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1. Introduction

1.1 The Green Belt within South Tyneside was established over 45 years ago to help prevent the spread of urban development within the area. The Green Belt forms part of the wider Tyne & Wear Green Belt, and remains an important asset to the borough continuing to provide a key role in managing development with South Tyneside and the wider Tyne & Wear conurbation. Within South Tyneside the Green Belt preserves the character and individual identities of the urban fringe villages, and prevents their merging with the larger towns of South Shields, Jarrow and Hebburn. The Green Belt also accommodates a wide variety of the borough’s environmental assets, including Local Wildlife Sites, wildlife corridors and areas identified for the Great North Forest. The borough’s areas of important landscape character, ‘High Landscape Value’ and ‘Landscape Significance’ are also found within the Green Belt.

1.2 Its boundaries have nevertheless seen various adjustments since its inception, both to release land for major new planned housing and industrial developments as well as being extended to help protect additional recreational and natural landscape areas. South Tyneside’s Green Belt boundaries were last reviewed in the 1990s when 7.6 hectares was deleted for the Whitburn Colliery housing development, but 66.5 hectares was also added to the Green Belt around Red Barns quarry in Hebburn adjacent to Wardley Manor Country Park in Gateshead.

1.3 The South Tyneside Green Belt presently covers about 2,408 hectares (5,950 acres), representing just over a third of the borough’s total land area. The essential purposes and functions of the Green Belt around South Tyneside remain consistent with those set out in the new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):

- to check the unrestricted sprawl of the built-up area of South Tyneside (or that of Sunderland or Gateshead);
- to safeguard the borough’s countryside from further encroachment;
- to prevent the merging of South Tyneside with Sunderland, Washington or Gateshead;
- to preserve the special and separate characters of Boldon Colliery, West Boldon, East Boldon, Cleadon and Whitburn villages;
- to assist in the regeneration of the urban area, by encouraging the recycling of previously-developed ‘brownfield’ land, particularly along the riverside.

1.4 This paper sets out the national and local planning policy context with regard to Green Belts and also the history of South Tyneside’s Green Belt and current landscape designations.

Green Belt – Facts and Figures

- The UDP and LDF Core Strategy record the **borough area** as **6,443ha** (15,921 acres)
- The more accurate GIS mapped extent of the borough boundary is **6,691ha** (16,531 acres); but excluding the River Tyne reduces the land area to **6,535ha** (16,149 acres)

- The UDP and LDF Core Strategy record the **Green Belt area** as **2,364ha** (5,841 acres)
- The more accurate GIS mapped extent of the Green Belt boundary is **2,408ha** (5,950 acres)

- The Green Belt in South Tyneside represents approximately **36-37%** of the borough

- The UDP noted the **Great North Forest** totals about 160sqkm (62sq miles) or **16,000ha** (39,538 acres); of which **17%** is within **South Tyneside** – approx. **2,720ha** (6,721 acres).
- The more accurate GIS mapped extent of the **borough’s Great North Forest area** is **2,819ha** (6,965 acres), or about **17.6%** of the total Great North Forest area and covering about **42-43%** of the borough.
2. National Planning Policy Context

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF extract: March 2012 – superseded former PPG2 (see Annex C))

Section 9: Protecting Green Belt land

2.1 The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.

2.2 Green Belt serves five purposes:

- to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

2.3 Once Green Belts have been defined, local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance the beneficial use of the Green Belt, such as looking for opportunities to provide access; to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation; to retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or to improve damaged and derelict land.

2.4 The general extent of Green Belts across the country is already established. New Green Belts should only be established in exceptional circumstances, for example when planning for larger scale development such as new settlements or major urban extensions. If proposing a new Green Belt, local planning authorities should:

- demonstrate why normal planning and development management policies would not be adequate;
- set out whether any major changes in circumstances have made the adoption of this exceptional measure necessary;
- show what the consequences of the proposal would be for sustainable development;
- demonstrate the necessity for the Green Belt and its consistency with Local Plans for adjoining areas; and
- show how the Green Belt would meet the other objectives of the Framework.

2.5 Local planning authorities with Green Belts in their area should establish Green Belt boundaries in their Local Plans which set the framework for Green Belt and settlement policy. Once established, Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances, through the preparation or review of the Local Plan. At that time, authorities should consider the Green Belt boundaries having regard to their intended permanence in the long term, so that they should be capable of enduring beyond the plan period.

2.6 When drawing up or reviewing Green Belt boundaries local planning authorities should take account of the need to promote sustainable patterns of development. They should consider the consequences for sustainable development of channelling development towards urban areas inside the Green Belt boundary, towards towns and villages inset within the Green Belt or towards locations beyond the outer Green Belt boundary.

2.7 When defining boundaries, local planning authorities should:

- ensure consistency with the Local Plan strategy for meeting identified requirements for sustainable development;
- not include land which it is unnecessary to keep permanently open;
- where necessary, identify in their plans areas of ‘safeguarded land’ between the urban area and the Green Belt, in order to meet longer-term development needs stretching well beyond the plan period;
- make clear that the safeguarded land is not allocated for development at the present time. Planning permission for the permanent development of safeguarded land should only be granted following a Local Plan review which proposes the development;
- satisfy themselves that Green Belt boundaries will not need to be altered at the end of the development plan period; and
- define boundaries clearly, using physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent.
2.8 If it is necessary to prevent development in a village primarily because of the important contribution which the open character of the village makes to the openness of the Green Belt, the village should be included in the Green Belt. If, however, the character of the village needs to be protected for other reasons, other means should be used, such as conservation area or normal development management policies, and the village should be excluded from the Green Belt.

2.9 As with previous Green Belt policy, inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.

2.10 When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. ‘Very special circumstances’ will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

2.11 A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in Green Belt. Exceptions to this are:

- buildings for agriculture and forestry;
- provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation and for cemeteries, as long as it preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;
- the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;
- the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;
- limited infilling in villages, and limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the Local Plan; or
- limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed sites (brownfield land), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within it than the existing development.

2.12 Certain other forms of development are also not inappropriate in Green Belt provided they preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land in Green Belt. These are:

- mineral extraction;
- engineering operations;
- local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location;
- the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction; and
- development brought forward under a Community Right to Build Order.

2.13 When located in the Green Belt, elements of many renewable energy projects will comprise inappropriate development. In such cases developers will need to demonstrate very special circumstances if projects are to proceed. Such very special circumstances may include the wider environmental benefits associated with increased production of energy from renewable sources.

2.14 Community Forests offer valuable opportunities for improving the environment around towns, by upgrading the landscape and providing for recreation and wildlife. An approved Community Forest plan may be a material consideration in preparing development plans and in deciding planning applications. Any development proposals within Community Forests in the Green Belt should be subject to the normal policies controlling development in Green Belts.
2.15 The basic principle about the permanence of the Green Belt is clearly well understood. In some instances the adopted RSS includes provision for a strategic review of the Green Belt and in others some local adjustments to the Green Belt are justified. There are examples of these local adjustments both adding to and taking away land from the Green Belt.

2.16 In the absence of a requirement in the Regional Spatial Strategy to review the Green Belt boundary, any change must be justified by exceptional circumstances.

2.17 If a review of the Green Belt is essential to accommodate needed development, it is likely to be a strategic consideration for an authority and should be dealt with as a tough decision in a core strategy. Minor adjustments to remove boundary anomalies should be undertaken in a lower level DPD. This is to avoid introducing minor non-strategic matters into a core strategy. Any changes proposed, large or small need to be shown in map form (preferably inset maps) so that anyone wanting to make representations knows precisely where the proposed boundary is. This applies to any proposed boundary changes not just those relating to the Green Belt.

2.18 A judgement needs to be made about whether a change is strategic or local and this is a source of some concern for authorities given the confusion that a local adjustment could, indeed should, be undertaken in the council’s strategic document - the core strategy. A local adjustment is one that is not based on a RSS policy - rather it is based on local needs and an assessment of how well the existing Green Belt boundary serves the purposes of national Green Belt policy.
3. History of South Tyneside’s Green Belt

3.1 The planning policy context for South Tyneside’s Green Belt is set out in the Tyne & Wear County Structure Plan (1978), The Tyne & Wear Green Belt Local Plan (1985) and West Boldon, East Boldon and Cleadon Local Plan (1985). The objectives set out in these documents have been transposed into the subsequent South Tyneside Unitary Development Plan (adopted 1999) and emerging Local Development Framework.

3.2 The statutory South Tyneside Green Belt was established more than 40 years ago in 1965 and approved as part of the Sunderland Periphery Town Map. The Tyne & Wear Green Belt initially extended along the southern periphery of Tyneside between South Shields and Sunderland and west of Sunderland.

3.3 Much of the remaining land in the county was proposed for designation at the same time but not confirmed by the Minister of State. In 1969, the Minister approved the former Durham County Development Plan First Review. This incorporated and the Sunderland Periphery Town Map. The Green Belt Proposed Modifications Schedule (dated 29th July 1968) stated:

`The area south of Sunderland County borough between the Durham – Sunderland Road A690 and the Coast; the area between Washington New Town and the Approved Green Belt areas south of Wickham, Gateshead, Felling, Hebburn and Jarrow are not covered by Green Belt notation. These areas are however included within an area for which a comprehensive land use/transportation study has been commissioned and, pending the completion of the study and the approval of the proposals submitted by the Planning Authority, development will be controlled to ensure that they will be kept open.`

3.4 The results of the aforementioned studies were incorporated into the Tyne & Wear Structure Plan.

**Tyne & Wear County Structure Plan (1978)**

3.5 The Structure Plan set out to limit urban growth and to prevent the coalescence of settlements, particularly the built-up areas of South Tyneside, Washington, Gateshead and Sunderland. The document also commented on the need to preserve the character of areas including Whitburn, through the application of Green Belt policies.

3.6 The areas of Green Belt identified in the Structure Plan were broadly in line with that set out in the Sunderland Periphery town map and the Durham County Development Plan. The Tyne & Wear County Structure Plan sought to prepare a more detailed subject plan (Tyne & Wear Green Belt Local Plan) defining the areas within the Green Belt and to provide detailed policy guidance.

**Tyne & Wear Green Belt Local Plan (1985)**

3.7 This subject plan was produced in support of the Tyne & Wear County Structure Plan. The document comprised of a set of policies for the control and management of the Tyne and Wear Green Belt. The Plan stated that:

3.8 *A Green Belt will be defined which:–*

    a) *broadly approximates to the exiting Green Belt* (*as set out in the Tyne & Wear Structure Plan)* ; and

    b) *prevents the merging of the following settlements :*
Sunderland with Washington, Houghton-le-Spring and Tynside; Gateshead with Washington, Birtley, Kibblesworth or Whickham; Newburn with Throckley; and checks the urban sprawl around and maintains the separate character of Crawcrook, Ryton, Winlaton and Whickham.'

Green Belt Policies – Tyne & Wear County Structure Plan 1978
3.9 With regard to the South Tyneside Green Belt, the Tyne & Wear Green Belt Local Plan identified the two main aims of the policies to be:

(i) to prevent the merging of South Tyneside and Sunderland, and
(ii) maintain the separate character of the settlements which lie between, i.e. Boldon Colliery, West and East Boldon, Cleadon and Whitburn.

3.10 The following changes to the existing statutory Green Belt were made by the document:

a) Drawing back of the Green Belt on the north side of East Boldon and at Boldon Lane and Moor Lane, Cleadon in order to provide housing and industrial land.
b) Exclusion of land north and west of Boldon Colliery to allow for large scale housing and industrial land provision.
c) Inclusion of land at the former Whitburn Colliery to enhance the setting of Whitburn Country Park.
d) Inclusion of land fringing the built up areas of South Shields and North Sunderland in order to protect recreational uses and restrict further spread of the built up area.
e) Inclusion of open land between Fellgate housing estate and the A1 (now A194), in order to prevent the further spread of the built up area and merging of Sunderland and Tyneside.

3.11 The Green Belt Local plan also provided a proposals map which identified areas of high landscape quality (See Annex A). This map had been informed by Local Structure Plan surveys carried out between 1975 – 1976 which sub-divided the countryside into identity areas from the point of view of their landscape and character.

West Boldon, East Boldon and Cleadon Local Plan (1985)

3.12 This document provided policies and guidance for the local area and was informed by the Tyne & Wear Green Belt Plan and Structure Plan. It is acknowledged within the document that the South Tyneside Green Belt is narrow and that the vast majority of it would be sensitive to any development.

3.13 The document identified areas of open land which were important to preserve, in order to prevent South Tyneside and Sunderland from merging. These were identified as the areas to the south of the Boldons and east of Cleadon.

3.14 Oakleigh Gardens playing fields on the northern edge of Cleadon was also added to the Green Belt and now makes a substantial contribution to the open break between South Shields and Cleadon.

3.15 A small deletion to the Green Belt was made to the south of North Road on the west side of West Boldon. This was due to large scale development proposals on adjoining land in the Boldon Colliery Local Plan resulted in the A184 road becoming the most appropriate Green Belt boundary.

3.16 The Local Plan also identified areas of high landscape quality within the Boldons and Cleadon area. As it is difficult to define precisely the boundary of a high quality landscape, the areas of landscape significance were not defined on the Local Plan Proposal Map. However, the following board areas of landscape significance were identified:

1) Cleadon Hills and eastern zone;
2) The outer corridor from Downhill Lane to Sunderland Road;
3) River Don Valley south of the A184 and the general vicinity of Elliscope Farm and Hylton Bridge;
4) Land visible from the A1 (now the A194), A184 and B1298.

3.17 It was considered that the policies designated to protect the openness of the Green Belt were not sufficient enough to protect the areas of high landscape importance. Therefore, Proposal 23 was introduced in order to provide additional protection to these areas:

‘Development which would adversely affect areas of high landscape significance will not normally be allowed except where it is for small scale extensions to existing uses appropriate to a rural area.’
Unitary Development Plan

3.18 The policies and designations set out in the Tyne & Wear Structure Plan, Green Belt Local Plan and the West Boldon, East Boldon and Cleadon Local Plan have subsequently informed the content of South Tyneside’s Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and Local Development Framework (LDF).

3.19 Two changes to the Green Belt were proposed in the UDP, these were:

- The deletion of Whitburn Colliery to regularise the position in respect that the site had been developed for housing.
- Extension to the Green Belt, west and north west of the A194 at Hebburn to the boundary of Gateshead MBC to separate Gateshead (Wardley) and South Tyneside (Hebburn).
4. Local Planning Policy Context

4.1 The policies within the Unitary Development Plan are gradually being replaced by the Local Development Framework. At present, UDP policies which have not been fully superseded are known as ‘saved’ policies. The policies which relate to the Green Belt and landscape protection within the UDP are currently ‘saved’ and have not yet been fully replaced by the adopted LDF policies.

Unitary Development Plan (1999)

Green Belt

4.2 UDP Policies ENV25–ENV25/5 set out the guidelines for management and control of development within South Tyneside’s Green Belt.

4.3 Policy ENV25 ‘The Purpose and Boundary of the Green Belt in South Tyneside’, sets out the overarching principles for South Tyneside’s Green Belt:

‘In conjunction with adjoining councils the local planning authority has defined and will protect and enhance, a Green Belt which will:

a) Check the unrestricted sprawl of the built up area of South Tyneside;
b) Safeguard the Borough’s countryside from further encroachment;
c) Prevent the merging of South Tyneside with Sunderland, Washington and Gateshead;
d) Preserve the special and separate characters of Boldon Colliery, West Boldon, East Boldon, Cleadon and Whitburn; and
e) Assist in the regeneration of the urban area, by encouraging the recycling of land, particularly along the riverside,

The Local Planning Authority will strictly maintain the Green Belt boundaries as shown on the Proposals Map.’
Areas of Landscape Value and Significance

4.4 Policy ENV23/1 ‘Areas of Landscape Value’ draws on Proposal 23 of the West Boldon, East Boldon and Cleadon Local Plan, in providing additional protection for areas of high landscape value. This policy identifies Cleadon Hills and Boldon Downhill as the areas of high landscape value. Both of these areas were identified in the Tyne & Wear Green Belt Local Plan Proposal Map.

4.5 The area of land south of the Boldons, between Hylton Lane and Sunderland Road is additionally protected by Policy ENV23/2. As an area of landscape significance, this area was also originally identified in the West Boldon, East Boldon and Cleadon Local Plan.

4.6 The UDP further recommended undertaking a study of South Tyneside’s Landscape by 2001 (Target ST6.15) with the aim of establishing and reviewing the boundaries of Areas of High Landscape Value and Areas of Landscape Significance.

Local Development Framework (2004 – present)

4.7 The Green Belt as defined in the UDP was ultimately transposed into the Core Strategy (adopted 2007) with no amendments to the existing boundaries proposed.

4.8 UDP Policy ENV25 ‘The Purpose and Boundary of the Green Belt in South Tyneside’ presently remains ‘saved’ and is still used as an important policy in determining planning applications.

4.9 The Green Belt policies within the LDF are broadly in accordance with the Green Belt and Landscape objectives set out in the UDP. Core Strategy Policy EA1 Local Character and Distinctiveness seeks to:

   i) protect and enhance the openness of the Green Belt
   ii) preserve the special and separate characters of the urban fringe villages of Boldon Colliery, West Boldon, East Boldon, Cleadon and Whitburn.

4.10 Protection of the Green Belt is also supported through the Development Management Policies DPD and draft Site-Specific Allocations DPD. The key purposes and functions of the South Tyneside Green Belt are summarised in the margin text alongside Policy DM8 of the Development Management Policies DPD and Policy SA10 of the Site-Specific Allocations DPD. However, it should be noted that there are no specific policies in either document addressing Green Belt issues.
4.11 Policy 9 ‘Tyne and Wear City-Region’ set out the purposes of the Tyne & Wear Green Belt in the Regional Spatial Strategy. The document stated that the general extent of the region’s Green Belt, including land around Tyne and Wear should be maintained. Section 9.5 of Policy 9 stated:

‘Ensuring that the Green Belt continues to safeguard the countryside from encroachment and check unrestricted sprawl of Tyne & Wear.

The Green Belt should:
a) prevent the merging of:
   - Sunderland with Seaham, Houghton-le-Spring, Washington or Tyneside;
   - Gateshead with Hebburn, Washington, Birtley or Whickam;
   - Washington with Chester-le-Street;
   - Newcastle upon Tyne with Ponteland, Newcastle International Airport, or Cramlington;
   - North Tyneside with Cramlington or Blyth; and
   - Durham with Chester-le-Street.’

4.12 In May 2010, the Government formally announced the intention to revoke Regional Strategies with the legal basis for their abolition to be set out in the Localism Bill. The RSS will thereafter no longer form part of the statutory development plan for the borough.
5. TyneWear Park – Regional Strategic Employment Site

5.1 Regional Planning Guidance (RPG1) gained statutory status as a Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) in 2004. The document set out the need to provide a strategic employment site within the sub-region of South Tyneside, Gateshead and Sunderland. Policy EL4 required a site to be allocated ‘North of Sunderland’ and identified an area of search within the Green Belt.

5.2 It was considered that land currently allocated within the regional development plans was broadly sufficient to allow for most new development proposed within the RSS. However, due to limited employment land provision in the part of the region covered by the local authority areas of Sunderland, South Tyneside and Gateshead, the need for a strategic employment site in the broad areas ‘North of Sunderland’ was accepted. In addition, it was considered that the location’s potential to have significant public transport access and its proximity to deprived ward areas within each of the surrounding local authorities, were pull factors in identifying this location.

5.3 GVA Grimley were commissioned to undertake a detailed search of the identified area in 2004. This study recommended Option 1 in South Tyneside (Land North of A184 bounded by the A194 (M) to West and A19 to East), as the preferred option for the employment site. This selected site would have consisted in a total site area of 190ha for the proposed 70 -90ha developable area employment site (115 -150ha gross), involving a total 205ha deleted from the Green Belt.

Site Options for the Prestige Employment Site
5.4 The reasons behind the selection of the preferred site (Option 1) were:

- the edge of the site is better related to adjacent urban areas so would form a more robust and defensible Green Belt boundary;

- the impact on the role and function of the Green Belt would be minimised. The site represents the most logical and PPG2 compliant deletion from the Green Belt;

- the site allows for a dedicated and high profile access to be created to serve the site off the existing highway network, subject to a detailed traffic modelling assessment;

- the site is potentially (marginally) the better option for meeting market profile requirements – commercially more attractive and thus deliverable. It has maximum frontage to three routes on the primary highway network;

- the site has less constraints, in terms of designated nature sites and existing infrastructure such as high voltage overhead power lines;

- the better proximity of the site to Fellgate and Heworth Metro stations give this site a distinct advantage in terms of multi-modal linkage and public transport options.

5.5 South Tyneside Council produced a draft preferred options ‘Tyne Wear Regional Employment Site’ Area Action Plan as part of the emerging LDF. This document summarised all the consultants’ findings, site context and amendments to the Green Belt to accommodate the proposed development. A full summary of the consultants findings is available in Annex C.

TyneWear Area Action Plan (‘preferred options’ draft August 2005)
5.6 Although the proposed Strategic Employment Site was largely supported by the Local Authorities within the area, the site was dropped from the final version of the RSS (adopted July 2008), on the recommendation of the Examination Panels report (2007). It was considered that the allocation should be removed from the RSS because development of the site could not be justified in the short to medium term. This was primarily due to the amount of employment land available for development at the time of the examination.

5.7 The TyneWear Employment site was also the only identified allocation, and proposed deletion, within the Tyne & Wear Green Belt at the time of examination. It was noted that, apart from this site, all other development could be accommodated within the region without the need for Green Belt deletions. Consideration was also given to the role of the Green Belt in its function in restricting future urban sprawl and facilitating regeneration in brownfield areas within the region.

6.1 During the examination of the UDP a number of objections were received regarding the Green Belt and the status of a number of sites within it. The main issue, considered by objectors, was that the Green Belt boundary as proposed in the UDP was drawn too tightly and that areas should be removed from the Green Belt and allocated for housing or industry.

6.2 The inspector commented on each site individually which is summarised below. The inspector also commented on the nature of the Green Belt in South Tyneside:

‘In any consideration of the extent of the Green Belt, regard must be had to its narrowness and fragmented and vulnerable nature. Rather than the ‘several miles wide of PPG2, the South Tyneside Green Belt is rarely more than 1 mile wide. Thus if a Green Belt is to be maintained, the opportunities for any change are limited and require particularly careful consideration – a relatively minor change could destroy or seriously damage the effectiveness of the Green Belt in many areas.’

Inspector Site Assessments

6.3 Land bounded by A19 the A1920 and the Administrative Boundary between the City of Sunderland and South Tyneside.

6.4 Sunderland City Council proposed to remove a section of the Green Belt adjacent to South Tyneside to be used as a strategic site for development by a single major investor. Sunderland suggested that South Tyneside should adopt a complementary policy to establish a logical, defensible and long term edge to development pressures. The proposal stemmed from a planning application from Sunderland AFC for a new football stadium on the Nissan Site, with a motel proposed within South Tyneside’s boundary.

6.5 The inspector concluded that it would be wrong to remove this land from the Green Belt in response to the objection from Sunderland City Council, as there was no certainty that Sunderland would delete the adjacent land from their Green Belt or that land would be taken up by a major employer.
6.6 Land South of Hedworth

The council proposed this area of land to be removed from the Green Belt and allocated as economic development. The council argued that the exceptional circumstances needed to justify the deletion of this land from the Green Belt was to counter the economic and social deprivation within the Borough, caused by the severe loss of employment during the 1980's and early 1990's. The council also considered that there were no alternative sites of a suitable size (>10 ha) within the urban area of the Borough.

6.7 The Inspector rejected this argument and the site was ultimately retained as Green Belt. It was considered that there were other regionally significant employment sites which provided employment for the residents of South Tyneside (e.g. Nissan, Siemans); therefore, in order to protect the fragile Green Belt, the economic development opportunities of neighbouring authorities were considered. The Council were not able to demonstrate that an inward investor was actively seeking a site within the Borough nor was there any certainty that anyone would come forward if the site was allocated.
6.9 Land at West Fellgate Farm, Laverick Hall Farm and Pool Bank

6.10 The inspector concluded that as the exceptional circumstances for economic development at the site south of Hedworth were not met, there was even less justification need for this site to be excluded from the Green Belt.

6.11 In addition, the Inspector stated that the land provides an important open aspect to the Borough. Development of this site would extend the built up area of the Borough, considerably into the open countryside and would affect a wildlife corridor.

6.12 Land to the South of Tileshed Lane and East of Boker Lane, East Boldon
6.13 The site was put forward as a potential housing site within the Borough. The Inspector recommended that no further housing allocations should be allocated within the UDP.

6.14 The inspector noted:

‘I would comment however, that this site is clearly one of those which must come into consideration if changes to the Green Belt have to be made to accommodate further housing development. It is well related to the settlement and associated services. However, development in this area would reduce the gap, in terms of distance, between Boldon and South Shields still further and would increase pressure on the remainder. If the gap were to be reduced here then it would become more difficult to reduce pressure to eliminate it completely between Newton Garths and Shields Road, thereby merging Boldon and Cleadon with South Shields.’

6.15 Land at South Lane, East Boldon

6.16 This site was also considered for a housing development. The Inspector also recommended that this site should also come into consideration if further housing land allocations are needed to be made in East Boldon. The Inspector stated that the site was well related to the settlement in terms of access to services.

6.17 The inspector commented on the above two sites (Land south of Tilesheds and Land at South Lane) that:

‘if considering only the Green Belt, then I would prefer the subject site to the south of South Lane to be allocated, as the Green Belt to the south is more substantial. However, the subject site lies in more attractive landscape and is closer to the Boldon Conservation Area, which is insulated from the northern site by relatively recent housing development. Thus in terms of the settlement and ignoring Green Belt issues I would prefer the northern site (Land south of Tilehead Lane and East of Boker Lane).’
6.18 **Land at South Tyneside College's Hebburn Campus**

6.19 This site was recommended as a proposed housing site. However, the Inspector rejected this proposal stating that if the site was to be built upon it would risk merging South Tyneside and Gateshead. It was also considered that the exclusion of this site from the Green Belt would also bring pressure to develop the site to the south. The inspector concluded that the development of this site would ‘destroy the Green Belt function’ within this area and would be contrary to PPS2.

6.20 **Land South Natley Avenue and North of Boldon Cricket Club**
6.21 This site was proposed for housing development which would constitute infilling the area between the existing housing development and the cricket club. Objectors to the UDP also argued that the Green Belt boundary was drawn too tightly around the existing urban area.

6.22 The inspector concluded that the site is beyond the built up limit of East Boldon and that the cricket club and associated buildings are appropriate structures which coincide with the purpose of the Green Belt. It is feared that development on this site would set an ‘unfortunate precedent’.

6.23 **Land South of Whitburn Lodge Public House**

6.24 The Inspector rejected the proposal for housing development at the UDP stage. However, the Inspector noted that this area of land is also located within the ‘undeveloped coast’ designation, however, it is contained by the pub and housing development to the south and when considering future housing this site would merit further examination.
6.25 **Land at Moor Lane, Cleadon**

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6.26 The Inspector rejected the proposal for housing on this site, but commented:

“If at some future date the shortage of land for housing development arises to such an extent that exceptional circumstances can be said to exist, then this site is one which should I believe be considered as part of a wider exercise.”

6.27 **Land at Wellands Farm, Lizard Lane, Whitburn**

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6.28 The proposals for housing developments at the UDP stage were rejected by the Inspector, due to sufficient housing land being available within the Plan. It was also noted that an agricultural land survey had shown there to be Grade 3A land on the farm, which would be a material consideration.

6.29 However, the Inspector also noted that the site does have some advantages, in that it is contained to the east and south by the existing village.
7.1 This section sets out the site-specific representations relating to South Tyneside's Green Belt received during the consultation of the Core Strategy.

An alternative location for the TyneWear Regional Employment Site at Wardley Disposal Point
7.2 UK Coal Mining Ltd made representations during the consultation of the Core Strategy suggesting Wardley Disposal Point as an alternative location for the TyneWear Strategic Employment Site. UK Coal Mining Ltd supported the requirement for a regionally significant employment site, however they proposed that Wardley Disposal Point would be a more suitable site for the following reasons:

**Site Size**

7.3 UK Coal Mining Ltd disagreed with the GVA Grimley Site Options Study which suggested that the Wardley Disposal Point was too small to accommodate the proposed employment site. At 57ha, UK Coal argued that the site was comparable with other large scale employment sites in the area and also reiterated that the RSS policy identified a site 'North of Sunderland' between 40 -200 ha.

**Previously Developed Land**

7.4 The representations made highlighted the fact that the Wardley site was the only Site Option in the GVA Grimley study which included a significant amount of previously developed land. UK Coal suggested that priority should be given to the re-use of this previously developed land. They also added that the re-use of the site would also improve the visual appearance of the site via the removal of existing buildings, structures and coal mound.

**Sustainability**

7.5 The re-use of previously developed land was also seen as a key factor in promoting the overall sustainability of the Wardley Disposal Point site. It was also put forward that the Wardley site also had better access to a range of public transport modes and opportunities, such as Heworth Interchange, a proposed Gateshead Park and Ride, and the Leamside Lane rail link. It was also noted that the Wardley Disposal Point also had access from the A194 Junction – identified as the favoured access by the Highways Agency in the GVA Grimley study.

**Green Belt**

7.6 Although all of the site options within the GVA Grimley study were located within the Green Belt, the site at Wardley Disposal Point would involve the loss of a smaller area of land from the Green Belt. Furthermore, the removal of existing buildings and the coal mound would reduce the overall impact on the remaining Green Belt.

**Marketability**

7.7 UK Coal highlighted that the Wardley Disposal Point was located adjacent to an established employment site (Follingsby Park), which indicated that the site was already a marketable location for industry and commercial distribution uses. It was suggested that the redevelopment of the Wardley Disposal Point would create the opportunity to build on the success of Follingsby Park and create a cluster of Logistics based accommodation.
Whitburn Firing Range

7.8 Representations were received from the Land Agent of the Reserves, Forces and Cadets Association to amend the Green Belt boundary at the Whitburn Firing Ranges site. The representation requested that the existing Green Belt boundary should be amended to allow a residential development on one part of the Firing Range site. This would provide the required investment needed to secure the ranges and the remaining Green Belt land for the foreseeable future.
8. South Tyneside Landscape and the Great North Forest

8.1 South Tyneside’s landscape character, ‘Areas of High Landscape Value’ and ‘Landscape Significance’, like the Green Belt, have been informed by the Tyne and Wear Local Structure Plan and Green Belt Local Plan. This information and local planning policy context is set out in Section 3 of this background paper.

The European Landscape Convention

8.2 The European Landscape Convention (ELC) is the first international treaty devoted to the management and protection of landscapes within Europe. The Government signed the convention in 2007, which embeds the convention in UK policy and through the management of landscapes.

8.3 The ELC defines landscape as:

‘An area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors’ (Council of Europe 2000).

8.4 Natural England leads the implementation of the ELC in England and it is recognised that many of the principles of the ELC are addressed through the production of National Character Areas and the Landscape Character Assessment guidance used to inform local policy making.

National Character Areas

8.5 The Countryside Agency assessed the landscape character of England in 2005. This resulted in the production of a ‘Character of England Landscape, Wildlife and Cultural Features Map’. The map divided England into 159 National Character Areas and includes systematic descriptions of the features and characteristics of the landscape.

8.6 Within the North East there are 15 National Landscape Character Areas (see map). Two National Landscape Character Areas coincide with the South Tyneside borough. They are the Tyne & Wear Lowlands (No. 14) and the Durham Magnesian Limestone Plateau (No. 15).

North East of England Character Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>North East Character Areas:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 North Northumberland Coastal Plain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Northumberland Sandstone Hills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Cheviot Fringe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Cheviots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Border Moors and Forests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 North Pennines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Tyne Gap &amp; Hadrian’s Wall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Mid Northumberland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 South East Northumberland Coast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Tyne &amp; Wear Lowlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Durham Magnesian Limestone Plateau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Durham Coalfield Pennine Fringe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 Pennine Dales Fringe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 Tees Lowlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 North Yorkshire Moors &amp; Cleveland Hills</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Natural England)
Tyne & Wear Lowlands

8.7 The Tyne & Wear Lowlands covers mainly the urban areas of South Tyneside, including South Shields, Jarrow and Hebburn.

8.8 The key characteristics of this National Character Area are:

- Undulating landforms incised by the River Tyne, River Wear and associated tributaries.
- Widespread urban and industrial development and networks of major road and rail links.
- A landscape of considerable recent change with a long history of coal mining – identified by open-cast extraction sites, spoils heaps and recently restored sites.
- Open fields of arable crops within the urban fringe – pony grazing and other miscellaneous activities around settlements.
- Irregular woodland cover
- Historic riverside cities of Newcastle and Durham

Durham Magnesian Limestone Plateau

8.9 The Durham Magnesian Limestone Plateau follows the South Tyneside coastline and covers the urban fringe areas of the Boldons, Cleadon and Whitburn.

8.10 The characteristics of the Durham Magnesian Plateau National Character Area are:

- Gently undulating upland plateau of open predominantly arable land, dipping south and east ward towards the coast with incised denes cut into the coastal edge.
- Clearly defined west facing escarpments, characterised by streams, remnant broadleaved woodland, scrub and species rich-limestone grassland on steeper slopes.
- Widespread industrial development - history of coal mining identified by recently restored colliery sites.
- Varied coastal scenery of low cliffs, bays and headlands.
- Strong urban development, dominated by Sunderland and other larger mining towns and villages.
- A19 corridor.

8.11 The Limestone Landscape Partnership has produced a ‘Landscape Conservation Action Plan’ for The Durham Magnesian Plateau. The document further identifies 6 broad landscape types within the National Character Area. Within South Tyneside it is possible to identify 4 of these landscape types:

- Limestone Coastal Plain
- Coastal Limestone Plateau
- Clay Plateau
- Limestone Escarpment

These Landscape types are described in more detail in Annex F.
Great North Forest Plan

8.12 The Great North Forest Plan was prepared on behalf of the Countryside and Forestry Commission in support of the Forest Plan, adopted by Government in 1993. It formed part of a national scheme to regenerate the countryside around towns and cities.

8.13 The Great North Forest initiative aimed to revitalise 96 square miles of urban fringe countryside in Tyne & Wear and County Durham. The plan aimed to:

- Increase tree cover and biodiversity;
- Promote environmental conservation and regeneration;
- Contribute to a stable rural economy;
- Work with local people to improve degraded environments;
- Provide opportunities for education and lifelong learning;
- Encourage sport, recreation and tourism, the arts and cultural activity.

8.14 The Great North Forest area is broken down into three broad character areas based on their underlying geology and topography. These areas are:

- The Western Hills – hilly and dissected countryside running down from the western edge of the Forest to the valleys of River Team and Wear;
- The Central Lowlands - low lying ground in the valleys of the Rivers Team and Wear together with a central area towards the River Tyne;
- The Magnesian Limestone Plateau – land to the north and east of the River Wear where limestone strata overlie the coal measures.

8.15 These broad character areas have been broken down further into sub-areas known as Local Management Zones. These zones have been identified through a combination of landform, landscape, settlement and social considerations:

The Central Lowlands
- Don Valley Farmland
- Boldon Colliery
- Cleadon Fringe

The Magnesian Limestone Plateau
- Cleadon Hills
- North Sunderland Fringe
- Downhill
## The Great North Forest Character Area Descriptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Great North Forest Character Area</th>
<th>Local Management Area</th>
<th>Description (1993)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Central Lowlands</strong></td>
<td><strong>Don Valley Farmland</strong></td>
<td>Extensive low-lying, arable countryside with large fields and low cut boundary hedges. Some dairy grazing towards the south. Occasional tree groups and small shelterbelts around scattered farmsteads. Surrounding urban edges very visible across open, flat landscape. Major intrusions from Monkton Cokeworks, Mount Pleasant substation and power lines, Wardley coal stocking area, Nissan and highway corridors. Highly accessible from major roads.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Boldon Colliery</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>A flat, almost featureless landscape of mixed urban fringe and agricultural uses, including playing fields, coal stocking, arable land and horse pasture. Remaining hedgerows are either overgrown or gappy with scattered areas of regenerating scrub vegetation on waste ground and a few mature trees. A neglected and disturbed landscape with a fragmented structure. An important open break between Boldon and Biddick Hall under pressure from urban intrusion. Divided by Newcastle / Sunderland railway line.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cleadon Fringe</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>A predominantly arable landscape of large fields bounded by gappy hedgerows. Few mature trees but areas of scrubby vegetation and smaller scale fields around Cleadon give a more intimate character. Scattered urban related uses, particularly horse grazing, intrude into this important area of open land between South Tyneside and the irregular villages of Boldon and Cleadon where newer housing is particularly intrusive. Only a narrow connection remains with the wider countryside around Cleadon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cleadon Hills</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>An open arable landscape, distinguished by its domed limestone landform. Large fields with gappy flailed hedges. Scattered groups of trees form distinctive skyline features, particularly around the few dispersed farmsteads. Stone walls are a particular feature, unique to this area. Panoramic views are intruded upon by the urban edge of South Tyneside and parts of the area are disrupted by past and present quarrying. The National Trust coast is a spectacular and important attraction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Magnesian Limestone Plateau</strong></td>
<td><strong>North Sunderland Fringe</strong></td>
<td>A mixed farming landscape with extensive arable fields, dairy grazing and smaller pastoral areas around Boldon. Scattered areas of rough grazing and scrub with gappy hedges and poor fencing. Many farms, often copses of wind sculpted sycamore. Urban edges of Boldon and Sunderland are intrusive but the area offers some attractive long distance views, particularly towards the sea. An important open gap between Sunderland and South Tyneside. Bisected by Newcastle / Sunderland railway line.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Downhill</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>A rolling, mixed farming landscape rising to a prominent hilltop on the magnesian limestone. Narrow belts of wind shaped trees are associated with scattered farm buildings and poorly maintained hedgerows. Landscape structure is disrupted by urban related uses, including the reservoir, waste tip and gold course. The limestone bluff forms a prominent feature in the wider landscape and offers panoramic views over the central Forest area. Existing and proposed housing at Town End and Downhill adds pressure.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**8.16** The Great North Forest areas largely correspond with the borough’s Green Belt designations as shown in the Map below.

**8.17** The priorities of the Great North Forest have been encapsulated in LDF Core Strategy Policy EA1. The policy requires development proposals to strengthen the character and distinctiveness of their respective surroundings and reflect the appropriate strategy for each zone. Criterion D of Policy EA1 identifies the following Great North Forest priorities:
implement the Great North Forest’s strategies for access, education, enterprise and biodiversity in a forestry framework by:

i) Enhancing the River Don Valley farmland into a well-wooded recreational landscape enclosing a network of open corridors;

ii) Reconstructing the Boldon/ Cleadon fringe as an informal and wooded local recreation area that softens intrusive urban edges;

iii) Conserving the open limestone grassland character of the Cleadon Hills;

iv) Enhancing North Sunderland fringe by significantly increasing tree cover; and

v) Restoring the small-scale agricultural field pattern of Downhill.

Green Belt, Great North Forest and Areas of High Landscape Value in South Tyneside.
Green Belt Landscape Study 2012

8.18 South Tyneside Council commissioned Land Use Consultants to undertake a Landscape Character Assessment of the borough. This study comprised of three main elements:

- Assessment and identification of landscape character areas
- Landscape character management guidelines
- Application of planning policy to landscape with specific reference to the Green Belt, protection of important landscape and wind power developments.

Local Landscape Character Areas and Land Use Types – South Tyneside

Areas of High Landscape Value and Significance

8.19 The study reviewed and assessed the existing landscape designations, potential for amendments to these designations and also the potential to allocate new areas of landscape value or significance. As a result of the consultants assessment, the following areas were recommended to be protected as landscape designations:

- Cleadon Hills
- The summit and scarp of Boldon Downhill
- The coast between Trow Point and Whitburn Coastal Park

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Existing Designation</th>
<th>Amendment to existing boundary or deletion</th>
<th>Reason/ Justification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cleadon Hills</td>
<td>Area of High Landscape Value</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>This area has been identified as appropriate for continued protection. It is recommended that this is retained, subject to boundary modifications. The present boundaries follow the urban/Green Belt boundary to the north and north-west, taking in the former water works. The southern and eastern boundaries are less well defined, and for large sections the boundary does not follow any physical feature. It is recommended that the north and</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
north-west boundaries are maintained, but that the remaining boundaries of the candidate area are modified to follow physical features, as follows:

- From Sunniside Lane, the boundary should be taken further south to follow field boundaries, and include the Cleadon Hill Cliffs area;
- From here, the boundary should continue eastwards along field boundaries to Lizard Lane; and
- Lizard Lane should form the eastern boundary.

These boundaries are more recognisable and robust. They also include more of the higher ground which forms the wider setting of the hilltop area. Cleadon Hill Cliffs are a feature of interest which form a part of the wider Cleadon Hills landscape.

| The summit and scarp of Boldon Downhill | Area of High Landscape Value & Area of Landscape Significance | Yes | The designation covers the hill summit and the area between the two overhead power lines which cross to north and south of the hill top. This area has been identified as meriting continued protection.

The area south of The Boldons is currently recognised as an ALS. This study has concluded that, although an area of pleasant, relatively well wooded farmland, this area does not display the range of aspects and qualities which would potentially merit the maintenance of the designation.

In order to protect the most significant part of the landscape, considered to be the hill summit, and its setting, a slightly larger area than currently designated has been proposed as a candidate local landscape area, taking in more of the highest ground.

The current boundaries follow Downhill Lane to the north-west, the overhead power lines to the south-west, the borough boundary, Hylton Lane, and another overhead power line to the northeast. These boundaries enclose a relatively small area, though covering the summit and scarp. Overhead power lines are not considered the most appropriate boundary; among other things, they may be removed in the longer term.

It is recommended that this area be enlarged to extend protection to the whole of the upper part of the hill, including part of the ALS which is not recommended for retention. The boundaries of the candidate area are as follows:

- The western boundary follows Downhill Lane and the track at the foot of the scarp;
- The southern boundary follows the borough boundary;
- The eastern boundary follows the eastern edge of the golf course; and
- The northern boundary follows the urban/Green Belt boundary.

| The coast between Trow Point and Whitburn Coastal Park | No | No | The area of coast recommended for inclusion runs from Trow Point to Whitburn Coastal Park. To the north of Trow Point, the coast becomes more developed and focused on tourism. The access road to the Trow Quarry car park has been selected as the northern boundary, to include all of The Leas.

The southern boundary has been drawn to include Whitburn Coastal Park, and follows the edge of the Shearwater housing estate. The candidate area therefore includes the most scenic and accessible parts of the coast.

The inland boundary follows the A183 Coast Road, except at Marsden Quarry, where it moves inland slightly to include the Marsden Limekilns which form part of the important group of features around Lizard Point.

8.20 These candidate landscape areas will be consulted on as part of the local plan review.
Landscape and the Green Belt

8.21 The landscape study also assessed the landscape character of the Green Belt areas in South Tyneside; in regard to its role in providing a function to the integrity of the Green Belt. The function of the Green Belt was evaluated in terms of contribution to Green Belt objectives set out in National Policy (PPG2), and a criteria-based evaluation was undertaken, and the findings were compared with the strategic recommendations for the Great North Forest Local Management Zones (p.29). The overall conclusion from this assessment was that the landscape character of all of the Green Belt character areas provided a major role in one or more of the Green Belt aims as set out in Core Strategy Policy EA1.

8.22 The table below provides a summary of each of the Green Belt character areas and their role in providing Green Belt functions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Character Area No.</th>
<th>Summary</th>
<th>Conclusion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Leas</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Though peripheral to the Green Belt as a whole, this small area is important in the coastal sequence of landscapes, as viewed from the A183 or from static viewpoints. Along with Cleadon Hills to the west it is key to maintaining the separate identities of Whitburn and South Shields.</td>
<td>The GNF strategy will conserve this area as important grassland forming part of the coastal edge of South Tyneside. Maintenance of an open landscape will enable the area to keep its role in the setting and identity of neighbouring settlements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>This area is important for recreation, but Increased tree cover would be less</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area</td>
<td>Notes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whitburn Coast</td>
<td>is less closely related to other areas of the Green Belt, being visually and physically separated by the settlement of Whitburn. At its northern and southern ends it has some importance to the separate identity of Whitburn, particularly to the south where the gap between Whitburn and Seaburn is only around 250m.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monkton Fell</td>
<td>Though this area is not distinctive and has few individual features of importance, it nevertheless plays a key role in Green Belt purposes, maintaining the identities of Hebburn and Gateshead as discrete settlements. The aims of the GNF strategy for this area are appropriate and will enhance its Green Belt function. Further woodland will increase the visual separation offered by the area, and improved access will contribute to the objectives of Green Belt land. The future restoration of Red Barns Quarry presents a major opportunity to invest in the landscape of this area.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boldon Fell</td>
<td>This is the only area of the South Tyneside Green Belt where the extent of the designation approaches the &quot;several miles wide&quot; recommended by PPG2 (paragraph 2.9). There are few distinctive features within the area, but it nevertheless plays a crucial role in maintaining the separate identities of South Tyneside’s settlements. It also plays a key role in maintaining the separate identity of South Tyneside, as distinct from Gateshead and Sunderland. Increased woodland in this area will enhance its value as an area of Green Belt, by increasing the perceptual separation between settlements. Consideration should be given to key southward views from Fellgate, for example, towards Penshaw Monument. Additional woodland along road corridors would reduce traffic noise and make the surrounding countryside more attractive for recreation.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boldon Downhill</td>
<td>Boldon Downhill is a local landmark, and is important to the setting and identity of West Boldon. Further east the area is of less significance in terms of setting, but the whole area plays a major role in maintaining the identity of the Boldons as a separate entity. Maintaining the open aspect of Boldon Downhill should be a principal aim for this area, allowing it to remain as a key landmark. Promotion of the hilltop as a viewpoint would increase opportunities to appreciate the distinction between the Boldons and surrounding settlements. Further west, increased tree cover would add to the visual separation provided by the Green Belt.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boldon Flats and Whitburn Moor</td>
<td>This low-lying area is not visually prominent and has only a limited role in the wider landscape setting of settlements. It does, however, play a critical role in settlement identity, by providing physical distinction between the villages of South Tyneside and the fringes of Sunderland to the south. Increased tree cover will enhance this landscape and increase its role in providing perceptual distinction between settlements. For example, at the narrow corridor between Seaburn and Whitburn, tree cover is already good around Whitburn but the southern edge is more open. Seaward views are a key characteristic of this area, and give it some sense of place. It is therefore important to maintain this open aspect.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Boldon and                    | The area plays a limited role in providing promotion of the area as a
| **Cleadon Fragmented Farmland** | settlement setting. However, this narrow area preserves the distinct identities of the Boldons and particularly Cleadon. There is no separation between South Shields, Boldon Colliery, West Boldon and East Boldon around the west of this area. There are only narrow gaps between East Boldon and Cleadon, and between Cleadon and South Shields. As has been noted by planning inspectors, the remaining Green Belt is potentially vulnerable. | recreational resource will increase local identification with the landscape, adding to this aspect of the Green Belt’s role. Increased woodland will assist with visual distinction between settlements, which is particularly important given the restricted width of this Green Belt. |
| **Cleadon Hills** | This area of the Green Belt plays a key role in the setting of South Shields, Cleadon and Whitburn. It is of primary importance in many views from both developed and undeveloped areas. It is also critical to the sense of place of much of eastern South Tyneside, with its landmark features making a major contribution to sense of place. | This is a distinctive landscape which will be best served by conserving key characteristics such as the limestone grassland and stone walls. The high ground provides the greatest distinction between settlements and should be maintained as open and accessible. Promotion of woodland at urban edges will enhance Green Belt boundaries, but will also improve visual distinction of settlements. |
9.1 The Unitary Development Plan addressed agricultural issues within the borough via policy ENV26.

‘The local planning authority will only permit the development of agricultural land and buildings when:

a) The best and most versatile land (Grades 1, 2 and 3a) is protected from development;

b) The viability of an existing countryside enterprise is not prejudiced’; and

c) Any requirement of Green Belt and Great North Forest policies are met.’

9.2 The UDP supporting text highlighted the fact that all of the farmland in South Tyneside is located within the Urban Fringe and is also designated as Green Belt. This therefore means that agricultural production is subject to additional pressures, such as litter, trespass and vandalism, as a result of being close to the urban area.

9.3 In preparation of the UDP, the Local Planning Authority commissioned the Resource Planning Group of the Agricultural Development and Advisory Services (ADAS) to undertake a study of the urban fringe farming problems in the area. The methodology used ‘Field Penalty Assessment’, interviewed farmers and obtained estimated costs and benefits of being in an urban fringe location on a field by field basis. The study took place in 1991 and examined data from 1990.

9.4 21 out of 26 farms in the borough and 1,308 ha of land (21% of South Tyneside’s total land area) was surveyed as part of the study. Approximately 80% of the areas farmland was found to be under active cultivation, with the two main uses being for cereal production or grassland to support beef rearing or horse grazing. The average cost to the farmer, as a result of their urban fringe location was £14,900 (1990). This was mainly due to the result of crop damage, rubbish clearance and boundary damage.

9.5 Agricultural Land Classifications of Green Belt areas were undertaken in December 1996 to January 1997 to inform the evidence base of the UDP. The assessed sites were those situated within the Green Belt which were subject to an objection. The assessed sites and there Agricultural Land Classification grades are set out below. Furthermore, maps of the sites are provided in Annex I.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Grade 2</th>
<th>Subgrade 3a</th>
<th>Subgrade 3b</th>
<th>Other land</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Land adjacent to South Tyneside College</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land at South Lane, Boldon</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land at Boker Lane, East Boldon</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land at Natley Avenue, East Boldon</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land at Moor Lane, Cleakon</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land at ‘Whitburn Hotel’, Whitburn</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land at Wellands Farm, Whitburn</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elliscope Farm, Hebburn*</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>184.8</td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pikes Hole Farm, Hebburn*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>129.4</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*ALC grades for these sites were undertaken in February 1992
Annex A: Local Green Belt Plan Proposal Map (1985)
Annex B: Aerial Photograph of South Tyneside Green Belt
Annex C: Former PPG 2 – Green Belt (superseded by NPPF)

N.B – The guidance set out in PPG2 was superseded by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – this guidance is set out in Chapter 2 of this document. The text of former PPG2 is set out here for information only.

Intentions of policy

The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open - the most important attribute of Green Belts is their openness.

1. Green Belts can also shape patterns of urban development at the sub-regional and regional scale, and help to ensure that development occurs in locations allocated in development plans. They help to protect the countryside and can assist in moving towards more sustainable patterns of urban development.

Purposes of including land in Green Belts

2. There are five purposes of including land in Green Belts, these are:
   - to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
   - to prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another;
   - to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
   - to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
   - to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

The use of land in Green Belts

3. Once Green Belts have been defined, the use of land in them has a positive role to play in fulfilling the following objectives:
   - to provide opportunities for access to the open countryside for the urban population;
   - to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation near urban areas;
   - to retain attractive landscapes, and enhance landscapes, near to where people live;
   - to improve damaged and derelict land around towns;
   - to secure nature conservation interest; and
   - to retain land in agricultural, forestry and related uses.

4. The extent to which the use of land fulfils these objectives is however not itself a material factor in the inclusion of land within a Green Belt, or in its continued protection. For example, although Green Belts often contain areas of attractive landscape, the quality of the landscape is not relevant to the inclusion of land within a Green Belt or to its continued protection. The purposes of including land in Green Belts are of paramount importance to their continued protection, and should take precedence over the land use objectives.

Designation of Green Belts

5. The essential characteristic of Green Belts is their permanence. Their protection must be maintained as far as can be seen ahead.

Defining boundaries

6. Once the general extent of a Green Belt has been approved it should be altered only in exceptional circumstances. If such an alteration is proposed the Secretary of State will wish to be satisfied that the authority has considered opportunities for development within the urban areas contained by and beyond the Green Belt. Similarly, detailed Green Belt boundaries defined in adopted local plans or earlier approved development plans should be altered only exceptionally. Detailed boundaries should not be altered or development allowed merely because the land has become derelict.

7. Where existing local plans are being revised and updated, existing Green Belt boundaries should not be changed unless exceptional circumstances exist, which necessitate such revision.

8. Wherever practicable a Green Belt should be several miles wide, so as to ensure an appreciable open zone all
round the built-up area concerned.

9. Boundaries should be clearly defined, using readily recognisable features such as roads, streams, belts of trees or woodland edges where possible. Well-defined long-term Green Belt boundaries help to ensure the future agricultural, recreational and amenity value of Green Belt land, whereas less secure boundaries would make it more difficult for farmers and other landowners to maintain and improve their land.

Safeguarded land

10. Safeguarded land comprises areas and sites which may be required to serve development needs in the longer term, i.e. well beyond the plan period. It should be genuinely capable of development when needed.

11. When local planning authorities prepare new or revised structure and local plans, any proposals affecting Green Belts should be related to a time-scale which is longer than that normally adopted for other aspects of the plan. They should satisfy themselves that Green Belt boundaries will not need to be altered at the end of the plan period.

12. In order to ensure protection of Green Belts within this longer timescale, some safeguarding of land between the urban area and the Green Belt may be required to meet longer-term development needs. Local Authorities should address the possible need to provide safeguarded land. They should consider the broad location of anticipated development beyond the plan period, its effects on urban areas contained by the Green Belt and on areas beyond it, and its implications for sustainable development.

13. Safeguarded land should be located where future development would be an efficient use of land, well integrated with existing development, and related to public transport and other existing and planned infrastructure, so promoting sustainable development.

14. In identifying safeguarded land, local planning authorities should take account of the advice on housing in PPS3 and on transport in PPG13. They should also have regard to environmental and landscape quality; to the contribution which future redevelopment might make to remedying urban fringe problems, producing attractive, well-landscaped urban edges; and to the advice in PPG7 on protecting the best agricultural land.

Control over Development

Presumption against inappropriate development

15. The general policies controlling development in the countryside apply with equal force in Green Belts but there is, in addition, a general presumption against inappropriate development within them. As such development should not be approved, except in very special circumstances.

16. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt. It is for the applicant to show why permission should be granted. Very special circumstances to justify inappropriate development will not exist unless the harm by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations. In view of the presumption against inappropriate development, the Secretary of State will attach substantial weight to the harm to the Green Belt when considering any planning application or appeal concerning such development.

New buildings

17. The construction of new buildings inside a Green Belt is inappropriate unless it is for the following purposes:
   • agriculture and forestry (unless permitted development rights have been withdrawn);
   • essential facilities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation, for cemeteries, and for other uses of land which preserve the openness of the Green Belt and which do not conflict with the purposes of including land in it;
   • limited extension, alteration or replacement of existing dwellings;
   • limited infilling in existing villages, and limited affordable housing for local community needs; or
   • limited infilling or redevelopment of major existing developed sites identified in adopted local plans.
Mining operations and other development

18. Minerals can be worked only where they are found. Mineral extraction need not be inappropriate development: and not conflict with the purposes of including land in Green Belts, provided that high environmental standards are maintained and that the site is well restored.

19. Mineral and local planning authorities should include appropriate policies in their development plans. Mineral planning authorities should ensure that planning conditions for mineral working sites within Green Belts achieve suitable environmental standards and restoration. Relevant advice on this matter is set out in MPG2 and MPG7.

20. The statutory definition of development includes engineering and other operations, and the making of any material change in the use of land. The carrying out of such operations and the making of material changes in the use of land are inappropriate development unless they maintain openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land in the Green Belt.

Land use objectives

21. When any large-scale development or redevelopment of land occurs in the Green Belt (including mineral extraction, the tipping of waste, and road and other infrastructure developments or improvements), it should contribute to the achievement of the objectives for the use of land in Green Belts. This approach applies to large-scale developments irrespective of whether they are appropriate development, or inappropriate development which is justified by very special circumstances. Development plans should make clear the local planning authority’s intended approach.

22. Planning obligations may be used to offset the loss of or impact on any amenity present on a site prior to development. In the case where amenity on a site adjacent to the Green Belt is lost as a result of development on that site, it may be reasonable for obligations to provide for offsetting benefits on land in the Green Belt, as long as there is a direct relationship between the two sites.

Visual amenity

23. The visual amenities of the Green Belt should not be injured by proposals for development within or conspicuous from the Green Belt which, although they would not prejudice the purposes of including land in Green Belts, might be visually detrimental by reason of their siting, materials or design.

Community Forests

24. Community Forests offer valuable opportunities for improving the environment around towns, by upgrading the landscape and providing for recreation and wildlife. An approved Community Forest plan may be a material consideration in preparing development plans and in deciding planning applications. Any development proposals within Community Forests in the Green Belt should be subject to the normal policies controlling development in Green Belts, and should respect the woodland setting. (See the Great North Forest Plan (p. 26).

Land Management

25. The aim should be to enhance the countryside, and especially those areas of land within the Green Belt or adjacent to it, which are suffering from disuse or neglect.

26. The overall aim should be to develop and maintain a positive approach to land management which both makes adequate provision for necessary development and ensures that the Green Belt serves its proper purpose.
Future of Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt

27. Green Belts contain some major developed sites. These sites remain subject to development control policies for Green Belts, and the Green Belt notation should be carried across them. If a major developed site is specifically identified in an adopted local plan or UDP, infilling or redevelopment which meets the criteria below is not inappropriate development. In this context, infilling means the filling of small gaps between built development.

Infilling

28. Limited infilling at major developed sites in continuing use may help to secure jobs and prosperity without further prejudicing the Green Belt. Where this is so, local planning authorities may in their development plans identify the site, defining the boundary of the present extent of development and setting out a policy for limited infilling for the continuing use within this boundary. Such infilling should:

(a) have no greater impact on the purposes of including land in the Green Belt than the existing development;
(b) not exceed the height of the existing buildings; and
(c) not lead to a major increase in the developed proportion of the site.

Redevelopment

29. The complete or partial redevelopment of major developed sites may offer the opportunity for environmental improvement without adding to their impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land within it. Where this is the case, local planning authorities may in their development plans identify the site, setting out a policy for its future redevelopment. They should consider preparing a site brief. Redevelopment should:

(a) have no greater impact than the existing development on the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land in it, and where possible have less;
(b) contribute to the achievement of the objectives for the use of land in Green Belts;
(c) not exceed the height of the existing buildings; and
(d) not occupy a larger area of the site than the existing buildings (unless this would achieve a reduction in height which would benefit visual amenity).

Gypsy Sites

30. As a rule it will not be appropriate to make provision for gypsy sites in areas of open land where development is severely restricted, for example, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, and other protected areas. Gypsy sites are not regarded as being among those uses of land which are normally appropriate in Green Belts. Green Belt land should not therefore be allocated for gypsy sites in development plans.
### Summary of Proposed Site Options

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPTION 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Location:</strong> North of A184, bounded by the A194 (M) to West and A19 to East. Within South Tyneside Borough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Area:</strong> 190 hectares</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Opportunities</strong></th>
<th><strong>Constraints</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Landscape of generally limited value lending itself to improvement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Some existing screening to shield from residential uses to north</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Highly visible from strategic road network, with direct frontage onto A19, A194(M) and A184</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Relatively direct access to strategic road network, with access opportunities off A184 and A194</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Configuration of site could lend itself to a zoning of land uses, i.e. to separate prestige B1 use from industrial uses.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Given the extensive prominent frontage, relatively unconstrained landscape and flexible site configuration, site is likely to be appealing to market</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Proximity to Boldon Business Park and opportunity for clustering/spin-offs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Proximity to Boldon Business Park and retail/leisure uses – opportunity for users of the park to utilise</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- ‘Logical’ extension of urban area; A184 provides a defensible Green Belt boundary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Providing SNCI/Local Wildlife Site is maintained and incorporated into structural landscape, no significant environmental constraints effect delivery</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- A ‘green route’ focused on the SNCI/Local Wildlife Site can be maintained to provide a north-south access and recreational route</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Fewer overhead power lines than elsewhere in the Area of Search</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Proximity to residential communities and in particular the most deprived wards in the local area (to the north)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Proximity to Metro station and existing bus routes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Site lends itself to extension of existing bus routes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Accessible by foot for communities to the north</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Visual impact issues from residential areas to the north</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Proximity to Boldon Business Park could potentially harm the ability to generate a distinct and prestigious image</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Greenfield site</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Listed buildings along southern boundary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Overhead power lines run over the site</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Wholly in private ownership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- SNCI/Local Wildlife Site</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### OPTION 2

**Location:** North of Nissan Plant, bounded to west by open fields, to the east by A19 and to the north by the river valley

**Area:** 170 hectares

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>Constraints</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• No discerning landscape features – lends itself to improvement</td>
<td>• Secondary highway access would be relatively circuitous (to the west)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Not highly visible from sensitive receptors</td>
<td>• Some frontage to A189, but in cutting at this point and visibility from strategic road network may be constrained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Direct access from A19 may be secured. Secondary access possible from west</td>
<td>• Proximity to Nissan plant may harm profile/image</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Frontage onto A19</td>
<td>• Long boundary to river valley, an environmental resource, will need protecting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Northern boundary with the river valley, provides good basis to deliver attractive setting</td>
<td>• Overhead power lines cross the site including 275KV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Planned ‘superbus’ route runs through the site – good potential to achieve high standard of public transport access</td>
<td>• Distant from most deprived wards, which are focused to the north</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Proximity to Nissan plant and other businesses – clustering, ‘spin-offs’, suitable setting</td>
<td>• Remote from Metro system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Introduction of ancillary uses e.g. Retail/leisure/recreation, could be of benefit to nearby community and business</td>
<td>• A19 could prove psychological barrier to communities to east</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Existing footpath link across A19; good potential to access by foot</td>
<td>• Greenfield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Residential community to east albeit beyond A19</td>
<td>• Cost implications of securing access from A19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Logical extension to urban area, but no clear defensible boundary to north nor west</td>
<td>• Natural rather than urban boundary to define Green Belt boundary to the north. No strong definition of western boundary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Potential resistance to direct from A19, from Highways Agency</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### OPTION 3

**Location:** Eastern portion of the Area of Search, bounded by the A19 to the east and the Nissan Plant to the south. Western boundary defined by existing lanes through the site and the northern boundary by overhead power lines.

**Area:** 160 hectares

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>Constraints</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Established landscape features could assist in providing attractive setting</td>
<td>• Sensitive landscape / environmental constraints – mature trees, river valley, rural character and built heritage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Long frontage onto A19</td>
<td>• A19 in cutting at southern end of site which affects visibility from this key frontage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Separate from much of surrounding development, helps to establish image and profile</td>
<td>• Overhead power lines including 275kv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Opportunity for direct access from A19</td>
<td>• Some of the most environmentally sensitive parts of area of search would straddle centre of the site – potential for development to fragment and disrupt the environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Footpath link across A19</td>
<td>• Flood plain runs through site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Proximity to residential community across A19</td>
<td>• Separate from residential population to north and far removed from most deprived wards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Introduction of mixed ancillary uses and recreational/amenity space could benefit community to east</td>
<td>• Indirect secondary access (from west)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• ‘Superbus’ route proposed to run through site – good public transport opportunities for southern end of site</td>
<td>• Difficulties in securing public transport provision to serve northern end of site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Does not present logical extension of urban area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No physical definition of western and northern boundaries (although latter could be extended to A184, which also opens up access opportunities)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• North East Aircraft Museum falls within southern section of site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OPMION 4</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Location:</strong></td>
<td>Land to the east, south and south-east of Follingsby Industrial Park, comprising Wardley Colliery. Southern boundary defined by River Don</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Area:</strong></td>
<td>130 hectares</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Opportunities</strong></td>
<td><strong>Constraints</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future potential to make use of Leamside Line</td>
<td>Only potential for Leamside Line at present seems to be for freight use – could harm the profile of a prestigious business park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dual access – directly from A184 and (indirectly from A194)</td>
<td>Wardley Colliery would require reclamation – up-front costs and delay?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprises Wardley Colliery – previously developed site in need of reclamation and currently a blight on landscape</td>
<td>Indirect secondary access from A194, which also passes Follingsby and which could therefore harm image. Access from A184 may only be possible by means of junction further to the east.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited overhead power lines</td>
<td>Residential properties occupy much of the prominent frontage – acquisition issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lies adjacent to existing built development and comprises brownfield site – relatively logical extension of urban area. Southern boundary, however, is determined only by natural boundary (river valley)</td>
<td>Location adjacent to Follingsby Industrial Park could harm profile and image of the site, particularly associated with HGV movements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus routes could potentially be extended/diverted to run route through site. Site location / configuration does not legislate against this.</td>
<td>Frontage on to strategic road network is limited, with frontage dominated by Follingsby development. Limited visibility. Likely to harm market appeal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No sensitive environmental constraints</td>
<td>Configuration of site may limit flexibility in terms of site planning and meeting specific requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landscape not of significant value</td>
<td>Distant from residential communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low sensitivity to visual impact</td>
<td>Distant from Metro station</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Distant from existing bus routes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**OPTION 5**

| Location: | Land south of A184, comprising Wardley Colliery and extending eastwards to A19 |
| Area:     | 170 hectares |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>Constraints</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Good visibility and long frontage on to A184, but limited visibility from A19 and no direct frontage to A19.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Direct access can be provided from A184</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Configuration provides flexibility and the ability to creates zones of development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Wardley Colliery is previously developed land in need of reclamation and a blight on the landscape</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Leamside Line could potentially provide rail freight access, although significance is limited for development concept</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Limited sensitivity in terms of visual impact</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• No particularly significant environmental constraints</td>
<td>• No direct frontage to A194, only limited frontage to A19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Western end of site abuts Follingsby Industrial Estate, potentially harming ability to create new image, albeit screening could achieve separation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Leamside Line’s potential likely to be limited to freight – could harm profile of western end of site, albeit screening is possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Wardley Colliery will need reclaiming – potential costs / timing issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Overhead power lines cross the site, but only to limited extent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• No logical boundary to the south.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Splits the Area of Search and thus the Green Belt in two and therefore harms its purpose. Questionable the southern boundary is a defensible Green Belt boundary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Distant from Metro station</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Distant from concentration of existing bus routes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Distant from residential communities – limited opportunities to walk to the site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Listed buildings on northern boundary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Tree preservation order</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### OPTION 6

**Location:** South western portion of Area of Search, bounded by the Leamside Line to the west, River Don to the north and A1290 to the south

**Area:** 150 hectares

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>Constraints</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Close to residential communities to west, potential for walking to the site</td>
<td>- Much of site designated wildlife corridor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Proposed ‘superbus’ route runs to the south of the site. Concentration of existing bus routes to west. Potential to extend routes, but difficult to create ‘loop’ to attract operators.</td>
<td>- Area of Grade 2 agricultural land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Leamside Line potential to provide rail freight access, but significance of this for development concept is questionable</td>
<td>- Greenfield site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Proximity to Nissan plant and other business development has potential for clustering / spin offs.</td>
<td>- River valley, an environmental resource runs through centre of site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Adjacent to existing built development</td>
<td>- Flood plains fall within site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- A number of overhead power lines run over the site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- SNCI/Local Wildlife Site falls partly within southern section of site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Great Crested Newts recorded just beyond southern boundary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Water Voles recorded in locations towards northern end of site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- No frontage or visibility to strategic road network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- No direct road access to strategic road network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Proximity to Nissan Plant may harm potential to create image</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Far removed from Metro station</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Distant from most deprived wards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Potential use of Leamside Line for freight use could harm image, but could provide screening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Visually sensitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- No logical eastern (and perhaps northern) boundary. Does not represent a logical urban extension Questionable the degree to which the Green Belt boundary could be defended.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**OPTION 7**

**Location:** Central section, bounded by West Pastures to the east, river valley to the south. Follingsby Lane runs east – west through centre of site.

**Area:** 130 hectares

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>Constraints</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Appropriate size</td>
<td>- Existing premises/ businesses occupy large portion in centre of site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- SNCI/Local Wildlife Site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Overhead power lines run across much of the site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- River Don valley, an environmental resource runs through centre of site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Flood plains fall within and on the boundary of the site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Distant from Metro station</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Distant from all bus routes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Very difficult to service by bus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Distant from all residential communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Distant from existing urban area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Within centre of Green Belt. Not a logical urban extension. Boundaries would be difficult to defend against further expansion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- No direct road access and very difficult to realise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- No frontage or visibility from primary road frontage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Comprises designated wildlife corridor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.1 Development must be guided by and adhere to an overarching master plan and series of design principles, which ensure that the development comes forward in and comprehensive and integrated manner. The master plan should provide maximum flexibility to ensure that it is able to respond to evolving occupier requirements over time – it is expect that the site will comprise a series of zones or campuses, focused on particular types of uses.

Summary Background Report:

1.2 **Market Demand Assessment** – key advantages of any strategic allocation drawn from the area of search:
   - Location
   - Highly prestigious development and business environment
   - Recognition and branding
   - Scale
   - Flexibility and alignment to the needs of a wider range of businesses
   - Transport connectivity
   - Quality of life
   - Environmental quality

1.3 **Brownfield Land Assessment** - key site-specific assessment criteria and weightings:
   - Accessibility by road (5)
   - Site size (4)
   - General environment (4)
   - Market significance (4)
   - Opportunity to influence business environment (4)
   - Opportunity for clustering (3)
   - Accessibility by public transport (2)
   - Availability (1)

1.4 **Transport and Accessibility Appraisal** – key constraints and opportunities:
   - Trunk road traffic congestion in the area is not considered to be severe, particularly along the A194 (M) corridor at the junction with the A195;
   - A number of potential access points area available to serve the area of search and no part is fundamentally constrained in its access options;
   - Future major improvements to the adjacent road network are not programmed to occur before 2012;
   - Existing public transport in the immediate area is limited, though some opportunities exist at the northern and southern ends of the area of search;
   - A number of barriers exist to the free movement of pedestrians and cyclists from the adjacent land uses, though some footbridges do exist.

1.5 Particular regard was had to the possibility of reinstating the Leamside rail line, and to a potential linkage with Project Orpheus (Nexus sponsored medium-term public transport plan).

1.6 Concludes that in broad terms the accessibility for those in the local and wider region is generally good given that the site is well served by strategic trunk roads and its proximity to existing public transport linkages.

1.7 **Visual Appraisal** – areas of higher value sensitivity to visual impact:
   - north-east corner of the site due to its visual exposure from both the A184 and the residential area of Fellgate;
   - the middle portion of the area of search around the valley of the River Don – it has the more attractive landscape features and, within a local landscape of fields, hedgerows and copses of mature trees, supports minimal development and is removed from the more urbanised character around the edge of the site.
1.8 However, does not identify any overriding landscape of visual constraint to development on any part of the area of search.

1.9 Environmental Constraints Study – key potential constraints:

- majority of the site is classified as Grade 3 agricultural land, with minor areas of Grade 2/Grade 3A;
- Rights of way crossing the site would need to be addressed;
- pylons and overhead cables will present some constraint to development due to the restrictive corridors underneath and adjacent (linked to West Boldon electricity sub-station);
- no statutory designated ecological or landscape areas other than the Great North Forest initiative and some local designations covering specific parts of the area of search;
- water voles are the only protected species within the area of search, present along the valley of the River Don and water features elsewhere;
- one Tree Preservation Order at Scots House alongside the A184;
- 5 listed buildings (all Grade II) – Laverick Hall Farm, Boldon Fellgate Farm, Scots House and Scots House gatehouse/stables, Hylton Grove Bridge;
- 46 non-scheduled archaeological sites recorded, ranging from pre-historic to modern WW2 domestic defence locations associated with the former Sunderland aerodrome – archaeological potential moderate, with the exception of ridge and furrow related to medieval finds around Scots House and WW2 features around the aerodrome;
- area has been subject of historic mining activity, but at such a depth that would not pose a risk if seam collapse was to occur – some evidence of shallow seams suggests a minor risk of subsidence in specific, relatively small parts of the area of search; an old mine shaft, an area of made ground and mound of colliery waste area associated with the Wardley Colliery;
- River Don is the main river designated as capable of flooding, and there are 3 areas of flood defence in place;
- nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter are the most significant pollutants, but air quality does not present a constraint to development.

1.10 The site falls within the Green Belt and the Great North Forest designation. Majority of the area of search consists of flat, gently undulating open fields given over to mixed agricultural uses, occasional hedgerow boundaries and scattered forms of houses – the character is dominated by its urban fringe location, with the only contrast in the area of Follingsby industrial estate and land associated with Wardley Colliery. The site is contained within a network of major roads, and the major landscape features are the 8 large-scale electricity pylons and overhead lines that cross the site.

1.11 No overriding constraints to development on the site, with the primary elements to have regard to in layout terms being the overhead power cables and the ecological value of the River Don.

1.12 Community Strategy – key principles that should inform and guide the development of a comprehensive and holistic strategy for maximising benefits:

- maximising employment impacts at all stages of development;
- tackling all potential barriers to development;
- engaging with and understanding the needs of communities;
- identifying skills requirements, shortages and gaps;
- encouraging the workforce of today and tomorrow;
- working closely with developers and occupiers;
- building on and enhancing existing practices and structures where possible;
- recognising the regional significance of the North of Sunderland site;
- linking with business support and workforce development provision;
- action to raise demand for employment, training and skills development.

1.13 Economic Appraisal – key issues:
• **development costs** – a scheme would generate a sizeable return on the public sector’s investment irrespective of which site option is chosen; discounted net receipts vary between £6.7m-£17.7m over the assumed 15-year life of the scheme – Option 3 (office-led) provides the greatest return, closely followed by (office-led) development of sites 1 and 2.

• **outputs and impacts** – potential to secure major economic impact through the development of a strategic site (estimated 4,470-5,440 net local jobs, plus an additional multiplier generated 1,300-1,600 in the region); no material difference in the extent and nature of benefits arising from site options 1, 2 and 3; site 4 is found to generate less economic benefit in terms of employment and wealth creation; key economic outputs are lowered under alternative scenarios (70% industrial with 30% offices), although the industrial-led approach will be able to achieve the strategic aims of attracting knowledge-based investment and higher value activities, with the accompanying diminished effect on economic diversification.

• **value for money** – all options provide very good value for money for the public sector’s initial investment (on a gross cost basis); likely that the private sector would play a much bigger role, thus reducing public sector inputs and improving value for money on secured investment; site 3 provides the best public sector value for money, although little difference between site options 1, 2 and 3 when judged on the basis of unit costs.

• **risk** – all the site options share and equal or broadly similar share of risks of wider market conditions or economic risk; site 4 is however distinct in terms of its potential remediation risk and the danger of replicating the higher quality environment that is more readily achievable on greenfield sites.

### 1.14 Health Assessment

- high demand for health-related services, suggesting a lower available workforce, in Bede and Hebburn South wards;
- development could improve economic conditions and increase home ownership, and thus have a positive health effect on surrounding residents and communities;
- targeting recruitment and economic development on the most economically deprived wards (Bede, Town End Farm, Castletown, Hebburn South) is likely to have a significant positive impact on their state of health;
- targeted economic development, a business park health plan and the encouragement of walking/cycling/leisure activities may have a positive effect on the health of the region and surrounding wards, particularly the most deprived;
- high percentages of residents with a limiting long-term illness or permanently sick may reduce the potential workforce available for recruitment and may suggest an above average demand for health services;
- demand for health-related services should be monitored in surrounding wards should the development increase the population of resident wards, although adequate capacity at present;
- appropriate public transport may be required to assist residents of surrounding wards to benefit from the job opportunities due to high proportion of households with lack of access to a car or van;
- appropriate mitigation will be needed to avoid a negative impact on health from noise, dust, water and land contamination, particularly during construction and any use of brownfield sites;
- development is likely to have a positive effect on education and training in the area, which may have a positive impact on health by improving overall social and economic conditions.

### 1.15

The development has a significant opportunity to improve the state of health of local residents through job creation and economic development; although this benefit will only be achieved if local job recruitment is undertaken. A business park health plan is also recommended.
### Annex F: Durham Magnesian Plateau Landscape Types: Key Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Durham Magnesian Plateau Landscape Type</th>
<th>Landscape Type: Key Characteristics</th>
<th>South Tyneside Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Limestone Coastal Plain</td>
<td>Low coastal plain of undulating or rolling terrain incised locally by narrow denes. Magnesia limestones are largely overlain by glacial drift of boulder clay, sands and gravels. Heavy, seasonally waterlogged clay soils and lighter brown earths. Predominantly arable farmland of cereals and oilseed rape. Semi-regular patterns of medium and large-scale fields bounded by low hawthorn hedges. An open landscape exposed to the sea with few trees. Ancient oak and ash dene woodlands and scattered plantations. Large coastal settlements connected by a well-developed network of busy roads. Scattered older agricultural ‘green’ villages connected by narrow winding lanes. A visually open landscape, broad in scale but with spaces defined by the rolling terrain. Occasional active or abandoned limestone quarries. Crossed by major roads and by a network of quiet country lanes. Wind turbines and overhead services are prominent on the skyline in places. The sea is often visible forming the eastern horizon. A predominantly rural landscape with a semi-rural or urban fringe quality in places. This is defined on its inland edge by the coast road (A183) as it is in the Sunderland Landscape Character Assessment.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coastal Limestone Plateau</td>
<td>A low escarpment, deeply dissected in places to form short valleys between well-defined spurs or low rounded hills. Gently rounded topography of soft magnesian limestones covered in places by glacial drift. Occasional steep-sided incised valleys and glacial melt-water channels. Thin calcareous soils over limestones with heavier clays on boulder clay and brown earths on glacial sands and gravels. Open, predominantly arable farmland, with pasture on steeper slopes and pony paddocks close to settlement edges. Remnants of limestone grassland on the thin soils of scarp slopes, spurs, ridge tops and incised valleys. Varied limestone plant communities in abandoned limestone quarries and road cuttings. Semi-regular patterns of medium and large-scale fields bounded by low, clipped hawthorn hedges which are often neglected or gappy. Few trees – thinly scattered hedgerow ash and sycamore. Sparserly wooded – ancient ash woodlands and areas of hawthorn scrub on steep spurs, vale-sides and denes. Occasional small ‘green’ villages on ridge tops and valley floors. Scattered mining towns and villages and larger urban areas in the north. Large limestone quarries, some in use as landfill sites, in prominent locations on ridges and spurs. Tracts of reclaimed land restored to agriculture, forestry or recreational uses. A visually open landscape with panoramic views across the surrounding lowlands and urban areas. Crossed by major roads, often in prominent cuttings with exposed limestone faces, and by a network of quiet country lanes. Rural in character with scattered isolated farms in places but with a semi-rural or urban fringe quality in settled areas. Wind turbines and overhead services are prominent on the skyline in places. The Cleadon Hills fall naturally, into this category due to the scale and frequency of the limestone outcrop and maritime influences. The boundary between this type and the adjacent clay plateau gradual but is taken as corresponding roughly to the break in slope that occurs around the 35m contour.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low plateau of flat, gently rolling or undulating terrain. Soft magnesian limestones are covered by a thick mantle of boulder clay. Heavy, seasonally waterlogged clay soils. Predominantly arable farmland - mostly cereals and oilseed rape –mixed in places with improved pasture and pony paddocks. Regular or semi-regular patterns of medium and large-scale fields bounded by low hawthorn hedges. Few trees – thinly scattered hedgerow ash, oak and sycamore. The flat clay lands of Whitburn and Cleadon Moors fall naturally into this category. The boundaries between this type and adjacent types are gradual and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Durham Magnesian Plateau Landscape Type</td>
<td>Landscape Type: Key Characteristics</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Clay Plateau**                        | • Sparsely wooded – occasional small broadleaved woods and larger conifer plantations.  
• Scattered mining villages and larger urban areas connected by a well developed network of busy roads.  
• Wind turbines, telecommunications masts and pylons frequently feature on the skyline.  
• Areas of derelict colliery land, reclaimed land and old clay pits.  
• Abandoned railway lines, many in use as cycleways.  
• A visually open landscape, broad in scale, with a semi-rural or urban fringe quality in places. | progressive: the ones selected are based on modest breaks on slope but taken where possible to the nearest field boundary.  
In the south they are taken to be the administrative boundary with Sunderland for consistency with the Sunderland Landscape Character Assessment although arguably they might extend some 150-200m south of that line in places.  
Unlike in areas to the south, the Clay Plateau extends to the coast between Whitburn and Seaburn. |
| **Limestone Escarpment**                | • A low escarpment, deeply dissected in places to form short valleys between well-defined spurs or low rounded hills.  
• Gently rounded topography of soft magnesian limestones covered in places by glacial drift.  
• Occasional steep-sided incised valleys and glacial melt-water channels.  
• Thin calcareous soils over limestones with heavier clays on boulder clay and brown earths on glacial sands and gravels.  
• Open, predominantly arable farmland, with pasture on steeper slopes and pony paddocks close to settlement edges.  
• Remnants of limestone grassland on the thin soils of scarp slopes, spurs, ridge tops and incised valleys.  
• Varied limestone plant communities in abandoned limestone quarries and road cuttings.  
• Semi-regular patterns of medium and large-scale fields bounded by low, clipped hawthorn hedges which are often neglected or gappy.  
• Few trees – thinly scattered hedgerow ash and sycamore.  
• Sparsely wooded – ancient ash woodlands and areas of hawthorn scrub on steep spurs, vale-sides and denes.  
• Occasional small ‘green’ villages on ridge tops and valley floors.  
• Scattered mining towns and villages and larger urban areas in the north.  
• Large limestone quarries, some in use as landfill sites, in prominent locations on ridges and spurs. Tracts of reclaimed land restored to agriculture, forestry or recreational uses.  
• A visually open landscape with panoramic views across the surrounding lowlands and urban areas.  
• Crossed by major roads, often in prominent cuttings with exposed limestone faces, and by a network of quiet country lanes.  
• Rural in character with scattered isolated farms in places but with a semi-rural or urban fringe quality in settled areas.  
• Wind turbines and overhead services are prominent on the skyline in places. | The escarpment is not strongly defined as a linear feature north of the River Wear.  
Boldon Hill with its steep western slope, limestone outcrops and abandoned quarries is its northern-most point.  
The gentler eastern slopes merge gradually with the flatter land of the Clay Plateau.  
The boundary selected is relatively arbitrary but is designed to capture the main outcrops of limestone. |
SOUTH TYNESIDE UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN
Pikes Hole Farm (Site A)

Agricultural Land Classification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Land Type</th>
<th>Area (ha)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 1</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>1.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td>Very Poor</td>
<td>744</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 3</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>1.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 4</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>744</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 5</td>
<td>Very Poor</td>
<td>3.34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Method of Classifying Agricultural Land

Location Map

Statistics

Area of Agricultural Land: 139.49ha

Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

Information compiled by: Newcastle Polytechnic

Source: MAFF, Environment Agency, Natural England, NPI

Project: South Tyneside Unitary Development Plan

Scale: 1:5000

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To find out more about the Local Plan, please contact:

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