



## Sedgefield Town Council

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**29<sup>th</sup> March 2018**

**Mr Stuart Carter,  
Senior Policy Officer,  
Spatial Policy Team,  
Regeneration and Local Services (ReaL)  
Durham County Council,  
Room 4/24,  
County Hall,  
Durham DH1 5UQ**

Dear Stuart,

### **The Sedgefield Plan:**

I am writing to you with an update on Sedgefield Town Council's actions in relation to The Sedgefield Plan (the Neighbourhood Plan for Sedgefield) and to accept Durham County Council's offer of practical support to complete the project. As you know, the community of Sedgefield has invested considerable time and effort to develop a Plan that allows for positive development in the Town, while preserving the qualities that make it such a great place to live for residents of all ages.

We are now in a position to proceed with a draft of The Sedgefield Plan that the Town Council adopted in February 2017 and that residents decisively endorsed in January 2018. It is imperative that we take this draft forward as quickly and smoothly as possible, and that the County Council makes good on the offers that it has made to help us achieve that. In the absence of any other up to date strategic planning document for Sedgefield, our Neighbourhood Plan will be essential, permitting considered and appropriate development, while providing protection from the over development that would destroy the cohesiveness of the community, and the qualities that make the Town attractive and appealing to so many.

At an Extraordinary Meeting of Sedgefield Town Council on 19<sup>th</sup> March, the Town Council resolved:

- i) To reverse the following sentence in part i) of the resolution that was made on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2017: "There would be no withdrawal of The Sedgefield Plan."
- ii) To withdraw the examined draft of The Sedgefield Plan, that was submitted for independent examination in June 2016.
- iii) To undertake Regulation 14 pre-submission consultation for the draft of The Sedgefield Plan that was adopted by Sedgefield Town Council on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2017.
- iv) To accept Durham County Council's offer to perform a health-check on the adopted draft of The Sedgefield Plan, at the same time that Regulation 14 pre-submission consultation is taking place.

It is in the interests of all stakeholders involved that the ultimate purpose of passing the above resolution is realised without delay or hindrance. Since October 2016, Sedgefield has had to accept significant new housing developments:

- 300 homes on land South of Eden Drive
- 100 homes on the site of the old Community Hospital
- 74 homes on the site of the Turners business.

At almost 500 additional homes, that total is already higher than the figure which Durham County Council allocated to Sedgefield in the last draft of The County Durham Plan, a number which the Independent Inspector stated was too high in his interim report following the Examination In Public. Yet, as you know, there are also other prospective developments in the pipeline. In that context, completing The Sedgefield Plan is more important than ever. Sedgefield Town Council has made a resolution that will allow that to happen, but only with full and sustained support from Durham County Council.

We will now proceed with Regulation 14 Pre-submission Consultation on The Sedgefield Plan (as adopted by Sedgefield Town Council in February 2017). The Town Council is well aware that aspects of the evidence base will need to be updated, and that other refinements to the Plan may be required before it is taken to Referendum. However, because of the real fear in our community that yet more housing developments could be imposed on the Town in the near future, we believe that it is vital to avoid any delays as we progress through the final stages of the Neighbourhood Plan process. Therefore, we ask for the assistance of Durham County Council to undertake the health check and make any necessary amendments to our draft Plan concurrently with the other actions that we must complete to take The Sedgefield Plan to Community Referendum.

Sedgefield Town Council ask for your urgent attention on this matter and will welcome your continued support in taking the required steps to get The Sedgefield Plan made.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and lines, positioned above the name of the signatory.

Cllr Mel Carr,  
Chairman,  
Sedgefield Town Council.

cc: Mr Stuart Timmiss, Head of Planning and Assets, Durham County Council