

# **Peterlee Masterplan Update**



**Durham County Council**

**December 2016**

## Context for Masterplan Updates

Masterplans are being developed for the majority of the main towns in County Durham. This document for Peterlee provides an update to the 2013 Masterplan. Given the potential impact of the Horden rail station, this proposal is reflected in the Masterplan Update. It provides an update on what has been delivered across Council services in the recent past. The update also sets out key activities for the future including in the town centre.

### Key Priorities:

- To support the development of new homes;
- To support the development of new jobs by encouraging new business activity, including support for advanced manufacturing;
- To improve existing industrial estates and in particular tackle the decline of North East Industrial Estate by encouraging business relocation and reuse for housing;
- To work with the private sector to increase choice in supermarket provision and to encourage the town centre to cope with its changing role;
- To capitalise on the advantages of the rail link through the area by creating a new rail station on the Durham Coast Line at Horden;
- To improve pedestrian and cycle paths to industrial estates including links to the new rail station on the Durham Coast Line at Horden; and
- To improve the evening economy within the town centre for residents and visitors.

## Profile

Peterlee is a main town in East Durham. It occupies a strategic location between the North East's two conurbations and has good transport links to the main towns in both the Tees Valley to the south and Tyne and Wear to the north. The town lies adjacent to the Durham Coast Rail Line, although it is not currently served by this line, and is situated next to the A19, one of County Durham's principal roads and economic corridors.

Building on these geographical advantages, Peterlee is a major employment centre with large employment estates being located mainly west of the A19. Peterlee also acts as a service centre for the many settlements in east of the County including Blackhall Colliery, Horden, Easington Colliery and Shotton Colliery.

Peterlee lies on the Durham Coast, which having been transformed by the Turning the Tide Partnership, is of growing importance as a destination for visitors. The Coast is recognized for its high quality landscape and seascape through its designation as a Heritage Coast in 2002 and for its nature conservation value. Areas of the adjacent coast and Castle Eden Dene which lies to the south, have been designated as Special Areas of Conservation due to their outstanding nature conservation value.



## History

The new town of Peterlee was founded in 1948 on a plateau north of Castle Eden Dene. The town was developed to provide improved housing and environmental conditions for the miners who were living in poor industrial housing in surrounding mining villages.

The town was planned around the concept of a tightly-defined retail / commercial centre, with five outlying residential neighbourhoods and industrial estates to the north. Later this included the industrial area immediately west of the A19 trunk road at Shotton Colliery.

Following its designation in 1948, the new town developed through phased migration from neighboring colliery and former colliery villages. The decline of the coal industry has stimulated a major and lasting campaign for new employment including the development of enterprise zones as new employment locations. The Peterlee Development Corporation (closed 1988) was extremely successful in attracting jobs to the town.

Peterlee's legacy as a new town has provided the settlement with an open appearance with housing set in a maturing landscape. There is a range of public and community services provided by the town.

## Economic Profile

Peterlee has a population of 28,251 (Census 2011). 36% of Peterlee's working age population who are economically active, work in the local area and approximately 72% work in County Durham. Commuting patterns show there are outflows to surrounding areas of Tyne and Wear and the Tees Valley. Reflecting the economic opportunities in Peterlee nearly 10,000 commuters from outside of the local area travel to Peterlee and its industrial estates every day.

## Business Profile

For several decades, Peterlee has benefitted from very significant investment in the infrastructure which serves and supports its capability to attract and sustain business and industry.

Peterlee's offer is based upon key sites for employment generating businesses at the North West and South West Industrial Estates (to the west of the A19) and the town centre itself. Bracken Hill and Whitehouse business parks are adjacent estates that offer new accommodation. The industrial estates together provide a broad range of serviced sites and buildings for industry and warehousing, together with office space and call centre accommodation, much of which was developed



in the period 1995-2005 when parts of the industrial estates held Enterprise Zone status. The estates accommodate branches of global corporations such as Caterpillar, Mecaplast, Knauf AMF and NSK as well as successful businesses which began locally, such as Seaward Electronics and the GT Group, all of which provide a significant number of jobs. Peterlee is a well-established location for manufacturing and engineering businesses and is a prominent business location in the North East. This offers a foothold in the market to capture new investment in the emerging renewables, advanced manufacturing and ultra-low carbon industries.

More recently, the town's employment sites have become an important component of the wider offer within the A19 corridor as a home for automotive supply industries (serving the Nissan UK plant at Sunderland and others), high value-added engineering businesses and operators in the emerging low carbon vehicle sector.

Manufacturing and call centres are the dominant sectors in the area and a high proportion of residents also work in transport and storage. Small and medium sized businesses are catered for at a number of locations, including the Novus Business Centre on Judson Road.

Business Durham also established Peterlee Business Park Group four years ago and within the last two years appointed a private sector led steering group. A number of companies have benefitted from the work undertaken by the group, ranging from securing new contracts, to support filling vacant positions etc.

Business Durham provides a financial contribution to the group and time in-kind from their Business Development Area Manager, who covers the East of the County. The balance of the costs of the group is met by sponsorship from other companies within the locality who see the benefit that the group brings to the area.

## Education

Peterlee is well served in terms of education provision with six primary schools, three secondary schools, two sixth form facilities and East Durham College.

East Durham College was the outcome of a merger of Durham College of Agriculture and Horticulture / Houghall College and East Durham Community College. A new building costing £36 million was opened in September 2008.

St Bede's Catholic School/Byron Sixth Form, Shotton Hall Primary and Academy and Dene Community School have all been rebuilt under the Building Schools for the Future programme and offer high quality accommodation. This represents a very significant investment in education provision in Peterlee totaling over £72 million.

Adult Learning is provided by East Durham College and other organisations. There is a range of training providers locally including onsite training facilities run by East Durham College on the South West Industrial Estate and Profound Group, KF Training and Springboard. Some providers offer links to local companies and apprenticeship opportunities.

Educational attainment is improving in the Peterlee area. Between the 2001 and 2011 censuses, the proportion of the population with 'degree-level qualifications and higher' has increased from 5%-6% of the population to around 11%.

## Town Centre

Peterlee is recognised as a district centre and serves a catchment that extends south towards Hartlepool, west towards Durham City and includes substantial rural areas and Houghton to the north.

Peterlee's retail catchment is both discrete and well contained. This is reflected in high expenditure retention levels with existing convenience provision within the town centre retaining 71.5% (£59.3 million) of the overall £82.9 million available in its catchment area. The ASDA store dominates the catchment securing 78.9% (£44 million) in 2009 of the overall main food spend. The ASDA store continues to trade significantly above the company's own benchmark.



The town centre has many strengths:

- ASDA serves as an anchor foodstore which is complemented Aldi and Lidl;
- There is a good mix of national multiple comparison retailers (Argos, Wilkinsons), independent retailers and high street services;
- A pedestrianised shopping centre;
- The Castledene shopping centre (covered mall facility) which provides 28,430 sq m of retail and office space;
- A regular town centre market;
- Good public transport accessibility; and
- Free car parking;

## Leisure and Tourism

Peterlee Leisure Centre is a valuable local provision and is located just to the south of the town centre. This provides good swimming and indoor fitness facilities and a new gym. The Council's Culture and Sport service offers support to local clubs, societies and communities to enhance engagement and participation in such amenities. An example of this is the partnership approach to childhood obesity through physical activity and education. In addition the town council runs leisure and sports facilities for residents at its three sites at Lowhills Road, Eden Lane and Helford Road and provides bowls, cricket, tennis, football, cricket and rugby and has a dedicated full time Sports Development Officer.

The East Durham Coast is a growing area for tourism visiting the Durham Heritage Coast.

## Housing

The new town was planned around existing plantations and denes linking to Castle Eden Dene and residential access roads have been created incorporating wide verges. This combination has given the town a distinctive and attractive layout offering opportunities as the ownership pattern has developed beyond its original social housing roots. There are now extensive private estates and good pedestrian access to leisure and town centre facilities. This is backed up by bus transport around the town linking to the town centre bus station.



## Transport

The town is well-connected to the regional trunk road network, being adjacent to the A19 linking the town to Tyneside and Wearside to the north and to Teesside in the south.

Peterlee is served by both regional and local bus companies with regular services to most of the North East's major centres, including Newcastle, Sunderland, Durham, Hartlepool, Stockton, and Middlesbrough. Local bus services provide the residential areas of the town with links to the town centre and interconnectivity. Peterlee bus station is located within the town centre, immediately to the south of the retail heart.



Peterlee was served by Horden Railway Station on the Durham Coast Line until the station closed in 1964. The line, which is owned by Network Rail, provides regular services between Middlesbrough and Newcastle, via Hartlepool, Sunderland and the coast. At present, Seaham is the only County Durham station on this line. Grand Central also operates a service, using this line, between Sunderland and London King's Cross.

## What has been delivered?

Peterlee has had significant investment over the last few years supported by both the private and public sector. These include:

### Housing

- Over the last two financial years (2014/15 to 2015/16) 55 dwellings have been provided in Peterlee.
- In 2014/15 and 2015/16 3.45hectares of land was acquired at the North East Industrial Estate at a cost of £767,158 to create a development plot of 390 affordable homes. A further £828,842 is committed between 2016/17 and 2018/19.

### Business

Development in and around the town in recent years suggests a degree of confidence in the town for investors. Some notable recent developments include:

- Bristol Laboratories has spent £25 million buying, converting and installing new equipment to set up its major manufacturing base for generics drugs. It will employ 347 staff of which 137 will be graduates and post graduates.
- Car Component manufacturer TRW has grown its plant since 2011 with £33 million of investment and a job lift of 485 making electronic safety components for the automotive industry. It expects its workforce to reach 1,000 by the end of 2018.
- Durham County Council Community Economic Development have accessed support to improve the town's infrastructure, two businesses have taken up the offer accessing £33,095 of Council investment. Both businesses have expanded and created 12 full time equivalent new jobs for the area. Community Economic Development are currently working with two further businesses helping one new business into trading and expanding another, creating a further four full time equivalent new jobs for the area. Since 2014 Durham County Council's Employability Team has supported 69 apprentices into employment in Peterlee.

### Transport and Infrastructure

Over the last two years a number of projects have been delivered to improve infrastructure within the town:

- In 2014/15 improvements were made through the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) including a footpath link to Howletch Lane Primary School, a crossing point at Our Lady of the Rosary Primary School, and parents' waiting shelters at Shotton Primary School (Shotton Colliery) and at Cotsford Infant School (Horden).



- In 2014/15 and 2015/16 feasibility work for the new Horden (Peterlee) Rail Station at a cost of £233,047.
- In 2014/15 Peterlee bus station was acquired at a cost of £524,542 and in 2015/16 improvements were made to the bus station and information displays.
- In 2015/16 as part of the delivery of the Peterlee Streetscape project signage was designed for public realm works at a cost of £9,384.
- In 2015/16 targeted building improvements created 10 jobs, helped start one new business and supported another at a cost of £13,095. A further £225,866 is committed between 2016/17 and 2017/18.
- In 2015/16 a contribution was made to the cost of a new vehicle for East Durham Community Transport.

Specialist health facilities in Peterlee include:

- Drug and Alcohol Treatment services base;
- Contraception and Sexual Health Services;
- Healthy Living Pharmacies; and
- Healthworks.

## **East Durham Area Action Partnership**

The East Durham Area Action Partnership has been involved in a number of projects with the local community which include:

- Peterlee Bike and Skate Park – Working with local councilors and Peterlee Town Council the park cost £137,000 and also provided employment and training of young people.
- Peterlee Decent Homes Environmental Project – In 2009, East Durham Homes began the implementation of their decent homes strategy for Peterlee and the surrounding settlements. Working in partnership with East Durham Homes, Kier and East Durham College, this project provided complementary environmental improvements at a cost of £368,000. The scheme also led to the employment of five trainees who gained level 2 NVQs at East Durham.
- Supporting and upgrading community rooms at Peterlee Methodist Church.
- Yoden Road Improvements - Redeveloping a supporting wall and footways at Yoden Road shopping area. This involved vast community consultation and was gratefully received.

- Number of events average 10 a year including domestic violent, dementia projects, Peterlee Youth Club, LAB meetings and Seascope School for community development.

## What will be delivered?

### Housing

A further 1,045 dwellings already have planning permission but are not yet built out. These sites include:

- The Low Hills Site (900 dwellings);
- The former Thorpe Maternity Hospital (50 dwellings); and
- The former Registry Office and Peterlee Area Education Office on York Road (27 dwellings).

### Retail and Town Centre

Peterlee has seen approvals for two large foodstore schemes, at the former Easington College site and the partial redevelopment of the Castle Dene Shopping Centre. A further approval will see the development of a further Aldi Store during 2017 serving Peterlee and Horden.

### Tourism, Leisure & Recreation

The library will be located within the leisure centre, which will be subject to additional improvements over the next 12 months.

### Transport

A new station, to be known as Horden Peterlee and located on the Durham Coast Line, will provide improved public transport access to residents and businesses in the Peterlee area. The proposed site of the station, known locally as South East View, will be served by the existing Middlesbrough to Newcastle hourly service, which also serves Hartlepool, Sunderland and smaller towns such as Seaham.

The new station will fill a 21 km gap in rail service provision between Hartlepool and Seaham, and improve access for thousands of residents. It will help to raise the profile of the area as a business, leisure and residential location, whilst also enabling greater access to jobs and services in the North East.

Network Rail's indicative timetable for opening the station is 2019/20 and Durham County Council is working in partnership to mitigate risks and facilitate its delivery. Once it is operational the station is expected to facilitate 71,000 trips per annum and reduce road vehicle trips by 850,000 km per annum in the North East.

Development and construction costs will largely be covered by the Council's capital budget. Work is programmed between 2017/18 and 2018/19 at a cost of £2,466,117.

At a cost of £225,000 works to improve public realm areas around Peterlee bus station are due to start in January 2017 and further schemes are being considered.

## East Durham Area Action Partnership

The AAP priorities for 2016/2017 were agreed as:

- Maintaining the social fabric of our communities (including job creation)
- Children and young people (including education and training)
- Health, mental health and wellbeing

Proposed AAP projects in the Peterlee area include:

- Further highways/parking works with Durham County Council including Acre Rigg Road parking bays to improve road congestion/parking/verge condition (£7.7k).
- Herton Close, bollards to prevent quad bikes adjacent to properties (£1.6k).
- Warwick Place, bollards to prevent quad bikes adjacent to properties (£1k).
- Kent Walk, bollards to prevent quad bikes adjacent to properties (£2.5k).
- Newark Close, parking bays to improve road congestion/parking £14k) (this is a very rough price as it is still being designed).
- Parking at Burt Close.
- Community Development officer to work in Eden Hill area of Peterlee.
- Apprentices linked to Rugby Club and Groundwork.
- Shower block at Horden and Peterlee Rugby Club to facilitate and encourage females of all ages into physical activity.

Each County Councillor in the Peterlee area (as in other areas) also has a budget for a range of small-scale activities.