

Examination of Cotherstone Neighbourhood Plan – Durham County Council response to Examiner's Questions

5) To improve the clarity of the policy to manage development in the Local Green Space (LGS), I am proposing to recommend that the second sentence of Policy CNP4 should be revised to read: **“Inappropriate development that would be harmful to the openness of the Local Green Spaces will only be supported in very special circumstances.”** Would the Qualifying Body (QB) confirm acceptance of this wording.

The Local Planning Authority (LPA) would prefer that the Policy wording remain as is. We consider it aligns with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Para 103) and it will enable a consistent policy approach across the County in relation to previously adopted Neighbourhood Plans.

6) Would the Qualifying Body (QB) comment on the suggestion by Natural England about including reference in the Design Code to demonstrating how a minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain is to be achieved. Has the LPA adopted a policy or guidance on the subject?

No specific additional guidance has been issued on the subject. The LPA consider that County Durham Plan (CDP) policy adequately addresses this and there is a mechanism within this process to achieve this on a site by site basis. It is felt that this would be too detailed a requirement to request in a Neighbourhood Plan.

7) Would the QB and LPA comment on the representation from WS Hodgson & Co that Policy CNP7 and the Design Code is unnecessarily restrictive and the proposed revision to the last line of the policy to introduce greater flexibility.

The LPA consider that the policy is not unnecessarily restrictive and should remain as is to preserve the integrity of this policy within the Neighbourhood Plan.

8) Would you also supply me with the full Screening Assessment on the pre-submission plan for the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) as requested in the Procedural Note.

LPA have provided document