

Startforth Parish

Neighbourhood Plan

2023 – 2040

**Pre-submission Draft For
Community Consultation
January 2024**



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Frontispiece: Startforth viewed from the walls of Barnard Castle

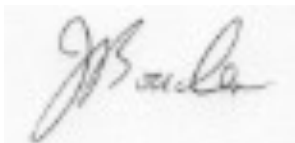
Foreword and Acknowledgements by the Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Group

Following objections to various planning applications in Startforth, Durham County Council (DCC) recommended that Startforth residents would benefit from having a Neighbourhood Plan in place. Using the Localism Act of 2011, the Plan would enable the local community to have a say in any future developments in Startforth. The idea of creating a Neighbourhood Plan was welcomed by Startforth Parish Council (SPC) who set up the Startforth Parish Neighbourhood Plan Group (SPNPG). The SPNPG being made up of two Parish Council members and residents of the Parish.

Durham County Council formally recognised that the SPNPG had been formed as a working group of the Parish Council and they provided an advisor from within their Planning Department to liaise with our Group. The SPNPG then started a consultation process with Parish residents. A number of events were held in 2018 to find out residents' views on planning matters. Following these events, it was established that residents wanted to retain the rural nature of the Parish, to keep the Community Centre/School and many expressed concerns regarding future large housing developments.

Preparation of the Plan was delayed by the Covid Pandemic and during that time, new initiatives were introduced which considerably altered the work required to bring it together. Due to the amount of new house building there was also considerable increase in the number of Parish residents during this time. An additional event (in April 2023) was held to get an understanding of the current opinions on planning issues of importance and concern to Parish residents.

Signed



Jim Boaden - Chair of Startforth Neighbourhood Plan Group

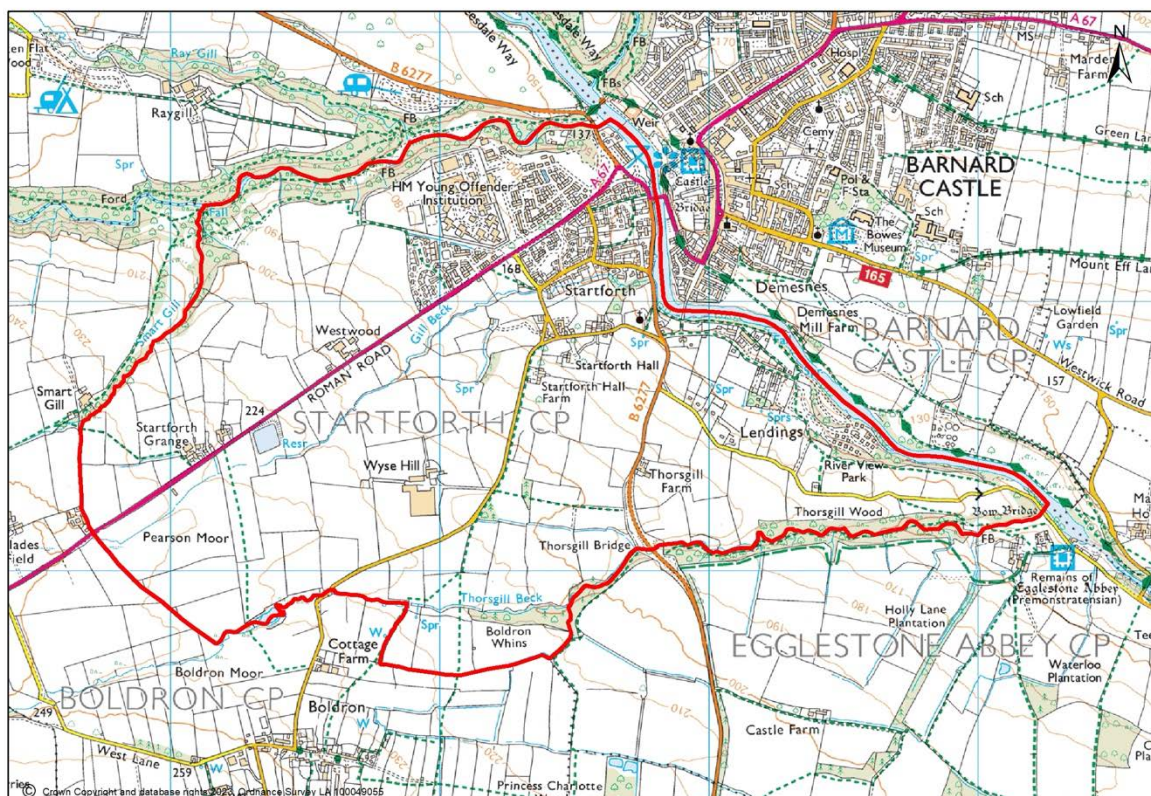
Acknowledgements.

The SPNPG are very grateful to the following:

- i. The Parish Council for their continuous support and success in obtaining government grant money to sustain the project;*
- ii. Startforth Morrith Memorial Community Centre for the use of their facilities;*
- iii. Graham Black, Stuart Carter & Beth Graham of Durham County Council for their guidance, advice and support to the group and;*
- iv. The initial contribution by Neighbourhood Planning Consultant Shaun Hanson of Planning Advice Plus.*

Chapter 1. Background to the Neighbourhood Plan

- 1.1 The Localism Act 2011 gives local communities the ability to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan that shapes the future of their local area. A Neighbourhood Plan is intended to set out local planning policies for its own area as a guide for developers and residents as to the future use and development of land. It can guide proposals in the local context so that they address the issues of concern to residents. A Neighbourhood Plan carries great weight in influencing the location of housing and other development within its area.
- 1.2 Since April 2009 most local government services, including planning, have been provided by Durham County Council, which is a unitary authority. DCC has adopted the County Durham Plan which is the statutory development plan setting out planning policies for Startforth and the rest of the County. Startforth Parish Council is the second tier of local government responsible for providing a range of the most local services.
- 1.3 As the body qualified to do so, Startforth Parish Council made an application on 6th October 2017 to designate the whole Parish as a Neighbourhood Plan Area. The application was granted by Durham County Council on 10th October 2017. The following map shows the boundary of the Neighbourhood Plan area which corresponds to the Parish of Startforth.



Plan 1: The area covered by the Neighbourhood Plan which is also the Boundary of the Parish of Startforth

- 1.4 This Neighbourhood Plan contains policies for the direction of future development and the conservation of the appearance and character of Startforth Parish.

The Neighbourhood Plan Process

- 1.5 A Startforth Parish Neighbourhood Plan Group (SPNPG) was formed by the Parish Council to carry out the work of preparing the Neighbourhood Plan. The group has been made up of Parish Councillors, a representative for the Morrith Memorial Community Centre and residents were invited to join. The Plan has been drawn together with the support of Durham County Council Planning Officers who have attended meetings, provided information, advice and feedback and have offered practical mapping support.

Working Group Members

Jim Boaden	Chair
Margaret Rhodes	Startforth Morrith Memorial Community Centre & Action Recorder
Pat Estall	Startforth Parish Council
Chris Carr	Startforth Parish Council
Andrew Bishop	Startforth Resident Member
Gordon Brooks	Startforth Resident Member
Jean Hunter	Startforth Resident Member
Susan Goat	Startforth Resident Member

- 1.6 After the SPNPG was formally recognised by Durham County Council an application was successfully made for grant aid from the Government's Locality fund. This enabled the Group to employ a planning consultant, hold the consultation events, provide a venue for their meetings and the printing and publicity of the draft document.
- 1.7 The Group carried out comprehensive community consultation exercises in 2017 and 2018 to obtain evidence of the local social, economic and environmental issues affecting Startforth. The first involved the distribution of a questionnaire to all households within the Parish with an invitation to attend a day-long event at the Startforth Morrith Memorial Community Centre (SMMCC). This was followed up by a Neighbourhood Plan Communication Event at the Centre in May 2023.
- 1.8 The details of the community consultations are set out in the 'Consultation Statement' which has also been submitted to Durham County Council.
- 1.9 The responses from the consultation exercises have provided a broad set of issues for consideration. The key issues and priorities that relate to planning have been brought together in the Vision and Objectives for the Neighbourhood Plan. The Vision and Objectives have provided the starting point for developing the Plan's policies set out in each topic chapter.
- 1.10 The Group has also undertaken the necessary background work to gather evidence in order to assess the options to tackle the issues raised. The SPNPG has formed a profile of Startforth Parish from the available parish, county, and national census data and by detailed assessment of the important features within the village which the Plan seeks to protect, such as important Local Green Spaces and Valued Views.

- 1.11 Once the Plan has been through its various stages of adoption, including acceptance by a referendum of Startforth residents, it will become part of the statutory planning framework. It will have the same statutory status as a Development Plan prepared by the County Council. The policies within the Plan will be used by Durham County Council in the determination of all planning applications made within the Parish. Its policies would therefore carry real weight in assessing planning applications and help future decisions to better reflect the aspirations of local people.
- 1.12 The SPNPG developed a vision for Startforth Parish which retains its identity as being an attractive village, surrounded by countryside of significant landscape value, close to the amenities of the historic market town of Barnard Castle. This requires that any future development should be of an appropriate scale and be to satisfy demonstrably justifiable local need.
- 1.13 The Plan sets out the Vision, objectives and policies to ensure that the Parish of Startforth is a better place to live, retains its rural feel and character and develops its community assets over the period 2023 -2040. This Neighbourhood Plan for Startforth Parish will help to maintain and develop the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of its residents. The plan will allow sustainable development that meets the needs of the current generation, without compromising those of future generations.
- 1.14 It will be seen that most of the policies relate to the Startforth village itself and its immediate surroundings. This is because that is where there is most pressure for development and changes in the use of land.
- 1.15 The Plan is made up of this written document, which is divided into chapters dealing with each topic that leads to a policy. The policies are set out in each chapter in bold type within a shaded box and are identifiable by a specific policy number. A background and justification for each policy is provided. The policies are supported by their own maps. Other maps and photographs are included for information, reference and illustration.
- 1.16 For anyone unfamiliar with planning terms used in this Plan, the Government has provided a glossary within its National Planning Policy Framework <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework/annex-2-glossary>.
- 1.17 The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared to cover the period, commencing in 2023 and ending in 2040. After adoption it will be subject to regular monitoring and review by Startforth Parish Council to ensure that its policies continue to be relevant and effective.
- 1.18 National planning policy is set out in the latest National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF). The County Durham Plan (CDP) adopted in October 2020 provides local planning policy. The Neighbourhood Plan does not include policies dealing with strategic issues as these are dealt with by the Durham County Council. The Plan sets out policies that are more locally relevant to Startforth and not covered by the County Durham Plan.

1.19 As the Neighbourhood Plan will operate alongside and support national and County level planning policies it will therefore have to pass a set of conformity tests before it can be brought into legal force. The Neighbourhood Plan must have regard to:

- i) national planning policy
- ii) be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the NPPF and CDP
- iii) contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and
- iv) be compatible with national and any continuing European Union obligations.

1.20 How this Plan meets these requirements will be set out in detail in the 'Basic Conditions Statement' to be submitted to Durham County Council.

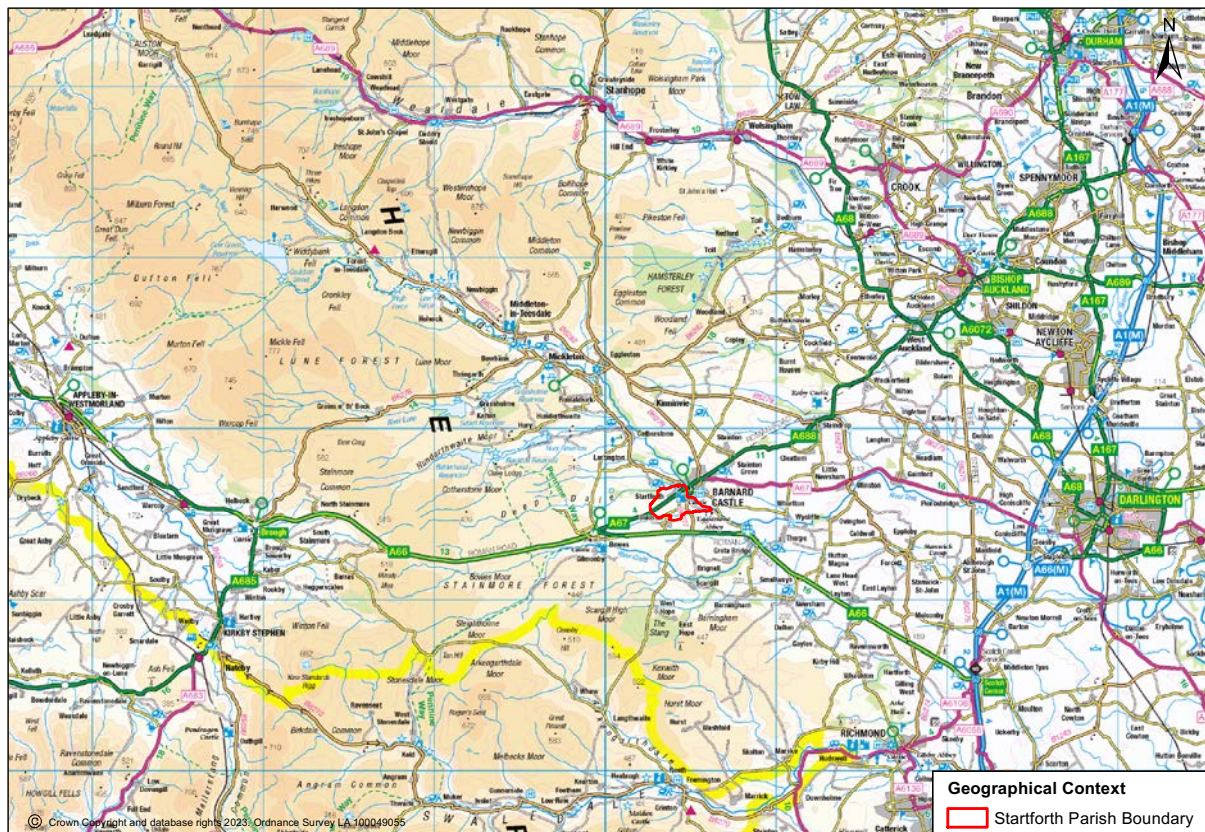
1.21 The Neighbourhood Plan focuses on those issues of most value to its residents. Startforth is essentially a rural area, so the Plan seeks to ensure that future development does not lead to a loss of its most valued environmental qualities and its remaining community facilities. It has sought to identify the most important elements that define its character and make Startforth an attractive place to live.

1.22 The policies define the Development Boundary of the built-up area of the village and identify the most important Local Green Spaces, Valued Views and community assets. At the same time the Plan supports appropriate development that would lead to an enhancement of community and economic well-being in Startforth Parish.

Chapter 2. Profile of the Startforth Neighbourhood Plan Area

Geographic Location

- 2.1 Startforth Parish is situated in Teesdale, a dale on the eastern side of the Pennine hills in the south-west corner of County Durham. The boundaries of the parish are mostly defined by rivers, the river Tees to the north-east, Deepdale Beck and Smart Gill to the northwest and Thorsgill to the southeast.
- 2.2 The historic market town of Barnard Castle faces Startforth from the opposite side of the river Tees. The village is bisected by a major transport route the A67. This connects the settlements in County Durham with those in Cumbria.
- 2.3 The Historian William Hutchinson wrote of this area “The environs of this place are remarkably beautiful and the Vale of Tees everywhere abounds with the noblest and most romantic landscapes.”



Plan 2: The geographical location of Startforth Parish

Description of the Parish

- 2.4 The Parish of Startforth covers an area of approximately 407 hectares (1.57 square miles) and is essentially rural in character. The residential focal point of the Parish is the village of Startforth. The rest of Startforth Parish has a relatively small population

with concentrations of houses at Startforth Grange and the farmsteads of Westwood, Wyse Hill Farm, Thorsgill Farm and Startforth Hall Farm.



Photo 1: Startforth approached from Boldron with Startforth Hall Farm mid centre right

The Parish in Context

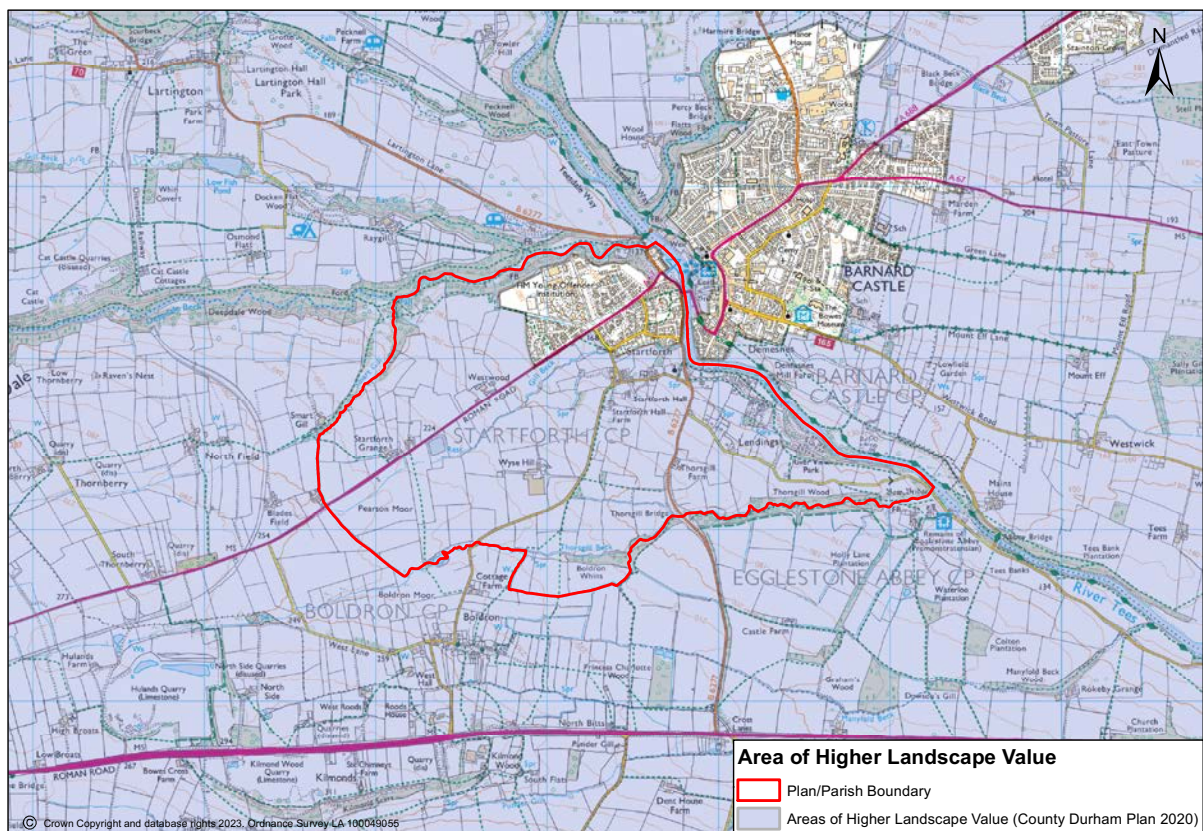
- 2.5 To get an understanding of the profile of the Parish of Startforth the Office of National Statistics (ONS) data for both census years of 2021 and 2011 has been consulted. The censuses have provided the relevant data relating to the population, age range, number of dwellings, the composition of households and the types of employment of residents in Startforth Parish. The relevant extracted data can be viewed in Appendix 1 Statistics.
- 2.6 The ONS census data for both 2021 and 2011 includes the inmates residing within His Majesty's Young Offenders Institute Deerbolt (HMYOI). The inmate's inclusion obscures what otherwise would be considered the 'normal' resident population statistics. Adjustments, based on local knowledge, have been made where possible by excluding the inmates of HMYOI from the data.
- 2.7 The impact of new house building within the Parish since the last census in 2021 has been considered. With local information of known numbers of new houses an estimation has been able to be made for the population level as at the end of 2023. A comparison of the 2011 and 2021 census data and its extrapolation to 2023, shows that the Parish has had a significant increase in its population. Excluding the occupants of HMYOI Deerbolt in 2011 there were 890 residents, this rose to 1020 in 2021 and 1,420 by the end of 2023. This represents a 59.6% increase in the population of Startforth between 2011 and 2023 with most occurring within the last couple of years.

- 2.8 Although the age groupings have changed between the 2011 and 2021 censuses the data shows that Startforth has a slightly smaller percentage of the population aged between 0 and 19 than County Durham and England as a whole. The 2021 census shows that Startforth has a significantly lower percentage of the population aged between 20 and 64 (51.7%) than County Durham (57.0%) and England (58.4%). This is countered by Startforth having a proportionally higher population aged over 65 (28.8%) than County Durham (21.4%) and England (18.4%). The 65 and over percentage having increased between 2011 (22.6%) and 2021 (28.8%).
- 2.9 Startforth has a far greater percentage of detached (40.9) and semi-detached (44.4) houses and a lower proportion of terraced houses (12.5) than County Durham (19.0/36.5/38.5) and England as a whole (22.3/30.8/24.6). Whilst the proportion of flats and apartments (2.2%) is similar to that of County Durham (1.3%) both figures are far fewer than that for the rest of England (22.2%). There are also more 2 person households in Startforth (46.2%) than County Durham (36%) and England (34%).
- 2.10 The employment profile of Startforth residents is generally comparable with that of County Durham and England. A difference is that Startforth has a greater proportion of residents who are managers, directors and senior officials (13.3%) than County Durham (10.1%) and England (11%). It has a greater proportion of residents in professional occupations (19.2%) than County Durham (14.5%) but a significantly lower proportion than England as a whole (27.1%).
- 2.11 There are far fewer households (8.6%) who do not have a car, which is well below that of County Durham (24.1%) and England as a whole (23.5%). A key influencing factor is that Startforth is a rural Parish with limited access to services and employment other than by private car.
- 2.12 Generally Startforth has a greater percentage of households who consider themselves to be in good/very good health (84.4%) compared to County Durham (76.9%) and England (82.2%).

Landscape Context

- 2.13 The Parish boundaries include agricultural land which is mainly pasture for the grazing of sheep and cattle. The riverine woodlands along the parish boundaries are supplemented by some incidental plantations and field trees. Field boundaries are a mixture of walls and post and wire fences with hedgerow trees.
- 2.14 The open grass areas, wooded gills, numerous gardens and the variety of housing all make for a very pleasant environment – thus Startforth enjoys a rural hinterland with the advantages of proximity to the urban functions and services of Barnard Castle which makes it a very desirable place to live. Most roads and a large proportion of the village houses have views of the surrounding countryside or across the river Tees to the historic market town of Barnard Castle with its castle dominating riverside views.

- 2.15 The following plan shows that all around the built-up area of Startforth village and HMYOI (and Barnard Castle) the land is designated by Durham County Council as an Area of Higher Landscape Value.

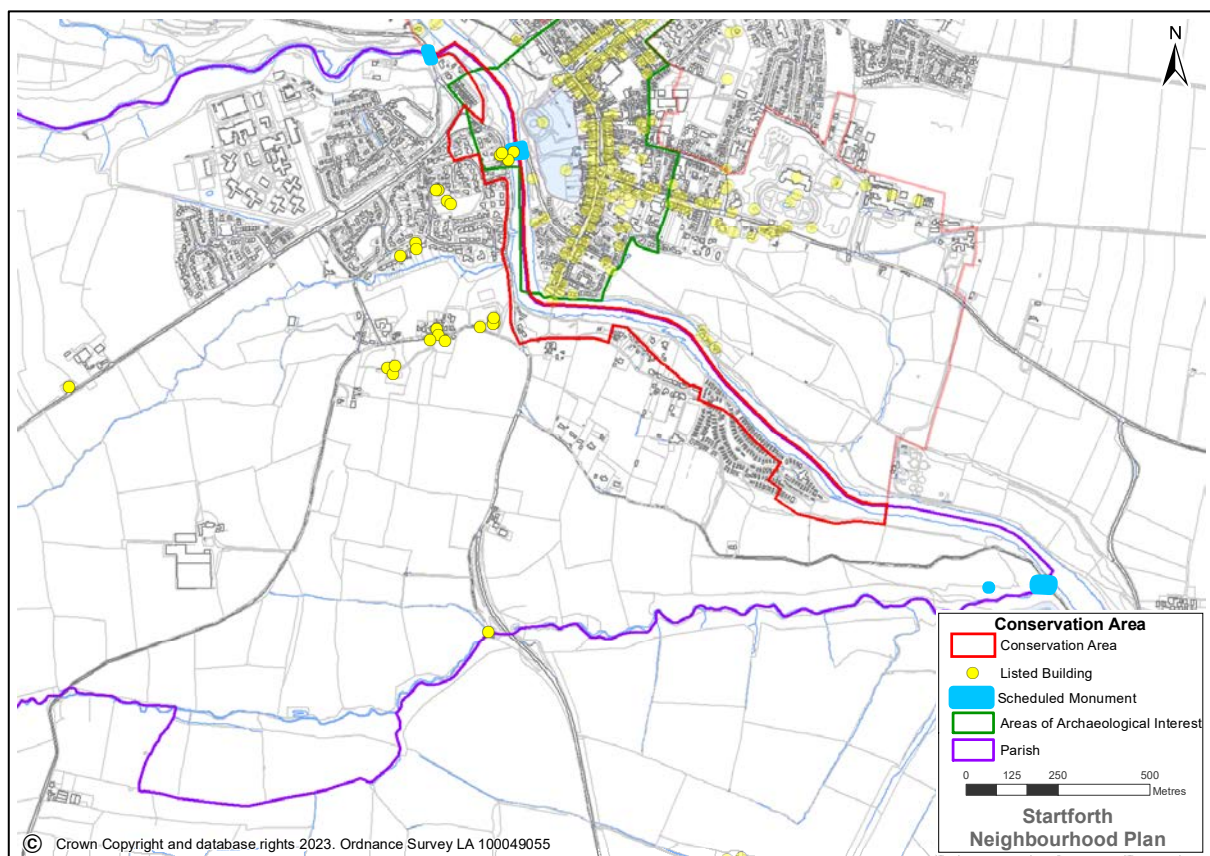


Plan 3: The AGLV surrounding the built-up area of Startforth Village

Historic Context

- 2.16 The name ‘Startforth’ derives from ‘Street Ford’ which refers to the crossing of the Tees at this point by a Roman road. The road is now the A67 which bisects the parish and its village. The A67 links Roman forts located at Bowes and Binchester and Roman roads that are now the A66 and A1. The A66 is the main route over this part of the Pennines and connects Cumbria with the north-east. It is also a major road for longer distance travellers and freight between Scotland and the south and east of England and coastal ports to continental Europe.
- 2.17 The river Tees used to be the administrative boundary between County Durham and the North Riding of Yorkshire. From 1894 to 1974 the middle tier of local administration between County and Parish levels was Startforth Rural District Council. This council covered the parishes in the north-westerly corner of Yorkshire up to the Cumbrian (then Westmorland) boundary. Local government re-organisation in 1974 saw Startforth Parish put in Teesdale District Council, a second-tier authority within an expanded County Durham. Following further re-organisation in 2009 Startforth Parish is under the unitary authority of County Durham.

- 2.18 The main settlement within the parish is Startforth village. The village differs from many other villages in Teesdale in that it has not grown up around one or more village greens. The oldest parts of the village being the three distinct historic growth centres of High Startforth, Low Startforth and Bridge End.
- 2.19 The older parts of the village are characterised by the predominance of stone buildings and walls. Heritage England has listed 26 buildings of architectural or historic interest within the parish. Only the part of the Barnard Castle Bridge over the Tees that is within the parish is Grade I. The twenty-five others being Grade II buildings and listed features (e.g., walls, gates and headstones). (See Appendix 2 for the definitive list.)
- 2.20 There are four scheduled monuments within or partially within the parish boundaries, three of these are bridges. They are Deepdale Bridge, Thorsgill Beck Packhorse Bridge and Barnard Castle Bridge. The remaining designated monument is a carved rock that stands on the Startforth side of the Thorsgill Beck not far from Eggleston Abbey.
- 2.21 The following plan shows the location of designated heritage assets in the Parish of Startforth. It shows the distribution of Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monuments and that the boundary of both the Barnard Castle Conservation Area and Area of Archaeological Interest extend across the river Tees.



Plan 4: The Conservation Area, the location of listed buildings, scheduled monuments and the boundary of the Area of Archaeological Interest within Startforth Parish

Character Appraisal of Principle Areas of Startforth

- 2.22 Startforth village is made up of a number of distinct residential areas and housing estates that reflect their period of construction. Prior to the twentieth century the village had three historically separate growth centres, being High Startforth, Low Startforth and Bridge End. The twentieth century saw expansion of the village and infilling between the historical areas of Low Startforth and Bridge End. High Startforth has remained separate from the rest of the built-up village. It has retained its character as a scatter of individualistic houses between the parish church and the former village school.
- 2.23 The security fenced complex of HMYOI Deerbolt forms an adjunct to the north of the village. It has been built on a site that historically had been used since the 18th century for army encampments.
- 2.24 To assess the character of the village a standardised assessment method was utilized, based on the Character Assessment Toolkit devised by Oxford City Council.

The Three Historic Areas of Startforth village

High Startforth

- 2.25 High Startforth is an area characterised by its stone-built houses behind roadside walls. Intermittent development is loosely grouped and spread out along the road with a low number of detached, semi-detached houses and cottages. Many of the houses are listed buildings, the most notable being Startforth Hall, Holy Trinity Parish Church and the Manor House. The many listed walls, gates and gate piers have particular value in defining the character of the street scene.



Photos 2 & 3: Houses in High Startforth



Photo 4: The Manor House



Photo 5: Historic post box in the roadside wall of The Manor House

2.26 A notable non-listed building of local historic and architectural interest is the Startforth Morritt Memorial Community Centre. The Community Centre was formerly the primary school for the village. The school was built in 1877 and closed in 2016. The buildings continue to serve the population of Startforth as the only community venue in the village, other than the Parish Church. The Community Centre provides an all-purpose large hall, meeting rooms, a kitchen and facilities for meetings, social and physical activities. Part of the buildings, with their associated enclosed yards, are used by a day nursery for pre-school children.



Photos 6, 7, 8 & 9: Startforth Morritt Memorial Community Centre including Kirklands Day Nursery

- 2.27 The Holy Trinity Parish Church was built in 1863 in the gothic style on the site of a mediaeval church. Its graveyard contains a number of unusual and listed gravestones including Commonwealth war graves.



Photos 10 & 11: Holy Trinity Parish Church

- 2.28 On the slope below the church is Church Bank Field, a public seating and picnic area which offers views of the river and Barnard Castle.



Photos 12 & 13: Views of Church Bank Field

Low Startforth

- 2.29 The historical area of Low Startforth is centred on Low Startforth Road. At its eastern end the listed buildings of Low Startforth Hall extend into Boldron Lane with high roadside walling dominating the local streetscape.
- 2.30 The oldest housing in Low Startforth Road is a variety of detached and terraced stone-built houses facing directly onto the narrowest parts of the road. To this has been added twentieth century infill development in both semi-detached and bungalow form.



Photo 14: Low Startforth Hall



Photo 15: Listed buildings in Low Startforth Road



Photo 16: Low Startforth Road



Photo 17: The junction of Low Startforth Road with the A67 looking at new housing at Castle Croft

Bridge End & Deerbolt Bank

2.31 Bridge End is within the boundary of the designated Barnard Castle Conservation Area. One of the main features of this area is the Grade I listed County Bridge which provides road access to Barnard Castle and is a Scheduled Ancient Monument. The former White Swan public house built up against the south side of the western abutment of the County Bridge is a notable and prominent riverside listed building now converted into holiday lets.





Photos 19 & 20: Bridge End



Photo 21 & 22: Deerbolt Bank and as viewed from Barnard Castle

- 2.32 The stone-built houses of Deerbolt Bank are a continuation of those at Bridge End. The road is narrow and was the original route of the A67 and Roman street.
- 2.33 On the northern side of the bridge is the site of the former Ullathorne's Mill. The site of the mill is now a picnic area, which provides excellent views of Barnard Castle. The remains of the former flax mill with its former leat that drew water from the river Tees can still be found. Consequently, the site is included within the Area of Archaeology.

Twentieth Century Housing Areas

The Lendings

- 2.34 This is a low-density residential area to the south of the river Tees and is bordered across fields by large, detached stone-built houses along Abbey Lane. Other houses are sited in two main areas described locally as High and Low Lendings with an attractive mix of houses and bungalows surrounded by pastureland. A large caravan site, River View Leisure Park, is located to the south-east of the Lendings.

- 2.35 There is an attractive wooded riverside walk with views of the river and the cascading falls prevalent in this section of the Tees. Wonderful panoramic views of the Bowes Museum and Barnard Castle can be enjoyed from this area.



Photos 23 & 24. Tees viewed from the road leading to The Lendings and the riverside footpath below The Lendings



Photo 25. View of The Lendings and Abbey Lane from Barnard Castle

Corn Close & Stainmore Close

- 2.36 Corn Close is a mid-twentieth century development of semi-detached houses with wide landscaped verges. Stainmore Close is a late twentieth century development of houses and bungalows with a fenced children's play area for village children.



Photo 26. Children's Play Area at Corn Close and Stainmore Close

Boldron Lane

- 2.37 Except for the buildings of Low Startforth Hall behind their high stone wall Boldron Lane is lined by a mixture of mid-twentieth century terraced, semi-detached and detached houses and bungalows.



Photos 27: Terraced houses in Boldron Lane

Gill Lane

2.38 Is a steep road between Low Startforth and the riverside B6277. The housing is mainly in the form of bungalows and dormer bungalows.

Teesdale Road

2.39 Teesdale Road is also characterised by mid twentieth century dormer bungalows.



Photo 28: Teesdale Road and new housing in Gill Lane

Flaxfield & Deepdale Gardens

2.40 Flaxfield is a terraced row of mid to late twentieth century houses with gardens down to the river Tees. Deepdale Gardens is a row of properties extending the village up to the parish boundary and Deepdale Beck. Both are separated from other housing in Startforth by the site of Ullathorne Mill picnic area and the wooded slopes below the new housing of Castle Vale.



Photo 29: Flaxfield & Deepdale Gardens



Photo 30: The Tees river bank at Flaxfield

Ullathorne Rise

- 2.41 Ullathorne Rise is a medium density 20th Century housing estate comprising attractive, large, detached houses and bungalows rising steeply from the river Tees. Its road provides access to a new housing development in an adjoining field of 5 very large and visually dominating dwellings being constructed in non-traditional materials.



Photos 31 & 32: Ullathorne Rise

Startforth Park

- 2.42 Startforth Park was built in the 1940's and forms the most south-westerly part of Startforth. Startforth Park comprises an estate of 62 houses built after the war for military personnel. It adjoins open countryside to the south-west, the A67 and Deerbolt HMYOI. Most houses are semi-detached though some are terraced. By modern housing standards the gardens are large and the wide grass verges with trees provides an open aspect for nearly all the houses.



Photo 33: Startforth Park

Twenty First Century Housing Areas

Grangefields

- 2.43 The 65 houses of Grangefields were added on a triangle of open land between the HMYOI, Startforth Park and the A67. It was formerly owned by the Home Office that had provided training facilities for prison staff and space for recreation.



Photo 34: Grangefields

Castle Croft

- 2.44 Castle Croft is a new estate development of 166 houses nearing completion in 2023. It is sited between the main frontage of HMYOI, the A67 Bowes Road and the Lartington Road B6277. It is a mixture of 2, 3 and 4 bedroomed houses which are mainly detached or semi-detached.



Photo 35: Castle Croft housing estate

Chapter 3. Vision and Objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan

Introduction

- 3.1 Early extensive public consultation and engagement brought out the issues and aspirations that are of most concern to the local community. This revealed that one of the greatest concerns is the rate of extensive house building. This had led to the loss of local green spaces, valued views and potentially the extension of housing into open countryside designated an Area of Higher Landscape Value. Another major concern to locals is the loss of all community facilities within the village. Locals regretted the closure of the village school and expressed fears that the community use of the former school building and Parish Church would also be lost. (See separate Consultation Statement and related appendices.)
- 3.2 Further community engagement events have allowed a draft Vision and Objectives to be presented to the public for their analysis and discussion. The Vision and Objectives have been amended following advice from Durham County planning staff.
- 3.3 The key findings from the public consultation exercises as to the matters of most concern to the local community have been brought together and are expressed in the following overarching Vision for the Parish.

The Vision for Startforth in 2040

Our Vision is that in 2040 Startforth Parish:

- i) Has a thriving community that retains its own identity as an attractive rural village and wider Parish, that has conserved its existing natural and historic characteristics set in a beautiful and productive countryside in an Area of Higher Landscape Value;
- ii) Where all new housing and other development has been located within the Settlement Boundary and is of an appropriate small scale and only provided to satisfy demonstrable local needs;
- iii) Which has community facilities within the village to serve the needs of its own residents;
- iv) Remains a great place to live and sustains the wellbeing of its residents with access to the amenities of the town of Barnard Castle and elsewhere.

- 3.4 To achieve the Vision the following 5 objectives have been developed. The number of objectives and their wording has been refined through the process of public engagement. The number of objectives has been reduced to those that are of relevance to planning issues and are within the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan. Those related to the lack of public bus services, fast fibre broadband, the protection of listed buildings, other heritage assets and protected wildlife species have been

excluded. The following objectives lead to the policies set out in the respective topic chapters. Those policies seek to implement the Vision and Objectives for Startforth.

Startforth Parish Neighbourhood Plan Objectives

Objective 1: New development is located within the settlement boundary of Startforth village as defined by the Neighbourhood Plan in sustainable locations and of an appropriate scale and which supports the needs of the local community.

Objective 2: That the green, leafy rural landscape setting of Startforth village is protected and retained, including the preservation of the intervening fields separating High and Low Startforth and any new development outside of the defined settlement boundary has not been approved unless it has demonstrated a justifiable agricultural or other rural business need for its siting in the open countryside.

Objective 3: That the Local Green Spaces within Startforth village with their identified historic, natural, wildlife and amenity benefits have been retained for their important contribution to the character and wellbeing of the village and the diverse natural and semi-natural flora and fauna of the riverine and woodland habitats of the River Tees, Deepdale, Smartgill and Thorsgill have been protected and where appropriate all new development has enhanced their biodiversity.

Objective 4: That the identified Valued Views within, across and out of the village of Startforth have been preserved, including but not confined to those containing the setting of listed buildings, the conservation area, ancient monuments and area of archaeological importance, the river Tees and views of the surrounding rural countryside.

Objective 5: That the village of Startforth retains its existing community facilities of the Parish Church and Startforth Morritt Memorial Community Centre and that they remain available as local amenities for public use.

Principles for the Startforth Neighbourhood Plan

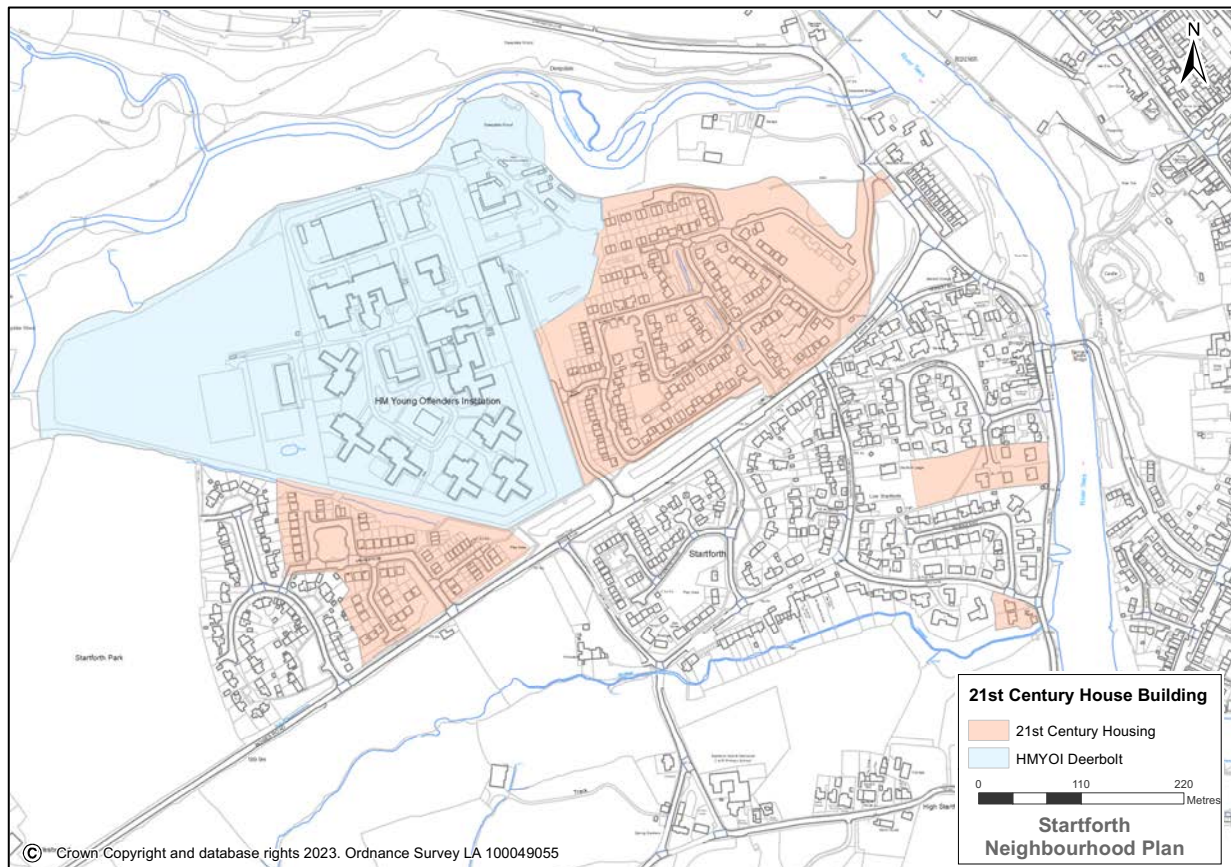
- 3.5 The achievement of the objectives will require the cooperation of relevant statutory and other agencies, including organisations in the commercial and not for profit sectors.
- 3.6 In delivering these objectives, the Neighbourhood Plan has identified some overarching core principles that all planning applications should demonstrate.

All development proposals must:

- a) Tackle the climate emergency and protect the natural environment and promote sustainable living;
- b) Maintain access to housing and community facilities for people of all ages;
- c) Ensure the living conditions of existing residents are protected and if possible enhanced;
- d) Respect heritage assets and their setting within the Parish;
- e) Avoid harm or degradation of Local Green Spaces and Valued Views and;
- f) Yield improved health and wellbeing for all residents and visitors.

Chapter 4. The Settlement Boundary of Startforth Village

- 4.1 The village of Startforth has grown significantly in recent years with the construction of large-scale residential developments of 64 houses at Grangefields and 162 at Castle Croft. A field with access from Ullathorne Rise is currently being built up with 5 large, detached houses. Two bungalows have been built with access onto Gill Lane. The areas of new housing development are shown on Plan 5 below. The plan illustrates the considerable expansion of the village in the 21st Century.



Plan 5: Twenty-first century house building in Startforth Village

The Need for a Defined Settlement Boundary

- 4.2 The County Durham Plan has not allocated any sites for housing within Startforth Parish. The need for new housing has already been fully met at County level for the Neighbourhood Plan period. Paragraph 1.19 of the County Durham Plan confirms that:

'as the Plan allocated sufficient sites to meet housing needs for the county it does not set out housing requirements for designated neighbourhood areas'.

- 4.3 Further speculative housing development has the potential to adversely affect the distinctive character and identity of Startforth as a village and its rurality. This would

undermine the following strategic housing policies of the adopted County Durham Plan: Policy 4 ‘Housing Allocations’ and Policy 6 ‘Development on Unallocated Sites’.

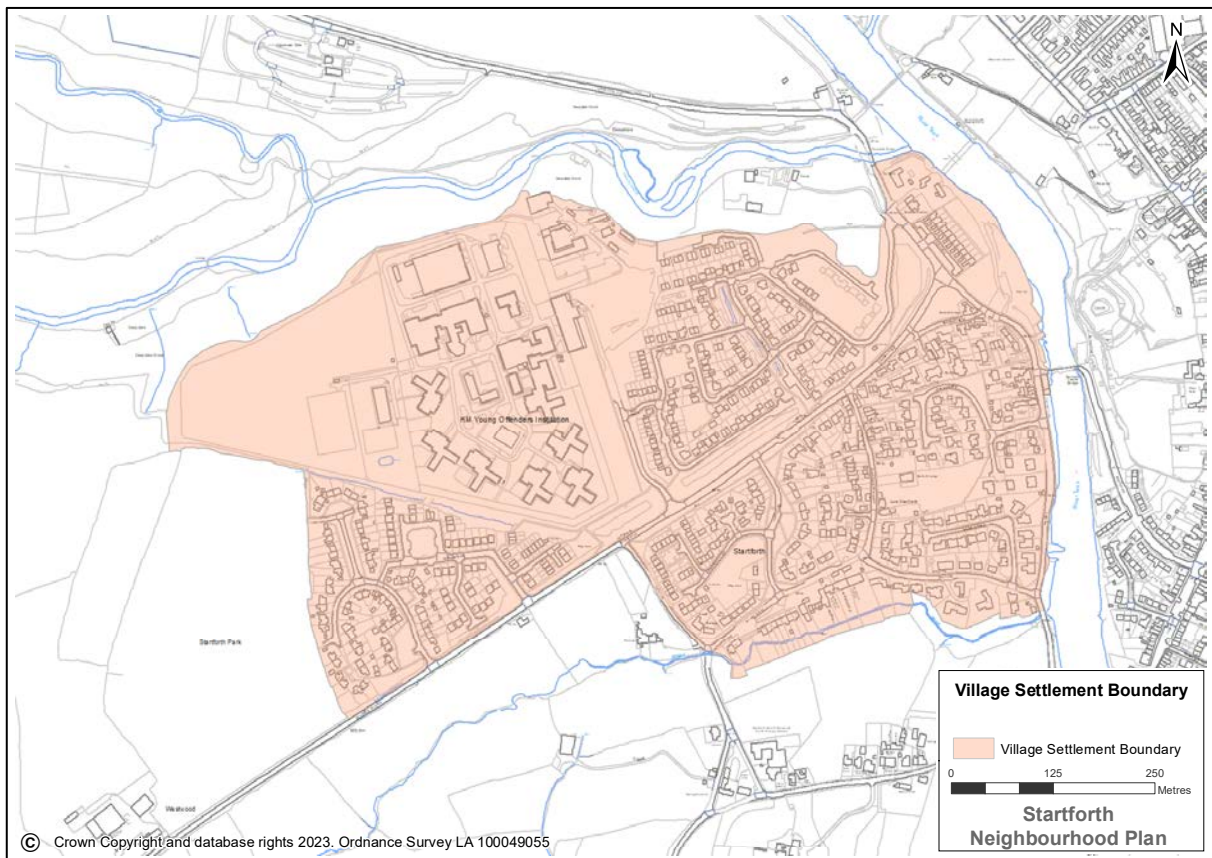
- 4.4 The purpose of setting a boundary is to define the built-up area of Startforth village. Within the defined Settlement Boundary are the existing areas of dense housing making up the main part of Startforth village. The defined areas are consistent with the County Durham Plan’s glossary definition of ‘built-up area’ which is:

‘The built up area is land contained within the main body of existing built development of a settlement or is within a settlement boundary defined in a Neighbourhood Plan. Areas falling outside this definition will be regarded as countryside.’

- 4.5 The settlement boundary is to provide certainty as to the extent of the built-up area and what is the open countryside beyond with its dispersed groups of houses and farmsteads. Defining a Settlement Boundary allows planning policies to be applied to protect the rural setting of the village so that future development is appropriate to its location. This is in accordance with the wishes of the community. In feedback during preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan, it was clear that the community supported the continuation of the settlement boundary drawn tightly around the current built extent of the village to safeguard the rural setting of the village.
- 4.6 The former Teesdale District Council Local Plan (1995 and saved policies 2002) provided Startforth and other villages with a settlement boundary. The current County Durham Plan (2020) does not retain a settlement boundary that defines the village limits for Startforth. The County Durham Plan does allow local communities to use the settlement boundary approach in their Neighbourhood Plans.
- 4.7 Unless a Neighbourhood Plan has defined a settlement boundary Policy 6 – ‘Development on Unallocated Sites’ of the County Durham Plan permits housing development outside of the built-up area in exceptional circumstances. Such housing development has to be well-related to a settlement and accord with all other relevant development plan policies. Development proposals outside a defined Settlement Boundary would be considered under the more restrictive Policy 10 – ‘Development in the Countryside’.
- 4.8 Generally, there is a presumption in favour of development within the settlement boundary, whereas the circumstances where development is accepted/approved in the countryside are deliberately more limited. The settlement boundary will help to direct the growth of Startforth village and enable development to take place in a coherent and sustainable manner. Future housing development would be confined to the settlement limits. This would maintain the structure and form of the existing settlement and protect the highly valued rural landscape setting of the village.

The Settlement Boundary

- 4.9 The boundary of the built-up area of Startforth village is shown on Plan 6 below. The settlement boundary follows the same line as defined in the former Teesdale District Council 'Teesdale Local Plan' where it is appropriate for it to do so. The boundary has been updated to include the extensive areas of new housing development that have been built since the making of that Local Plan. The defined Settlement boundary therefore includes all the main housing areas of the village and the latest additions where they have a built-up urban or suburban character.
- 4.10 The plan shows that High Startforth, The Lendings and farmstead building groups are outside of the Settlement Boundary. These are dispersed or low-density housing groups separated from the main village by agricultural fields and other significant areas of Local Green Space. The Settlement Boundary does not include any agricultural land for new housing development.
- 4.11 The Young Offenders Institution is included within the boundary as it is built-up land even though not considered to be part of village in the usual sense. Its inclusion means that development on the site would be considered under County Durham Plan Policy 6 and not Policy 10. This would provide the site with more options for appropriate sustainable development to support Parish residents. Any proposals for the site would be considered under the Startforth Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan, Durham County and the national planning policies pertaining at that time.



Plan 6: The Startforth Village Settlement Boundary

The Need for a Settlement Boundary

4.12 The consultation events have revealed that the overwhelming feeling of the public is that the sensitive rural setting of Startforth is highly valued and should be protected from unsympathetic and overwhelming housing development. Durham Council's 2019 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) does not rate any sites outside of the Startforth Village Settlement Boundary as being suitable for development.

4.13 One of the sites outside of the Settlement Boundary considered by Durham County Council was rated unsuitable due to the significant adverse residual visual and landscape impacts on landscape designation and coalescence issues between High and Low Startforth, together with the significant potential for an adverse impact on the setting of adjacent heritage assets. A planning application for 40 houses on the same site (Ref No: DM/16/02643/OUT) was refused and dismissed on appeal. The Planning Inspector concluding that the development would significantly erode and undermine the character of High and Low Startforth. This site is part of the designated Local Green Space No. LGS3.

4.14 Another site outside of the Startforth Village Settlement Boundary considered by the SHLAA was also deemed unsuitable as it would lead to a large excursion of housing development into the countryside. An application for 210 houses on the site (Ref No: DM/19/01060/OUT) was refused by Durham County Council. The five reasons for refusal including:

'that the development would represent a significant encroachment into the countryside, which would not be sensitively related to the existing settlement pattern and would result in a detrimental impact upon an Area of High Landscape Value landscape which would not respect the existing landscape setting'.

4.15 Another reason for refusal of DM/19/01060/OUT was that:

'insufficient submission and assessment to demonstrate or inform that the development would not result in unacceptably harmful impacts upon Deepdale Wood Local Wildlife Site or upon the biodiversity of the site including protected species.'

The other reasons for refusal related to insufficient information and assessment about archaeology, transport and highway safety impacts.

4.16 It is recognised that provisions exist in national planning policy for exceptions to the usual policy of development restraint in the countryside. These are set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) at paragraphs 78 and 79. In the County Durham Plan housing in the countryside is covered by Policy 11 – 'Rural Housing and Employment Exception Sites'.

4.17 The NPPF and County Durham Plan both include provision for limited residential development in rural areas, subject to meeting criteria as to its scale, nature and

location. Such housing also needs to meet an identified local need for affordable or specialist housing and to being restricted to those with close connections to the local community. The Neighbourhood Plan cannot and does not override the provisions set out in the NPPF and County Durham Plan.

- 4.18 This Neighbourhood Plan Settlement Boundary Policy is needed to ensure that the rural setting and wider countryside of Startforth is safeguarded from the encroachment of unacceptable development, and the attributes which characterise its rural landscape setting are not compromised.

The Settlement Boundary Policy

POLICY SPNDP1 - THE SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY OF STARTFORTH VILLAGE

The settlement boundary as shown on Plan 6 defines the extent of the built-up area of Startforth. Development proposals within the settlement boundary will be supported where they accord with the policies of the Development Plan (Neighbourhood Plan and the County Durham Plan).

Land outside the settlement boundary will be treated as open countryside and development proposals will not be supported unless they accord with the policies of the Development Plan and are specifically allowed for by national policy or other material considerations when determining planning applications.

Policy Guidance

- 4.19 Policy SPNDP1 confirms the role of the settlement boundary in defining the outer edge of the built-up area of Startforth. Land outside the boundary is classed as open countryside for planning purposes. This means that planning policies relating to development in rural areas will apply outside the boundary, whilst planning policies relating to development within built-up areas will apply inside the boundary.
- 4.20 The operation of the settlement boundary policy, in tandem with the other policies of the Neighbourhood Plan, will therefore serve to implement the Neighbourhood Plan's Objectives 1, 2 and 3.

Chapter 5. Local Green Spaces

The Value of Local Green Spaces

- 5.1 A valued aspect of the environment of Startforth is its varied open green spaces. These vary from formal children's play areas and amenity landscaped areas on housing estates to riverside woodlands and treed areas beside roads. As illustrated in the description of the Parish in Chapter 2 – 'Profile of the Startforth Neighbourhood Plan Area', Startforth is an attractive area with a significant number of valuable green spaces. The feedback from public consultation has been that the local community highly values these areas of Local Green Space.
- 5.2 It is widely acknowledged that green spaces contribute to the quality of the built environment, helping make places more attractive to live, work in and visit. They are a key measure of the quality of an area and play a large part in community wellbeing. This is particularly exemplified in that for most of its length through the village the A67 is separated from the nearest houses by a 'green corridor' of trees and grass verges. The grass and trees reduce the visual intrusion and to some extent the noise and pollution from passing vehicles.
- 5.3 Elsewhere in Startforth the planned open spaces and the undeveloped fields between High and Low Startforth separate historically and visually different areas of housing from each other. These open spaces form green links within the village and bring the surrounding countryside into the heart of the village.
- 5.4 The green spaces throughout the village are the essential elements that give Startforth its rural character. The preservation of the existing areas of green space in Startforth is seen by its residents as being hugely important for their wellbeing and the maintenance of the village's distinguishing character. They make a fundamental impact on the difference between the relatively dense development of the market town of Barnard Castle and the rural village of Startforth on the other side of the river Tees.
- 5.5 In the case of Startforth, the Local Green Spaces are an integral part of its village character. It is therefore very important that they are protected and not lost or harmed due to adverse developments.

Protection by planning Policies

- 5.6 At Government policy level, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) recognises that *'The designation of land as Local Green Space through local and neighbourhood plans allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them'* (paragraph 101). This importance can derive from attributes such as their visual amenity, recreational, heritage, tranquillity or wildlife value or a combination of any or all of these.



Photo 36: Local Green Spaces 1 – Stainmore Close Play Area

- 5.7 Durham County Council has produced an Open Space Needs Assessment 2018 which identifies the range of open spaces across the county. It shows the location and availability of open space and is used to calculate how much is needed within new housing developments. The County Durham Plan Policy 26 'Green Infrastructure' includes a section on 'Loss of Provision', which seeks to ensure that development proposals do not result in the loss of open space unless there are valid reasons to do so.



Photos 37 & 38: Local Green Spaces 2 – Ullathorne's Mill Picnic Area

The Designation of Local Green Spaces

- 5.8 An assessment of the green spaces in Startforth has been carried out in accordance with criteria set out in paragraph 102 of the NPPF. The criteria are:

"Paragraph 102

The Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is:

- a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;*

*b) demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.”*

5.9 The assessment of the green spaces throughout the village has resulted in a shortlist of 14 sites being identified as important and worthy of protection. These each met the criteria set out in the NPPF and are therefore justified in being designated as Local Green Spaces.

5.10 The assessments are summarized in the following table clearly showing the importance of these areas. The full assessments and location plans of the fourteen prioritised Local Green Spaces can be viewed in Appendix 3.

Local Green Spaces Summary Table

Key to LGS values and attributes in columns 1 to 8 below:

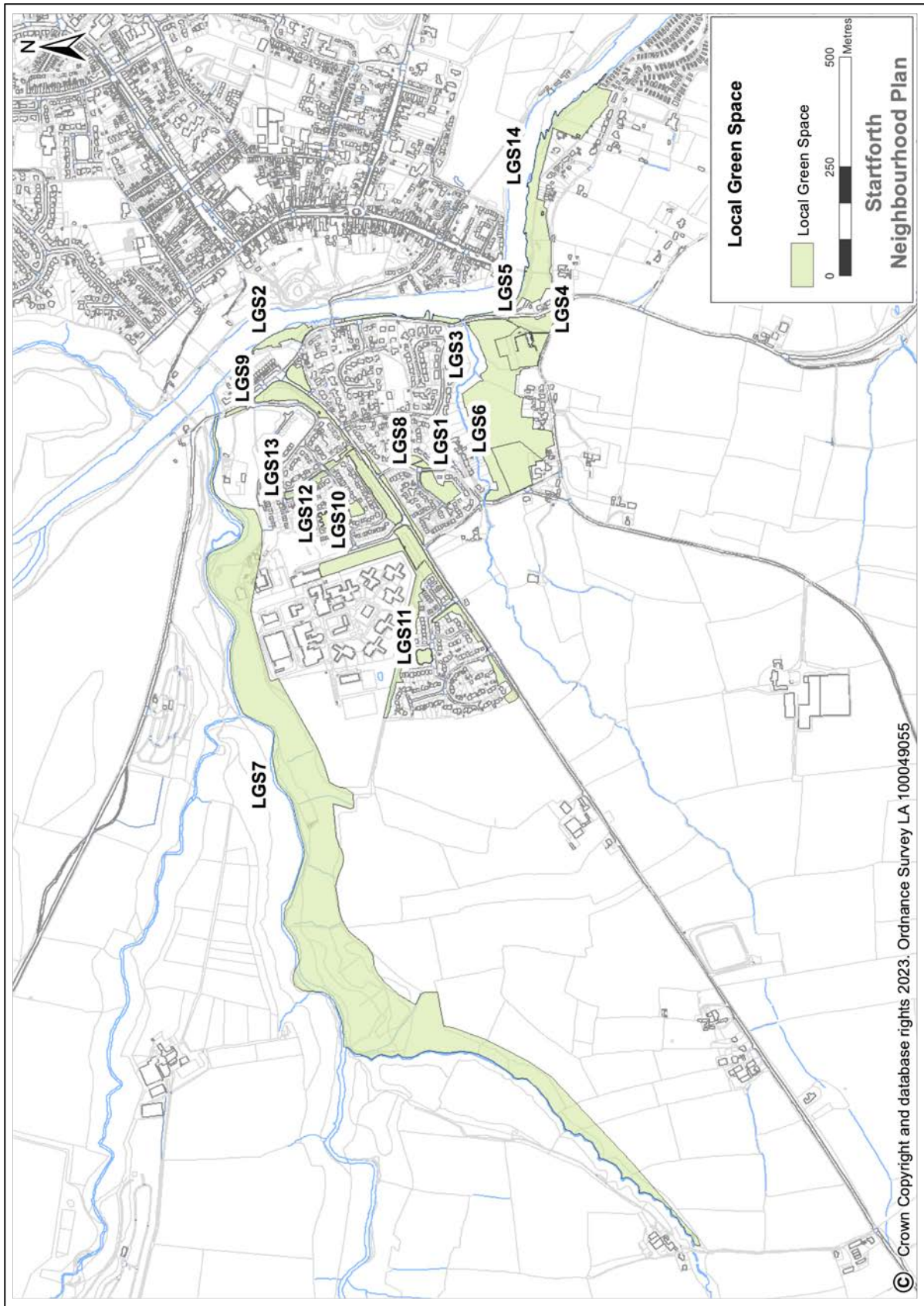
1) Beauty; 2) Historic value; 3) Recreational value; 4) Tranquillity; 5) Wildlife value; 6) Reasonably close to community; 7) Local in character; 8) Not extensive

Site Ref	Site Name	Size (ha)	Demonstrably Special to Community					Brief Summary of Justification	Other Attributes			Ownership
			1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	
LGS1	Stainmore Close Play Area	0.2	✓		✓	✓		Children's playground & recreational open space	✓	✓	✓	Durham County Council
LGS2	Ullathorne's Mill Picnic Area	0.3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Public park on historic site within Conservation Area, Area of Archaeological Interest & setting of designated heritage assets	✓	✓	✓	Durham County Council
LGS3	Land Separating High & Low Startforth	3.6	✓	✓		✓	✓	Pastoral fields separating High and Low Startforth & an Area of High Landscape Value	✓	✓	✓	Private
LGS4	Holy Trinity Church Graveyard & Cemetery	0.6	✓	✓		✓	✓	Parish Church its graveyard & an active cemetery	✓	✓	✓	Leeds Diocese & Durham County Council
LGS5	Church Bank Field	0.35	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Public parkland	✓	✓	✓	Startforth Parish Council
LGS6	Former School Playground & Field	0.7	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Playing field & playground	✓	✓	✓	Durham County Council

LGS7	Deepdale Woods	10.4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Ancient & semi-ancient woodlands designated Local Site for geology & wildlife with public access	✓	✓	✓	Private owners and Ministry of Justice
LGS8	Corn Close Open Space	0.1	✓		✓			Landscaped verge	✓	✓	✓	Durham County Council
LGS9	A67 Green Corridor	2.0	✓	✓	✓		✓	Roadside verges and trees	✓	✓	✓	Durham County Council, Ministry of Justice & private
LGS10	Grangefields Children's Play Area	1.3	✓		✓		✓	Public open space and play area	✓	✓	✓	Ministry of Justice and Grangefields Management Company
LGS11	Grangefields Recreation Field	0.1			✓				✓	✓	✓	Grangefields Management Company
LGS12	Castle Croft Greens North & South	0.22	✓		✓		✓	Public open space around protected tree	✓	✓	✓	Private
LGS13	Castle Croft Drainage Corridor	0.24	✓		✓		✓	Public open space along drainage features	✓	✓	✓	Private
LGS14	Startforth Bank of River Tees	2.5	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Riverbank with public access & views	✓	✓	✓	Various private owners



Photo 39: Local Green Spaces 3 – An agricultural field separating High and Low Startforth



Plan 7: The Local Green Spaces



Photos 40 & 41: Local Green Spaces 3 – Fields separating High Startforth from Low Startforth



Photos 42 & 43: Local Green Spaces 4 – Holy Trinity Parish Churchyard



Photos 44 & 45: Local Green Spaces 4 – Holy Trinity Parish Church graveyard extension



Photo 46 & 47: Local Green Spaces 5 – Church Bank Field



Photos 48 & 49: Local Green Spaces 6 – Former School Playing Field

5.11 The following quotations refer to Deepdale wood, which forms the northern boundary of Startforth Parish:

-Sir Walter Scott described Deepdale Wood as *"and last and least but loveliest still, Romantic Deepdale's slender rill"*.

-John Durkin's comment (owner of Deepdale) *"Deepdale is one of Teesdale's finest and most beautiful woodlands"*.



Photos 50 & 51: Local Green Spaces 7 – Sign at a right of way entrance into Deepdale Wood



Photos 52 & 53: Local Green Spaces 7 – Deepdale Wood footpath and Deepdale Beck



Photo 54: Local Green Spaces 8 – Corn Close Crescent



Photos 55 & 56: Local Green Spaces 9 - Woodland, trees and grass verges separating housing from the A67



Photo 57: Local Green Spaces 10 – Grangefield Children's Play Area



Photo 58: Local Green Spaces 11 – Grange Fields recreation Area



Photos 59 & 60: Local Green Spaces 12 – Castle Croft Greens



Photo 61: Local Green Spaces 13 – Castle Croft Drainage Corridor



Photos 62 & 63: Local Green Spaces 14 - Startforth Bank of River Tees



Photos 64: Local Green Spaces 14 - Startforth Bank of River Tees and Green Bridge

- 5.12 The following Policy SPNDP2 formally identifies Local Green Spaces (LGS's) and sets out how they will be safeguarded. The policy is to give them protection for the enjoyment of current and future generations. The policy meets objectives 2 and 3.

Policy SPNDP2 - Protection of Important Local Green Spaces

The sites listed below and shown on Map 7 are designated as Local Green Spaces (LGS's) and sets out how they will be safeguarded. The policy is to give them protection for the enjoyment of current and future generations for their recreational, historic, wildlife and visual amenity benefits in providing a natural, attractive rural setting to the village of Startforth and considered to be of importance to the wellbeing of residents. The impact of all new development within and adjoining the Local Green Spaces will be assessed to ensure that the extent and quality of the Local Green Spaces is protected and where possible enhanced.

LGS1	Stainmore Close Play Area
LGS2	Ullathorne's Mill Picnic Area
LGS3	Area of Separation Between High and Low Startforth
LGS4	Holy Trinity Church Graveyard and Cemetery Extension
LGS5	Church Bank Field
LGS6	Former School Playground and Field
LGS7	Deepdale Woods
LGS8	Corn Close Open Space
LGS9	Bowes Road, Lartington Road (A67) Green Corridor (Includes treed, grassed and landscaped areas adjacent to Castle Croft, Corn Close, Stainmore Close land south HMYOI, entrances to Grangefield and Startforth Park)
LGS10	Grangefields Children's Play Area
LGS11	Grangefields Fenced Recreation Field
LGS12	Castle Croft Greens North & South
LGS13	Castle Croft Drainage Corridor
LGS14	Startforth Bank of River Tees between The County Bridge and River View Leisure Park including Fields and woodlands either side of the 'Y' path leading to the Green Bridge.

Policy Guidance

5.13 The areas of Local Green Space have been identified by the community and through the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan as being of the highest value and in need of protection. The NPPF and Durham County Plan give Neighbourhood Plans the opportunity to designate local green spaces which are of particular importance to them. Those listed in the policy are of local significance and meet the requisite criteria for designation due to their natural beauty, recreational value, tranquillity, heritage and wildlife importance. They provide wildlife corridors and help retain the green rural character of the parish and support the wellbeing of residents.

Chapter 6 Valued Views

The Importance of Valued Views

6.1 The Parish of Startforth lies on the side of a Pennine dale where its sloping hillside location above the river Tees provides the fundamental basis for its landscape character. Longer distance views are of the Teesdale pastoral and wooded landscape rising from the river Tees to the higher elevation of the moorland tops. Shorter distance views are of the surrounding tree fringed pastoral fields, woodlands and across the river Tees towards the historic market town of Barnard Castle.

6.2 Durham County Council's 'County Durham Landscape Character' document places Startforth Parish within the "Gritstone Vale" of the "Dales Fringe". Outside of the village Startforth parish is within the "Broad Character Areas" of "Boldron & Lartington". It describes this area as:

"Boldron & Lartington. Gently sloping farmland falling from the fringes of the moorland plateau to the River Tees. A pastoral landscape of improved and semi-improved pastures bounded by old hedges and walls with scattered, locally abundant, hedgerow trees. The River Tees is lined by steep wooded bluffs; its tributaries, including the Deepdale Beck, lie in narrow steep-sided denes containing ancient ash and oak woodlands."

6.3 The views from its roads, gardens and green spaces are fundamental in making Startforth an attractive place to live. Wherever you are within Startforth you have attractive views, with the heritage assets of Barnard Castle and the surrounding dales countryside often form the backdrop. The Listed Buildings of Barnard Castle such as The Bowes Museum, St Mary's Parish Church and the Butter Market along with the historic rooftops of its streets enhance many of the local vistas within and through Startforth village. Equally Startforth village with its integrated green spaces and surrounding agricultural fields, designated as an Area of Higher Landscape Value, dominate the views from Barnard Castle and form an important element in the setting of its Conservation Area.

6.4 The Neighbourhood Plan formally identifies the most important views within Startforth Parish and sets out a policy SNDP3 intended to ensure their protection and retention. The policy complements those relating to the settlement boundary (SNDP1) and Local Green Spaces (SNDP2) towards implementing the Vision and Objectives of preserving the rural character and setting of Startforth.

6.5 Section 15 of the NPPF 'Conserving and enhancing the natural environment' supports the designation of important views in development plans. The NPPF states at paragraph 174:

'Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

1. a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);'

6.6 The Durham County Plan gives Neighbourhood Plans the opportunity to designate Valued Views that local communities consider to be of particular importance.

Summary of Assessment Methodology

6.7 To assess the character of the village and to identify the most significant views, a standardised assessment method was adopted, based on the Character Assessment Toolkit devised by Oxford City Council. The Toolkit is an established best practice methodology, widely used and endorsed by other bodies including Durham County Council.

6.8 The Toolkit is designed 'to develop a robust set of indicators (or metrics) that will enable planning and other professional staff and lay people to identify any key elements that contribute to forming character and to measure the significance/value of an area based on a robust methodology.'

6.9 The toolkit provides questions to help judge how different features of the landscape contribute to its character as well as the features which detract from its amenity. By so doing, it provides a structured way of identifying important features of the character of the area which you can then put measures in to protect.

The Assessment Process

6.10 Essentially, the method involved walking around the village, the town on the opposite riverbank and finding the places where the village and its surrounding landscape could be viewed. A significant number of such places were originally identified. A decision was made not to include those looking towards Startforth from Barnard Castle as they were adequately covered in the Barnard Castle Conservation Area Plan.

6.11 At each location, impressions of the character of the place were recorded using the Toolkit Questionnaire. This included evaluating the importance of various specific features including:

- Spaces - gaps between built elements, streets and gardens, impact of traffic
- Buildings - scale and form of buildings, materials, doors, windows
- Views – both within the space and views out of the space, roofscapes
- Greenery and Landscapes – trees, plants, water bodies and colour
- Light/Dark - shading
- Noise and Smell - man-made or natural

6.12 The viewpoints varied in the extent and distance of the visual interest. Generally, the better views were those of a longer distance that included attractive vistas of the

river Tees and important historic buildings and features. Some views are restricted to a particular place whilst others were visible from a length of road or path.

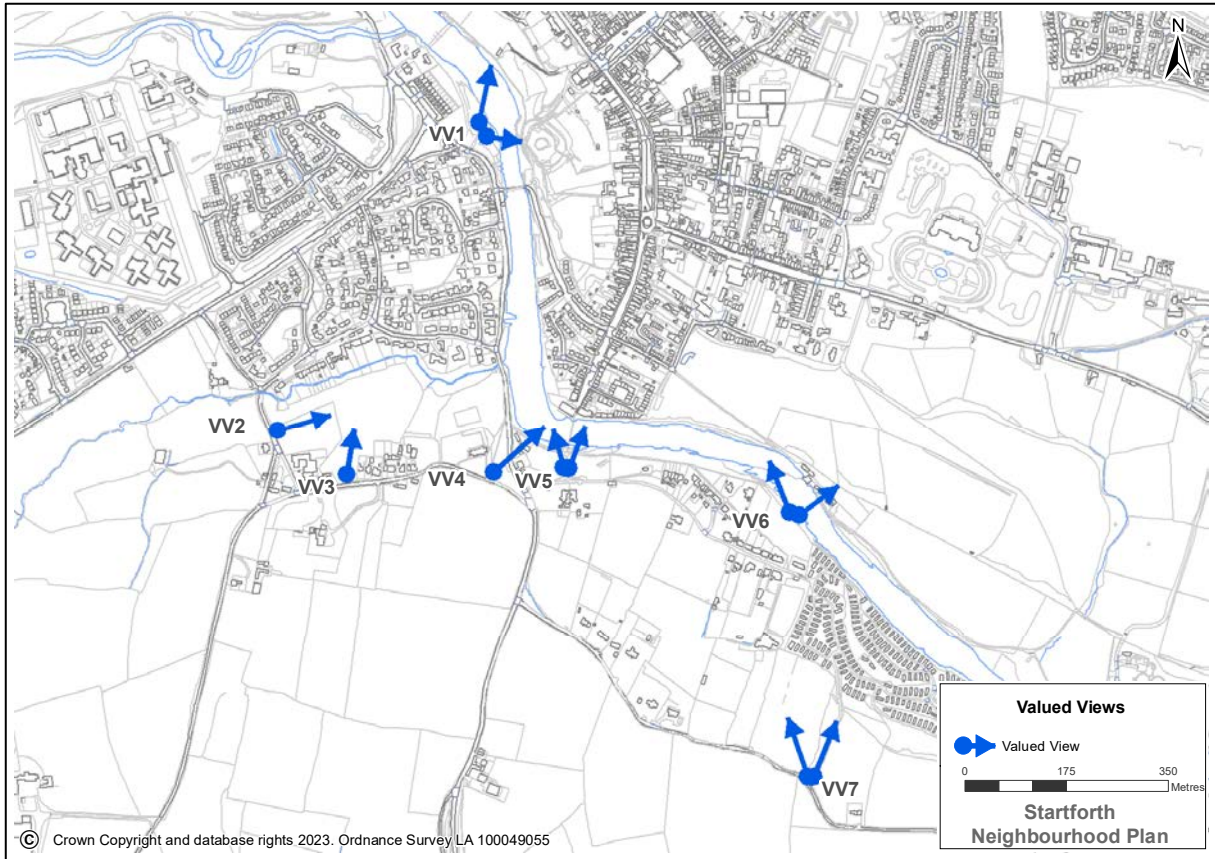
The Identified Important Valued Views

6.13 Only views which achieved a score of 20 and above points on the Character Assessment Toolkit have been considered to have the necessary importance to be included in the Neighbourhood Plan. A Character Assessment Summary Scoring Table using the Oxford Toolkit Scoring Sheet is set out below. The full Assessments of the views are in Appendix 4.

Character Assessment Summary Scoring Table

Ref	Location	Space Score	Buildings Score	Views Score	Greenery Score	Light/Dark Score	Noise/Smell Score	TOTAL SCORE
VV1	Ullathorne's Mill Picnic Area	4	5	5	5	4	3	26
VV2	Boldron Lane	4	0	5	4	4	5	22
VV3	High Startforth	5	5	5	5	5	5	30
VV4	Church Bank Field	3	3	3	5	4	3	20
VV5	The Lendings	5	5	5	5	4	4	28
VV6	The Lendings Riverside Footpath	4	5	5	5	5	5	29
VV7	River View Leisure Park	4	4	5	5	4	4	26

Note: Valued Views Assessments conducted on 1/02/2020 and 17/05/2023.



Plan 8: The Valued Viewpoints



Photo 65: Valued Views 1 - Barnard Castle from Ullathorne's Mill picnic area



Photo 66: Valued Views 2 - The view looking East from Boldron Lane to St. Mary's Parish Church in Barnard Castle



Photo 67: Valued Views 3 - View North towards Startforth village from High Startforth Road



Photo 68: Valued Views 4 – Church Bank Field viewed from High Startforth



Photo 69: Valued Views 5 – View north from The Lendings



Photos 70 & 71: Valued Views 6 - Startforth's River Tees footpath looking upstream towards the County Bridge and downstream to the Green Bridge



Photo 72: Valued Views 7 – View from Abbey Lane above River View Leisure Park

6.14 The intention of Policy SNDP3 is to formally acknowledge the importance of Valued Views and ensure that they are not unacceptably harmed by development. Whether development will unacceptably harm a Valued View will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. It will require consideration of the benefits of the development versus the degree to which the view is compromised in terms of its essential character, quality and integrity. Support will be given to measures which would improve and enhance a Valued View.

Valued Views Policy

POLICY SPNDP3: VALUED VIEWS

Development proposals will not be supported which unacceptably harm the character, quality and integrity of the Valued Views listed below and identified on Plan 8. Measures to enhance and improve the Valued Views will be supported.

VV1 – Ullathorne’s Mill Picnic Area

VV2 – Boldron Lane Field to East

VV3 – High Startforth Road

VV4 – Church Bank Field

VV5 – The Lendings Road

VV6 – The Lendings Riverside Footpath

VV7 – Abbey Lane above River View Leisure Park

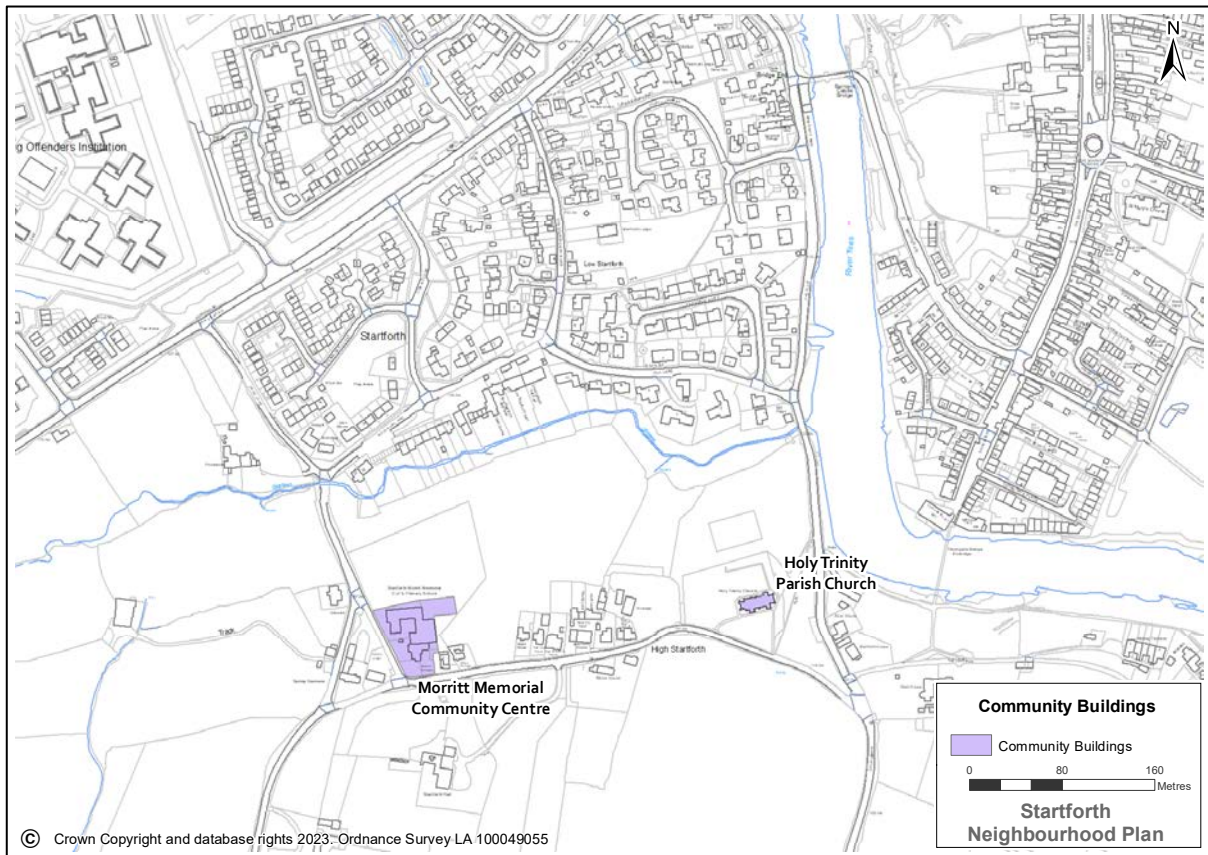
Policy Guidance

- 6.15 The Valued Views have been identified through the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan as being of the highest value and in need of protection. The NPPF and Durham County Plan give Neighbourhood Plans the opportunity to designate Valued Views which are of particular local importance. Those listed in the policy SPNDP3 are of local significance and meet the requisite criteria for designation due to their natural beauty, recreational value, tranquillity, heritage value and wildlife importance. Their protection will assist the retention of the rural character of Startforth and support the wellbeing of its residents.
- 6.16 The policy meets objectives 2 and 4.

Chapter 7. Community Facilities

Existing Community Facilities

7.1 Although in the past Startforth was served by a range of community facilities most of these have been lost as community assets. The Morrith Memorial Church of England Primary and Junior School, two public houses and all village shops have closed. There is a bar open to the public at the River View Leisure Park outside the main village.



Plan 9: Location of the existing community buildings

7.2 The only purpose-built religious building in Startforth is Holy Trinity Parish Church which has a limited number of programmed services but remains available for ceremonies and celebrations.

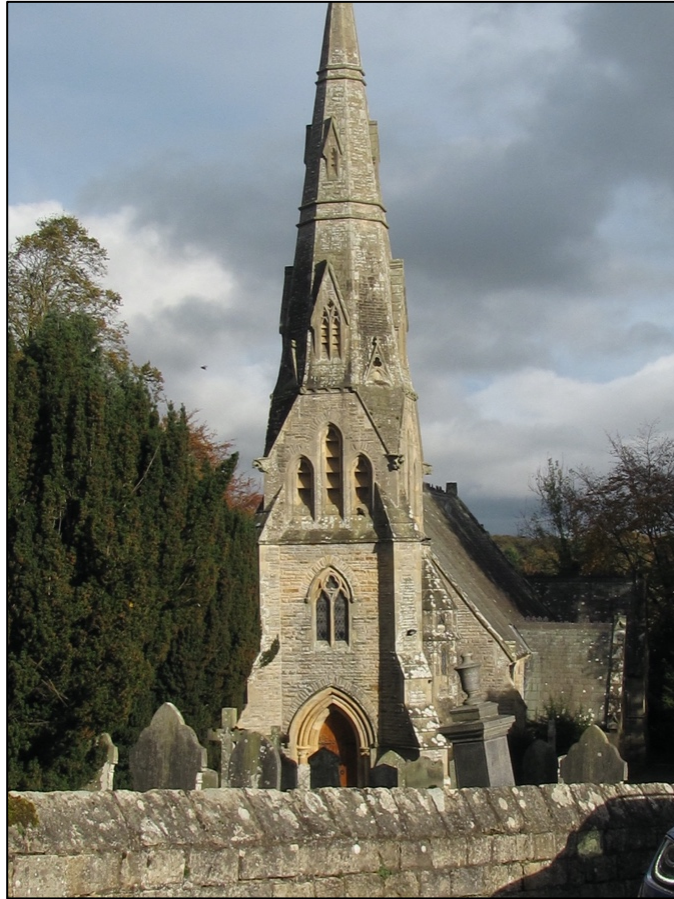


Photo 73: Holy Trinity Parish Church



Photo 74: Holy Trinity Parish Church

7.3 The focus for social, educational, dramatic, musical and other group activities in the village is therefore very much on the former Morritt Memorial Church of England Primary School. Its buildings have been re-purposed as the Startforth Morritt

Memorial Community Centre. The Centre provides a large hall with attached kitchen and serving area, meeting rooms and a library.

- 7.4 Part of the former school buildings and its associated enclosed external spaces are occupied by a popular local pre-school provided by a local private business.



Photo 75: The Startforth Morritt Memorial Community Centre



Photo 76: The Startforth Morritt Memorial Community Centre



Photo 77: The former school field and the more modern buildings at the rear of the Startforth Morritt Memorial Community Centre

The Need for Retention of the Community Facilities

- 7.5 The Community Centre provides the weekly meeting place for many cultural, educational, social and physical activities by groups of varying sizes and is the go-to place for village wide community events. The public consultation exercises emphasised the high value the local population puts on being able to use the Community Centre. It is an asset that provides for their community needs and provides significant support to the mental and physical well-being of the residents of Startforth.
- 7.6 The loss of either the Community Centre or Parish Church through re-development or a change of use would be detrimental to the social cohesion and health of the residents of Startforth. It is therefore important that the Community Centre and Parish Church are retained to continue to serve the local needs of Startforth Parish.
- 7.7 The Government's National Planning Policy Framework emphasises the importance of the planning system in creating healthy inclusive communities. At paragraph 93 it states:
- "c) guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs;"*
- 7.8 A Neighbourhood Plan policy is needed to ensure that the Community Centre and Parish Church are retained as community facilities in the village and safeguarded from a change of use or loss that would deprive the village of its remaining social, cultural, education and religious assets.

Community facilities policy

Policy SPNDP4: Retaining Existing Community Facilities

Where proposals for re-development or change of use would result in the partial or total loss of any of the following facilities or services within the village of Startforth, satisfactory alternative provision is to be made elsewhere within the Startforth Neighbourhood Plan Area, unless it can be demonstrated that a sufficient level of provision already exists to meet the needs of the residents of the Parish of Startforth:

1. Startforth Morritt Memorial Community Centre
2. Holy Trinity Parish Church

Policy Guidance

- 7.9 The Community Centre and Parish Church have been identified as being of the highest value and in need of protection as the only remaining community venues in the Parish. The NPPF and Durham County Plan give Neighbourhood Plans the opportunity to put forward measures to protect community assets which are of local importance. Those listed in policy SNDP4 are considered by the residents of Startforth to be of the utmost local significance and importance to the local community. Their protection from partial or total loss without full and clear justification would be detrimental to the wellbeing of Startforth Parish residents.
- 7.10 The policy meets objective 5.

Chapter 8. Delivery, Monitoring and Review

Delivery

- 8.1 Delivery of the Neighbourhood Plan will rely on the policies being implemented when planning proposals are submitted. Planning applications will be administered and determined by Durham County Council as the local planning authority, or in the event of an appeal, by a Planning Inspector.

Monitoring

- 8.2 The Startforth Neighbourhood Plan covers the period 2023 – 2040. It can be expected that over this period there will be significant and varying pressures from development and on the environment and not least changes to the social expectations of the local population. It may be found that the Plan’s policies have become out of date or even in conflict with the Durham County Plan and Government legislation.
- 8.3 It is therefore advisable to monitor the neighbourhood plan against impacting changes so that its Objectives remain relevant, and its policies can still be effectively implemented.

Review

- 8.4 The Government’s Planning Practice Guidance at Paragraph 084 (Reference ID: 41-084-20190509) states that there is no formal requirement to review or update a neighbourhood plan. However, any more recent planning policy will take precedence. Also, over time, the evidence base for the plan policy will be considered as being less robust. Other material considerations would then be likely to be given greater weight when planning decisions are made.
- 8.5 Durham County Council monitors and reviews its own planning policies and their relationship with Neighbourhood Plans. However, to reduce the likelihood of a neighbourhood plan becoming out of date communities are advised to update their plan, or any relevant part of it.
- 8.6 Startforth Parish Council, as the Qualifying Body for this Neighbourhood Plan will need to undertake its own monitoring. This will require the Parish Council to undertake a periodic review of the operation of the Neighbourhood Plan to assess the extent to which policies are being effectively implemented. Depending on the outcomes of this assessment measures to amend or replace the policies may be necessary. This will be undertaken in association with Durham County Council and in accordance with the Government’s legislation at that time.

Updating

- 8.7 Minor updates to a neighbourhood plan that do not materially affect the policies or permission granted by the Order can be made by a local planning authority at any time. If more significant material changes that affect the policies and the nature of the plan are considered necessary, then there would be a need for publicity and public consultation before being submitted to Durham County Council and by them on to an independent examiner.

Appendix 1

Statistics

The following selection of data is from that made available by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) in the 2011 and 2021 censuses. The ONS Census population data includes the residents of His Majesty's Young Offenders Institute Deerbolt (HMYOI). Therefore, it has been adjusted by the Startforth Parish Neighbourhood Plan Group (SPNPG) in order to give more accurate figures for the normal population.

The ONS has rounded the 2021 Population data up or down to the nearest 100 persons.

The 2023 population and household percentages are an estimation made by SPNPG of the increases following the completion of the on-going house building up to that year end.

Population (see note 1)

	2011	2021	2023
Resident population (minus the occupants of HMYOI Deerbolt)	890 (1361 - 471)	1020 (1400 - 380) (+ or – 49)	1420 (1800 - 380) (+ or – 49)

Age Profile of Residents (see note 2)

Age in years	2011			2021		
	Startforth %	Co. Durham %	England %	Startforth %	Co. Durham %	England %
0 – 17	17.0	20.8	21.4			
0 – 19				19.5	21.8	23.0
18 – 64	60.4	60.0	62.3			
20 – 64				51.7	57.0	58.4
65 + over	22.6	19.2	16.3	28.8	21.4	18.4

Households in Startforth by Year (see note 3)

	2011	2021	2023
Total Number of Households	406	520	648

Households by Type of Dwelling in 2023 (see note 3)

	Total Number in Startforth	% Startforth	% County Durham	% England
	648			
Detached	265	40.9	19.0	22.3
Semi-detached	288	44.4	36.5	30.8
Terraced	81	12.5	38.5	24.6
Flat/Apartment	14	2.2	1.3	22.2

Household Composition in 2021 (see note 4)

	% Startforth	% County Durham	% England
One Person Household	27.8	33.9	30.1
Two People in Household	46.2	36.0	34.0
Three People in Household	11.7	15.5	16.0
Four or More in Household	14.1	14.6	19.9

Employment Profile of Residents Aged 16-74 (see note 5)

Year	% Startforth		% County Durham		% England	
	2011	2021	2011	2021	2011	2021
Managers, directors and senior officials	11.9	13.3	8.9	10.1	10.9	11.0
Professional occupations	18.0	19.2	14.5	16.7	17.5	27.1
Associate professional and technical occupations	12.1	14.9	10.7	12.1	12.8	14.5
Administrative and secretarial occupations	8.9	9.1	11.3	9.5	11.5	9.6
Skilled trades occupations	16.3	12.3	12.6	11.7	11.4	8.7
Caring, leisure and other service occupations	8.3	7.7	10.3	10.4	9.3	7.9
Sales and customer service occupations	6.6	5.0	9.2	8.7	8.4	6.0
Process plant and machine operatives	6.1	8.3	10.2	9.3	7.2	5.5
Elementary occupations	13.6	10.3	12.3	11.5	11.1	9.4

Other Statistics 2021 (see note 4)

	% Startforth	% County Durham	% England
Households without car or van	8.6	24.1	23.5
Driving a car or van to workplace	56.7	57.4	44.5
Households who consider themselves to be in good/very good health	84.4	76.9	82.2

Notes.

Note 1. Sources:

- 2011 Office for National Statistics (ONS) census population data for 2011 minus those residents living in a communal establishment, (His Majesty's Young Offenders Institute Deerbolt (HMYOI)) (1361 minus 471 = 890 usual residents of Startforth).
- 2021 ONS census population data for 2021. The ONS provides a population figure that has been rounded up or down to the nearest hundred. This means that the figure has a variable of + or – 49.
The ONS population figures have also been adjusted to exclude those occupying HMYOI Deerbolt at that date (1400 – 380 = 1020).
- 2023 The ONS census population data for 2021 has been increased in proportion to the number of additional Households formed by the completion of new house building to the end of 2023. (See note 3)

Note 2. Sources: 2011 and 2021 ONS Age Profile Census data has been adjusted following the exclusion of the population occupying HMYOI Deerbolt at those dates (471 and 380 respectively).

Note 3. Sources: ONS 2011 and 2021 Household Census data. The 2023 figure includes households completed since the 2021 census date (406 + 162 Castle Croft + 64 Grangefields + 5 Houses at Stonley's Field + 3 houses in Bowes Road + 2 Bungalows in Gill Lane + 3 Apartments and + 2 houses at Riverside View + 1 bungalow Corn Close = 648.

Note 4. Source: ONS 2021 Census data. No adjustments have been made to the ONS data to remove the number of occupants of HMYOI Deerbolt or to add households created as a result of new house building since 2021.

Note 5. Source: ONS-2021 Census adjusted by excluding the economically inactive residents of HMYOI Deerbolt. Therefore total number of residents between ages of 16-74 is 1153 minus 420 =733. Percentages adjusted accordingly.

Appendix 2

Heritage Assets within Startforth Parish

a) Heritage England List of Buildings of Historic or Architectural Interest

Grade I

1. Barnard Castle Bridge, Over the River Tees, Bridge End

Grade II

- 1 Deepdale Bridge, B6277, Lartington
- 2 Old Bridge over Thorsgill Beck, B6277
- 3 Road Bridge over Thorsgill, Abbey Lane
- 4 Low Startforth Hall East, Boldron Lane, Low Startforth Hall, Boldron Lane
- 5 Front walls and gate piers to Low Startforth Hall and Low Startforth Hall East, Boldron Lane
- 6 Dovecote and outbuilding to west of West Mews, Boldron Lane
- 7 The White Swan Public House and Swan Cottage, Bridge End
- 8 Bridge End House with adjacent Coach House and yard walls, 5, Bridge End
- 9 Forecourt walls, railings and gate to number 5, Bridge End
- 10 Church of Holy Trinity, High Startforth
- 11 Angel headstone 4 metres south-west of organ chamber of church of Holy Trinity, High Startforth
- 12 Todman headstone 11 metres south of porch of church of Holy Trinity, High Startforth
- 13 Lych Gate to church of Holy Trinity, High Startforth
- 14 23, Low Startforth Road
- 15 25, Low Startforth Road
- 16 Startforth Lodge, Low Startforth Road
- 17 Garden walls, railings and gate to Startforth Lodge, Low Startforth Road
- 18 Startforth Hall, High Startforth
- 19 Stable Block north of Startforth Hall, High Startforth
- 20 Entrance screen to Startforth Hall, High Startforth
- 21 Outbuildings and yard walls to north-west of Startforth Hall, High Startforth,
- 22 Startforth House West and Startforth House East, High Startforth
- 23 Front garden walls and gatepiers to Startforth House East and West, High Startforth
- 24 The Manor House, High Startforth
- 25 High West Wood, with attached outbuildings on west, A67

b) Heritage England Scheduled Monuments

1. Deepdale Bridge (List Entry No: 1002321)
2. Barnard Castle Bridge (List Entry No: 1002353)
3. Thorsgill Beck Packhorse Bridge (List Entry No: 1005566)
4. Carved rock 160m north-west of Abbey Farm (List Entry No: 1018247)

c) Conservation Areas Designated by the Local Planning Authority

1. The part of Barnard Castle Conservation Area within Startforth Parish

d) Areas of Archaeological Interest Designated by the Local Planning Authority

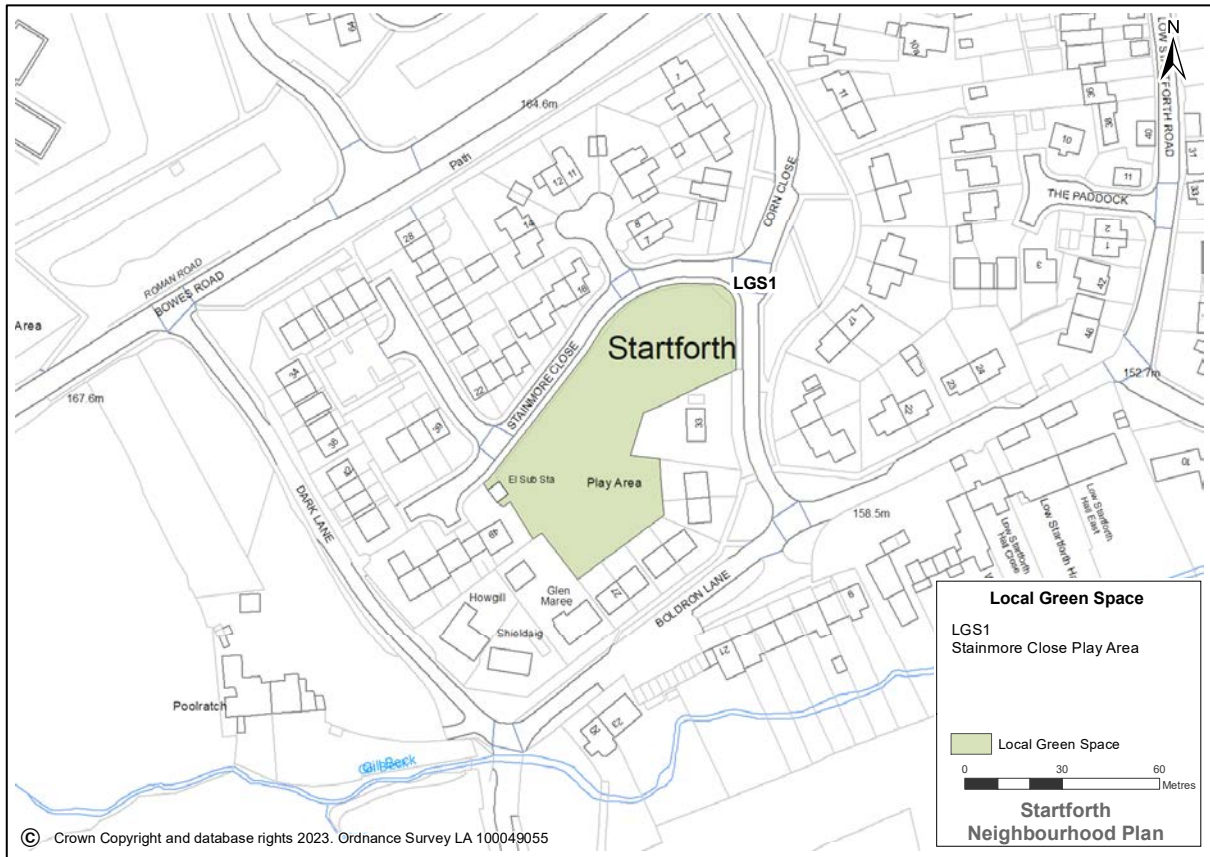
1. The part of Barnard Castle Area of Archaeological Interest within Startforth Parish

Appendix 3

Local Green Space Assessments

Site Name	Stainmore Close Play Area
Site Reference	LGS1
Description of site	Children's Play Area
Approximate size	0.2 Hectares
Date Assessed	01/08/2022
Assessment Outcome	Can be designated as a local green space

Site Location Plan



Site Description and Summary of Assessment

Well-used play area with playground equipment, seating, small playing pitch and attractive mature trees.

Photographs of the Site

View West towards Stainmore Close



View East towards Corn Close



View South from Stainmore Close across play area



Assessment Criteria

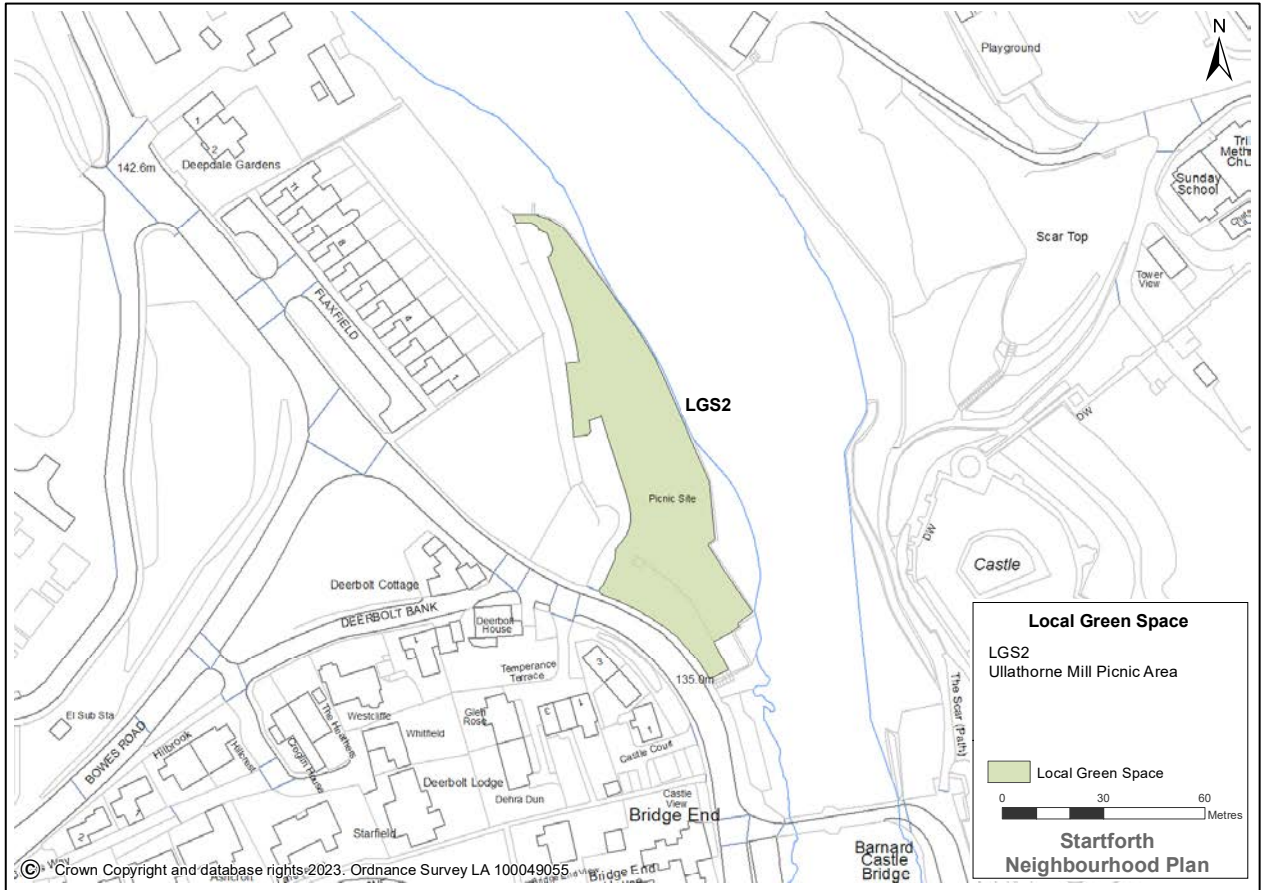
TABLE 1: QUALITIES OF THE LOCAL GREEN SPACE:		
Criteria	Y/N	Justification
1) BEAUTY	Y	Trees and hedges to neighbouring gardens give a pleasant open space
2) HISTORY	N	
3) RECREATION	Y	Children’s playground with a range of apparatus and open space provides for a range of recreational activities
4) TRANQUILITY	Y	The treed background and a siting away from any busy road gives a peaceful setting
5) WILDLIFE	N	
6) Other	N	

TABLE 2: CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LOCAL GREEN SPACE:		
Criteria	Y/N	Observations
Does the site have planning permission for development?	N	
Is the site allocated for development in the Local Plan?	N	
Is the site in close proximity to the community it serves?	Y	Provides play area for local children within the built-up area of the village
Is the site local in character?	Y	Site contained by garden and boundary fences
Is the site an extensive tract of land?	N	
Is the site 'demonstrably special' to the local community?	Y	Well used recreational area providing safe and dedicated play space for children and meeting area for parents

TABLE 3: CONCLUSION OF ASSESSMENT:	
Criteria	Answer and further comments
Which criteria in Table 1 have been met?	1, 3 & 4
Have all the criteria in Table 2 been met?	Yes
Is the site suitable for designation as LGS?	Yes
Ownership	Startforth Parish Council
Landowner involvement?	Yes

Site Name	Ullathorne's Mill Picnic Area
Site Reference	LGS2
Description of site	Historic site of former Ullathorne Mill, now an attractive riverside amenity area with picnic tables. Identified as part of an area of higher landscape value with excellent views across the river to the castle.
Approximate size	0.3 Hectares
Date Assessed	01/08/2022
Assessment Outcome	Can be designated as a local green space

Site Plan



Site Description and Summary of Assessment

Historic site of former Ullathorne Mill, now an attractive riverside amenity area with picnic tables. Identified as part of an area of higher landscape value with excellent views across the river to the castle.

Photographs of the Site

View Southeast from road entrance



View Northeast from road entrance



Access road to parking area



Base of former Ullathorne Mill chimney



Assessment Criteria

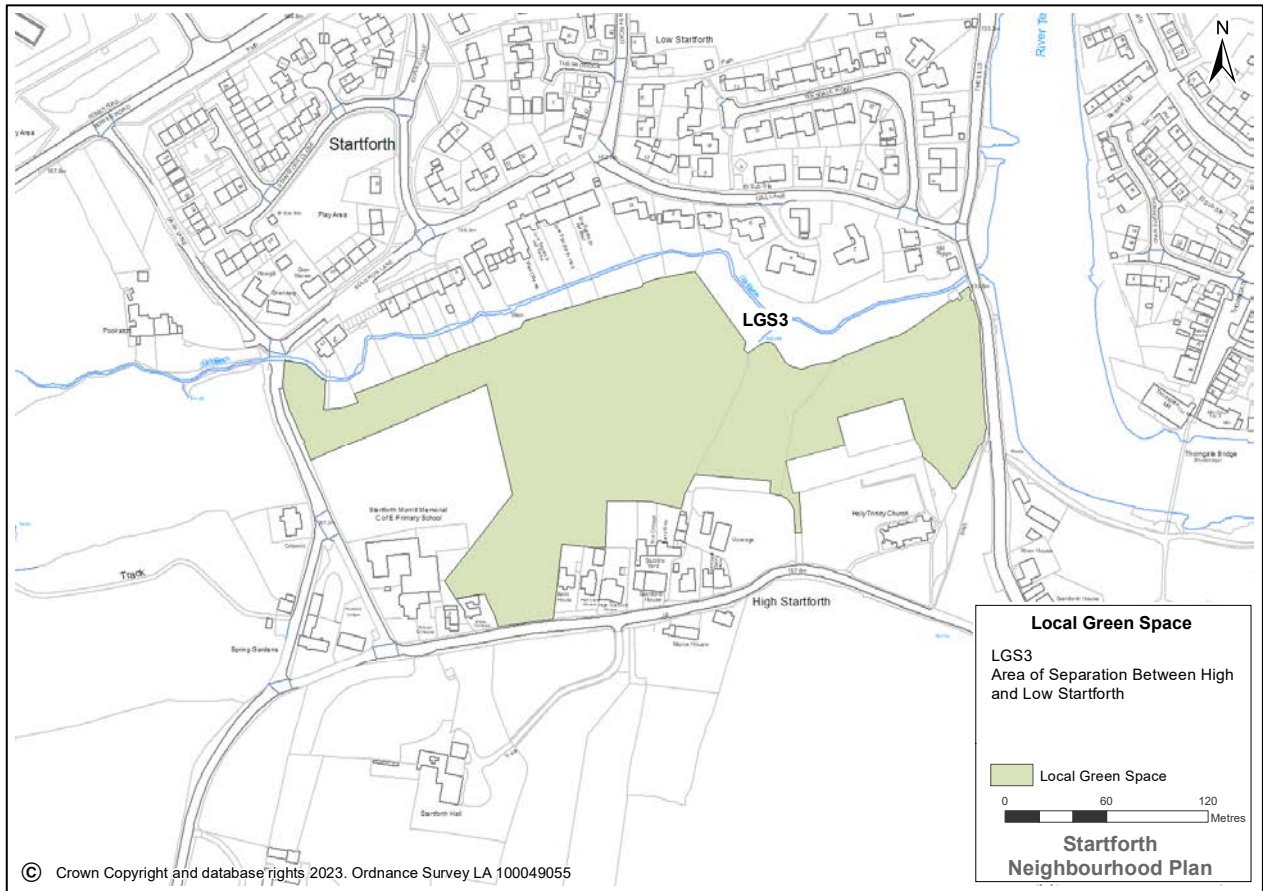
TABLE 1: QUALITIES OF THE LOCAL GREEN SPACE:		
Criteria	Y/N	Justification
1) BEAUTY	Y	Small riverside public park with very good close up views of the castle at Barnard Castle
2) HISTORY	Y	Historic site of Ullathorne Mill with retained industrial features (base of chimney and mill leat) and situated within the Barnard Castle Conservation Area and Area of Archaeological Interest. Within the setting of Barnard Castle and the County Bridge, both designated as Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Grade I Listed Buildings
3) RECREATION	Y	Informal recreation area with pic-nic tables
4) TRANQUILITY	Y	Enclosing trees on two sides of triangle give a peaceful riverside setting
5) WILDLIFE	Y	Part of the riverside wildlife corridor along the treed banks of the River Tees

TABLE 2: CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LOCAL GREEN SPACE:		
Criteria	Y/N	Observations
Does the site have planning permission for development?	N	
Is the site allocated for development in the Local Plan?	N	
Is the site in close proximity to the community it serves?	Y	Adjacent to housing and within walking distance of the rest of the village and with a small car parking area
Is the site local in character?	Y	The triangular public amenity space is on the riverside within the village and bounded by trees, housing and a road, with views dominated by the castle across the river
Is the site an extensive tract of land?	N	
Is the site 'demonstrably special' to the local community?	Y	Small public park on the locally important historic site of Ullathorne Mill with important views of Barnard Castle

TABLE 3: CONCLUSION OF ASSESSMENT:	
Criteria	Answer and further comments
Which criteria in Table 1 have been met?	1, 2, 3, 4 & 5
Have all the criteria in Table 2 been met?	Yes
Is the site suitable for designation as LGS?	Yes
Ownership	Durham County Council
Landowner involvement?	Yes

Site Name	Fields Separating High and Low Startforth
Site Reference	LGS3
Description of site	Agricultural fields
Approximate size	3.6 Hectares
Date Assessed	1 st August 2022
Assessment Outcome	Can be designated as a Local Green Space

Site Location



Site Description and Summary of Assessment

Attractive belt of pastoral open land which plays a vital role in maintaining the historic physical separation of High and Low Startforth. Also identified as an Area of High Landscape Value, providing attractive views particularly from the south and west.

Photographs of Site

View East from Boldron Lane towards Barnard Castle



View East from Boldron Lane



The view North from High Startforth between residential properties



Looking West from the cemetery at Holy Trinity Church



View West from Cemetery.



View west from The Sills of the field below Holy Trinity Church



Assessment Criteria

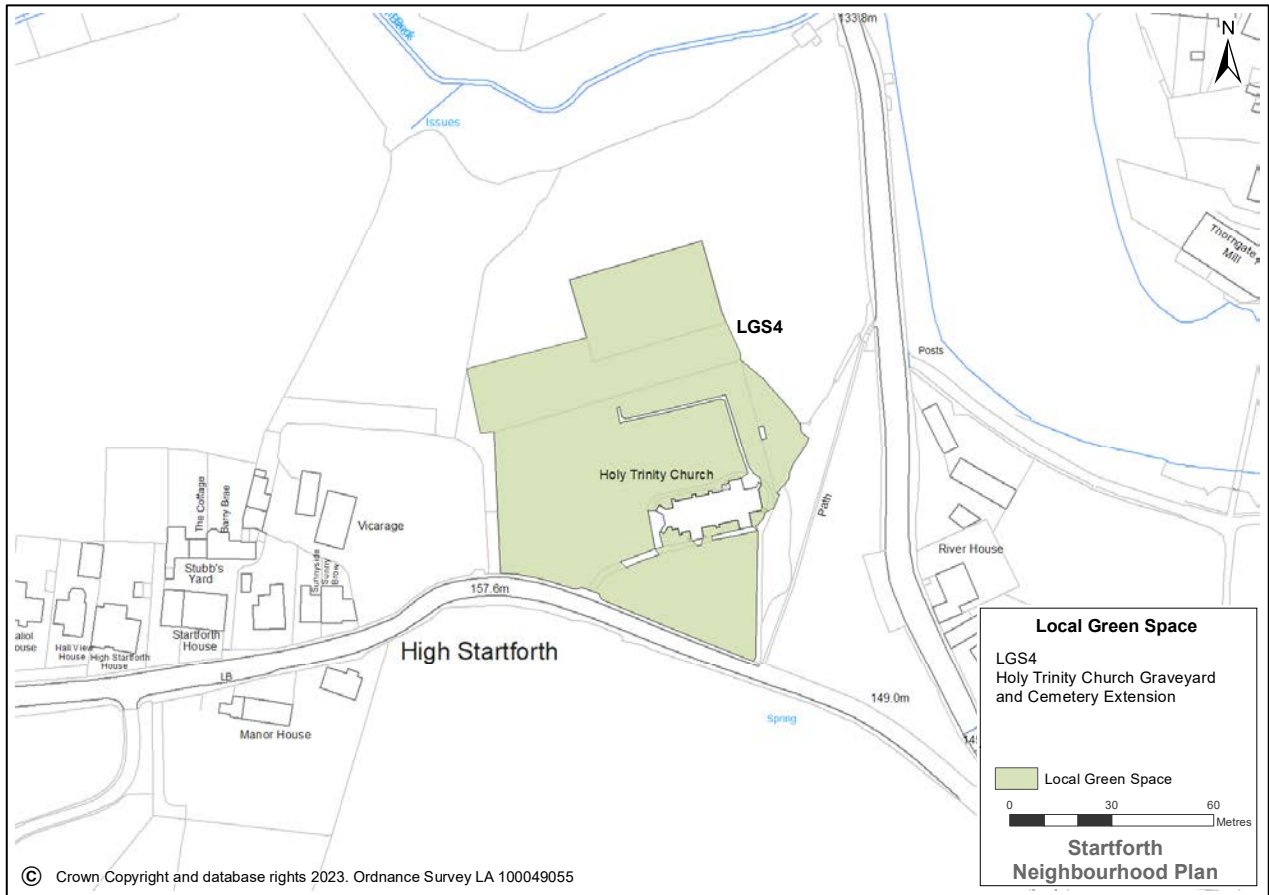
TABLE 1: QUALITIES OF THE LOCAL GREEN SPACE:		
Criteria	Y/N	Justification
1) BEAUTY	Y	Attractive pastures with treed boundaries and views of Barnard Castle
2) HISTORY	Y	Historical area of separation between High and Low Startforth
3) RECREATION	N	
4) TRANQUILITY	Y	Peaceful pastoral fields
5) WILDLIFE	Y	Habitat and natural corridor for wildlife through the village

TABLE 2: CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LOCAL GREEN SPACE:		
Criteria	Y/N	Observations
Does the site have planning permission for development?	N	
Is the site allocated for development in the Local Plan?	N	
Is the site in close proximity to the community it serves?	Y	Backed onto by housing in High and Low Startforth and the Community Centre field and village roads
Is the site local in character?	Y	The surrounding boundary trees, walls, houses and churchyard give a sense of enclosure
Is the site an extensive tract of land?	N	
Is the site 'demonstrably special' to the local community?	Y	Important visual and physical separation area between historically separate parts of the village

TABLE 3: CONCLUSION OF ASSESSMENT:	
Criteria	Answer and further comments
Which criteria in Table 1 have been met?	1, 2, 4 & 5
Have all the criteria in Table 2 been met?	Yes
Is the site suitable for designation as LGS?	Yes
Ownership	Private
Landowner involvement?	No

Site Name	Holy Trinity Parish Church and Cemetery
Site Reference	LGS4
Description of site	Holy Trinity Church graveyard and adjoining cemetery extension
Approximate size	0.6 Hectares
Date Assessed	1 st August 2022
Assessment Outcome	Can be designated as a local green space

Site Location Plan



Site Description and Summary of Assessment

The grounds of Holy Trinity Church, including the graveyard/cemetery to the south, west and north of it. This is a peaceful, attractive area of open space (part of an area of higher landscape value) as well as providing a historic setting to the Grade II listed church, lych-gate and headstones.

Photographs of Site

View East of Holy Trinity Church from its Lychgate



View East of graveyard between the church and the road



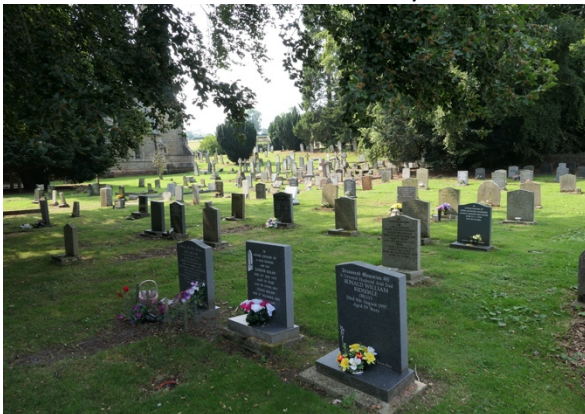
View looking North across graveyard



View looking West across churchyard



View towards South across churchyard



The cemetery extension looking Westwards



Assessment Criteria

Criteria	Y/N	Justification
1) BEAUTY	Y	Traditional graveyard with Yew and other trees surrounding the Victorian church and active cemetery with open aspect to river Tees
2) HISTORY	Y	Historic walled graveyard with Victorian church, lych gate and several headstones that are all Grade II Listed
3) RECREATION	N	
4) TRANQUILITY	Y	Peaceful treed setting for remembrance and contemplation
5) WILDLIFE	Y	Largely undisturbed habitat for nesting birds and other wildlife

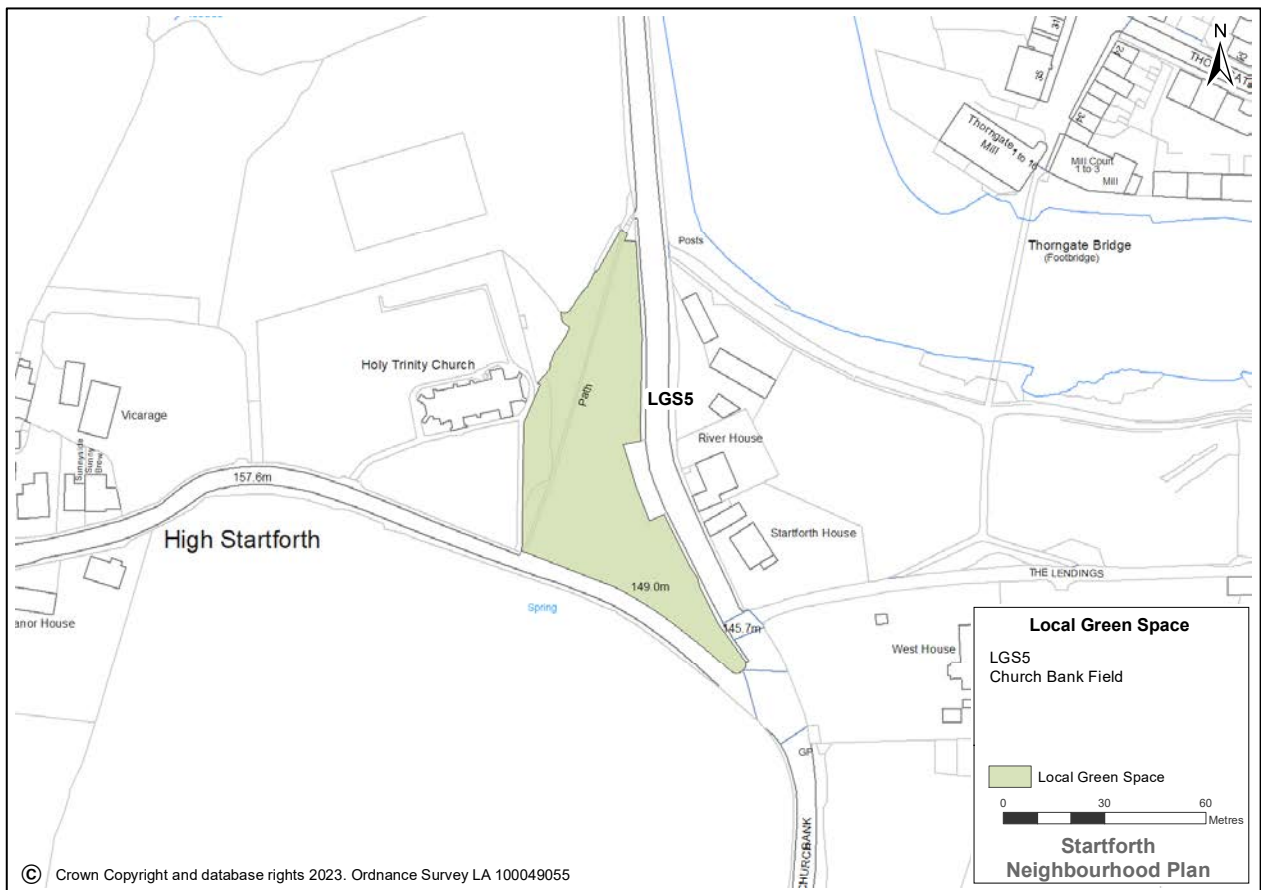
Criteria	Y/N	Observations
Does the site have planning permission for development?	N	
Is the site allocated for development in the Local Plan?	N	
Is the site in close proximity to the community it serves?	Y	Close to housing and within walking distance for most residents of Startforth
Is the site local in character?	Y	Boundary walls, trees and church building provide an intimate setting
Is the site an extensive tract of land?	N	
Is the site 'demonstrably special' to the local community?	Y	Provides special significance for worship, celebration of events in family life and commemoration of loved ones.

Criteria	Answer and further comments
Which criteria in Table 1 have been met?	1, 2, 4 & 5
Have all the criteria in Table 2 been met?	Yes
Is the site suitable for designation as LGS?	Yes
Ownership	Leeds Diocese (graveyard) and Durham County Council (cemetery)

Landowner involvement?	Yes - DCC
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Site Name	Church Bank Field
Site Reference	LGS5
Description of site	Seated viewing area & wooded backdrop
Approximate size	0.35 Hectares
Date Assessed	1 st August 2022
Assessment Outcome	Can be designated as a local green space

Site Location Plan



Site Description and Summary of Assessment

Pleasant, peaceful and well-maintained area with seating, backed by a footpath and mature woodland. Provides attractive visual aspect to this part of the village as well as providing views across the Tees and Barnard Castle. Has additional value as setting to designated heritage assets – Conservation Area to east and Grade II Listed Holy Trinity Church to west.

Photographs of Site

View East from High Startforth gateway



View North from High Startforth gateway



View North from High Startforth



Assessment Criteria

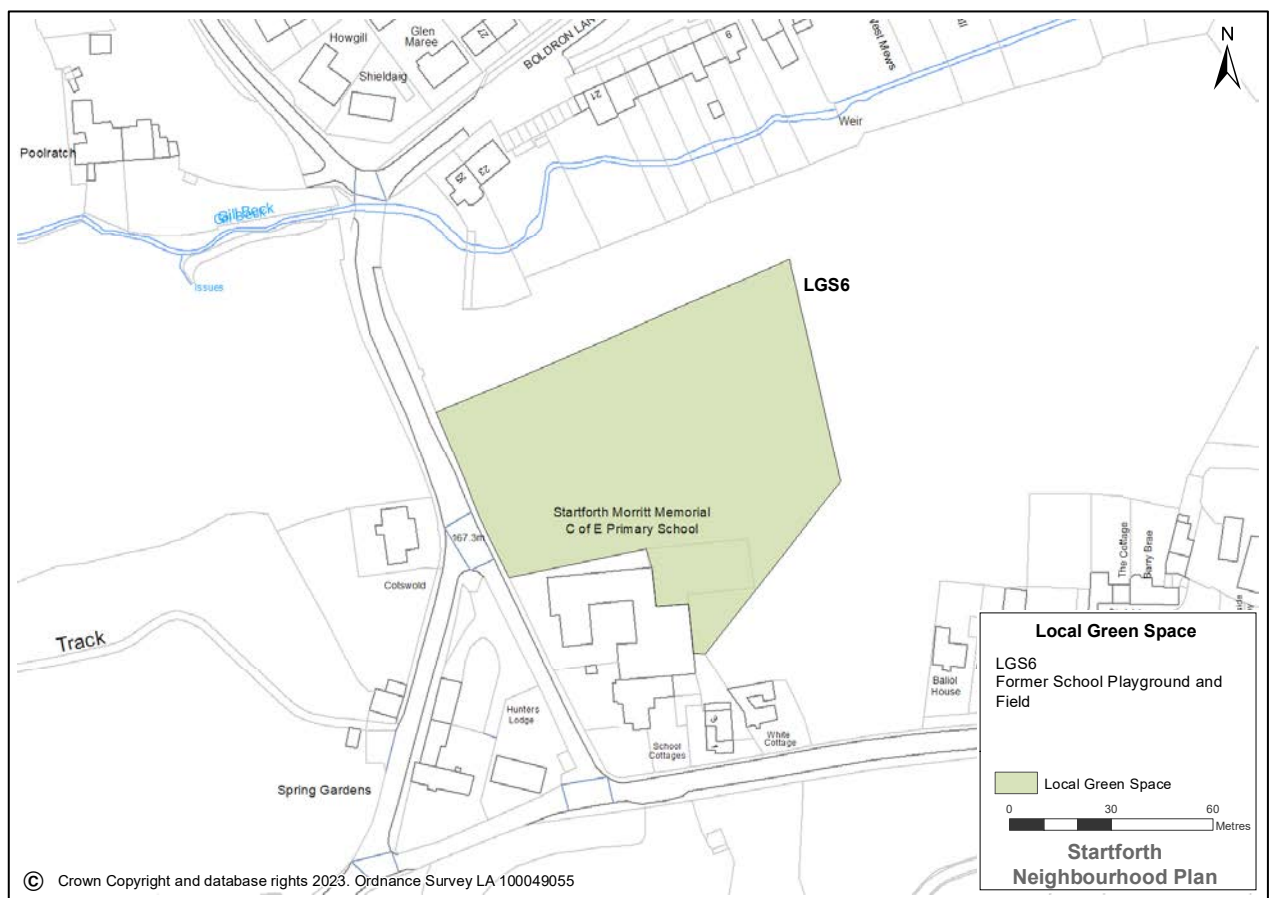
TABLE 1: QUALITIES OF THE LOCAL GREEN SPACE:		
Criteria	Y/N	Justification
1) BEAUTY	Y	Landscaped seating area with attractive views of Barnard Castle
2) HISTORY	Y	The Eastern boundary adjoins the Barnard Castle Conservation Area and the Western boundary adjoins the churchyard of the Grade II Listed Holy Trinity Parish Church
3) RECREATION	Y	Space for passive and sedentary recreation with small car park
4) TRANQUILITY	Y	Landscaped setting enclosed by trees and walls
5) WILDLIFE	Y	Provides wildlife habitat and corridor connecting green space within village with open countryside.

TABLE 2: CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LOCAL GREEN SPACE:		
Criteria	Y/N	Observations
Does the site have planning permission for development?	N	
Is the site allocated for development in the Local Plan?	N	
Is the site in close proximity to the community it serves?	Y	Within easy walking distance of housing and route to/from Barnard Castle
Is the site local in character?	Y	Landscaped recreational facility at junction of village roads
Is the site an extensive tract of land?	N	
Is the site 'demonstrably special' to the local community?	Y	A local park for tranquil recreation with attractive outlook crossed by a footpath on pedestrian route through village

TABLE 3: CONCLUSION OF ASSESSMENT:	
Criteria	Answer and further comments
Which criteria in Table 1 have been met?	1, 2, 3, 4 & 5
Have all the criteria in Table 2 been met?	Yes
Is the site suitable for designation as LGS?	Yes
Ownership	Startforth Parish Council
Landowner involvement?	Yes

Site Name	Playing Field of former Startforth Church of England Morritt Memorial School
Site Reference	LGS6
Description of site	Playing field and playground of community centre and pre-school
Approximate size	0.7 Hectares
Date Assessed	1 st August 2022
Assessment Outcome	Can be designated as a local green space

Site Location Plan



Site Description and Summary of Assessment

Playing field and playground of the former Morritt Memorial Church of England Primary School. The playing field has a level grassed surface with banking to the southwest and southeastern sides where it rises to the level of the hard surfaced playground and the adjoining road. The field and playground are enclosed in part by stone walling, hedges and trees. The open playing field affords attractive views from Boldron Lane of Barnard Castle and its St Mary's Parish Church. Any usage of the ex-playing fields is only possible with a licence granted following application to Durham County Council. The adjoining Community Centre serves as the village hall for Startforth and hosts a range of social, cultural and educational group activities including a pre-school.

Photographs of Site

View North from Boldron Lane



View North East from Boldron Lane direction



View west from Eastern end of the field



View North along Eastern boundary



Assessment Criteria

Criteria	Y/N	Justification
1) BEAUTY	Y	Attractive setting for external Community Centre activities and green space separation between housing in High Startforth and Low Startforth
2) HISTORY	Y	Former playing field of the historic Startforth Morritt Memorial Church of England Primary School
3) RECREATION	Y	Open space for external activities associated with the community centre
4) TRANQUILITY	Y	Peaceful setting between housing at High and Low Startforth
5) WILDLIFE	Y	Provides habitat for nesting birds, bats and other wildlife

TABLE 2: CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LOCAL GREEN SPACE:

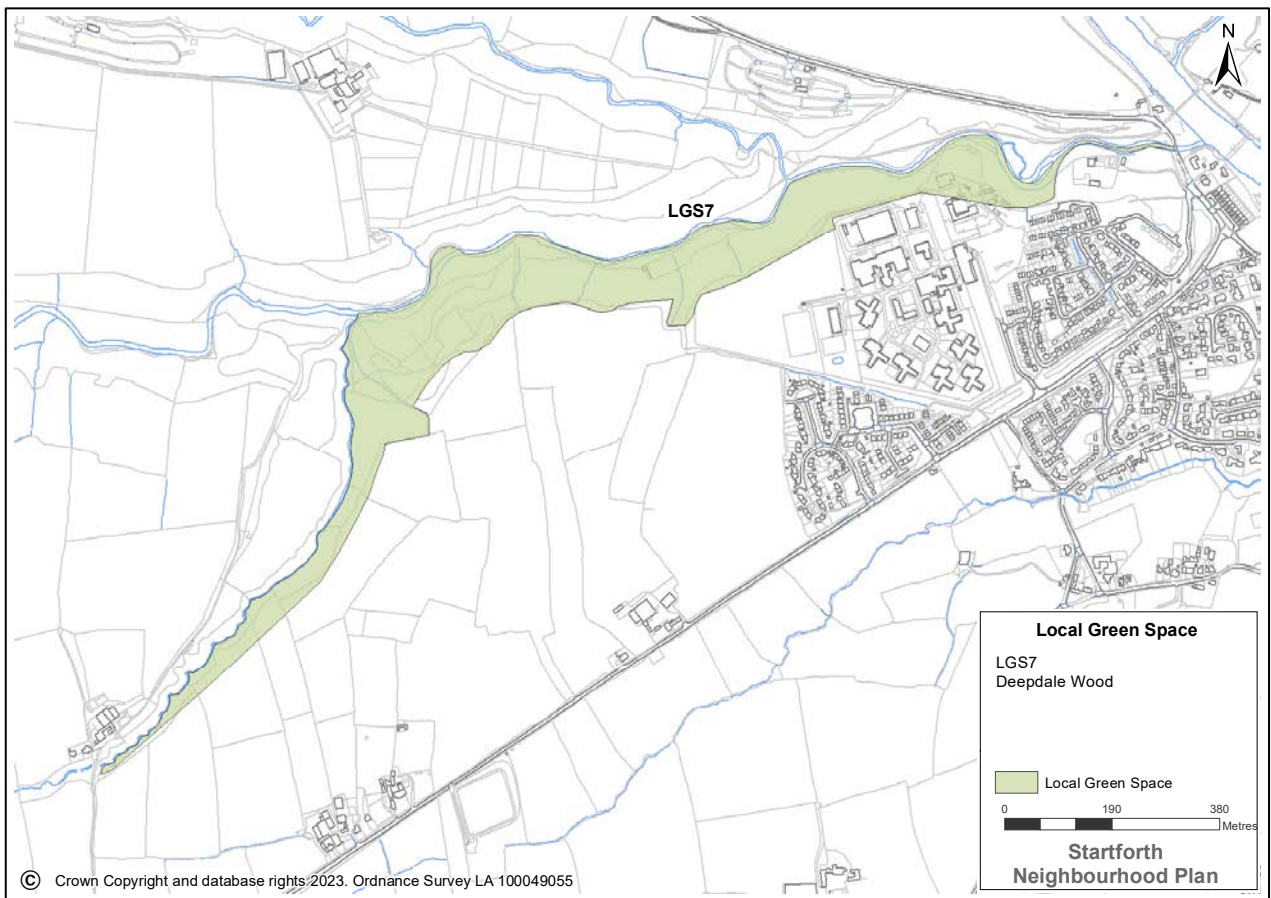
Criteria	Y/N	Observations
Does the site have planning permission for development?	N	
Is the site allocated for development in the Local Plan?	N	
Is the site in close proximity to the community it serves?	Y	The site is close to housing and accessible by walking by all village residents
Is the site local in character?	Y	Trees and walls give self-contained and clear boundaries
Is the site an extensive tract of land?	N	
Is the site 'demonstrably special' to the local community?	Y	The Community Centre serves as the village hall for Startforth and is the only flat external space in the village for organised community and group activities

TABLE 3: CONCLUSION OF ASSESSMENT:

Criteria	Answer and further comments
Which criteria in Table 1 have been met?	1, 2, 3, 4 & 5
Have all the criteria in Table 2 been met?	Yes
Is the site suitable for designation as LGS?	Yes
Ownership	Durham County Council
Landowner involvement?	Yes

Site Name	Deepdale Woods
Site Reference	LGS7
Description of site	Ancient woodlands along the southern bank of Deepdale Beck
Approximate size	10.4 Hectares
Date Assessed	1 st August 2022
Assessment Outcome	Can be designated as a local green space

Site Location Plan



Site Description and Summary of Assessment

The tract of Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland along the southern banks of Deepdale and Smartgill Becks is within Startforth Parish. Deepdale is designated in the Priority Habitat Inventory as Deciduous Woodland (England) and identified as a Local Site (Geology & Wildlife) in the County Durham Plan. The woodland within the parish outside of the ownership of the Ministry of Justice is managed by Durham Wildlife Trust as a Local Nature Reserve. The eastern end of the woodland terminates at Deepdale Beck road bridge on Lartington Lane. The bridge is a Grade II Listed Building and a Scheduled Ancient Monument. To the South the woodlands adjoin the Castle Croft housing estate, HMYOI Deerbolt and pasture fields. The Deepdale woodlands extend westwards beyond the parish boundary and end at Low Crag and Crag Pond.

Photographs of Site

View West from Lartington Lane at entrance to Castle Croft



View West from Lartington Lane with entrance to the recycling centre



View West of woodlands and Deepdale Beck



View East of wooded riverbank



View East within the woodlands



View West on public footpath beyond HMYOI



Assessment Criteria

TABLE 1: QUALITIES OF THE LOCAL GREEN SPACE:		
Criteria	Y/N	Justification
1) BEAUTY	Y	Ancient woodland of mixed mainly deciduous species contained within a steep valley of a tributary of the River Tees

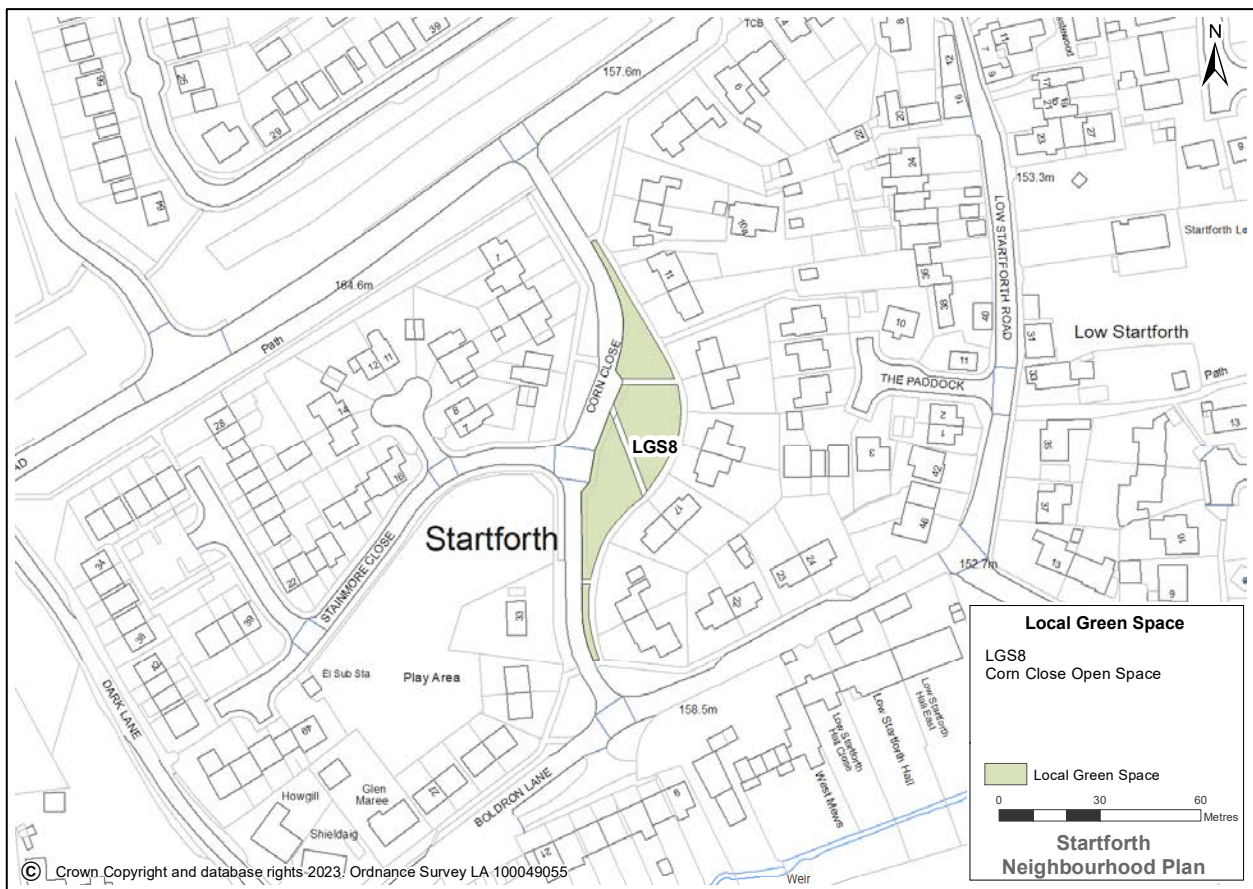
2) HISTORY	Y	Ancient woodland with remnants of WWII shooting range adjoining boundary of Barnard Castle Conservation Area and Deepdale Bridge a Grade II Listed Building and Scheduled Ancient Monument.
3) RECREATION	Y	Public footpaths allow access for enjoyment of the natural woodland
4) TRANQUILITY	Y	Steep valley sides contain the woodlands and provide tranquillity
5) WILDLIFE	Y	Abundant habitat for breeding and feeding avian, terrestrial and aquatic fauna and flora including protected species

Criteria	Y/N	Observations
Does the site have planning permission for development?	N	
Is the site allocated for development in the Local Plan?	N	
Is the site in close proximity to the community it serves?	Y	The site is within a short walking distance of the village and accessed by several public rights of way
Is the site local in character?	Y	Steep narrow valley and woodland give self-contained and clear boundaries and intimate environment on edge of village
Is the site an extensive tract of land?	N	
Is the site 'demonstrably special' to the local community?	Y	Deepdale is a visually important natural landscape feature of ecological and recreational significance providing locals with enjoyment of the natural environment and an attractive route for exercise and access to Barnard Castle

Criteria	Answer and further comments
Which criteria in Table 1 have been met?	1, 2, 3, 4 & 5
Have all the criteria in Table 2 been met?	Yes
Is the site suitable for designation as LGS?	Yes
Ownership	Private owners and Ministry of Justice
Landowner involvement?	No

Site Name	Crescent of Green Space at Corn Close
Site Reference	LGS8
Description of site	Landscaped crescent of green space as part of original housing layout
Approximate size	0.1 Hectares
Date Assessed	1 st August 2022
Assessment Outcome	Can be designated as a local green space

Site Location Plan



Site Description and Summary of Assessment

Attractive area of green space and trees created as part of the original design layout of this crescent of houses on Corn Close. Provides a pleasant residential environment

Photographs of Site

View looking South across crescent of open space



Assessment Criteria

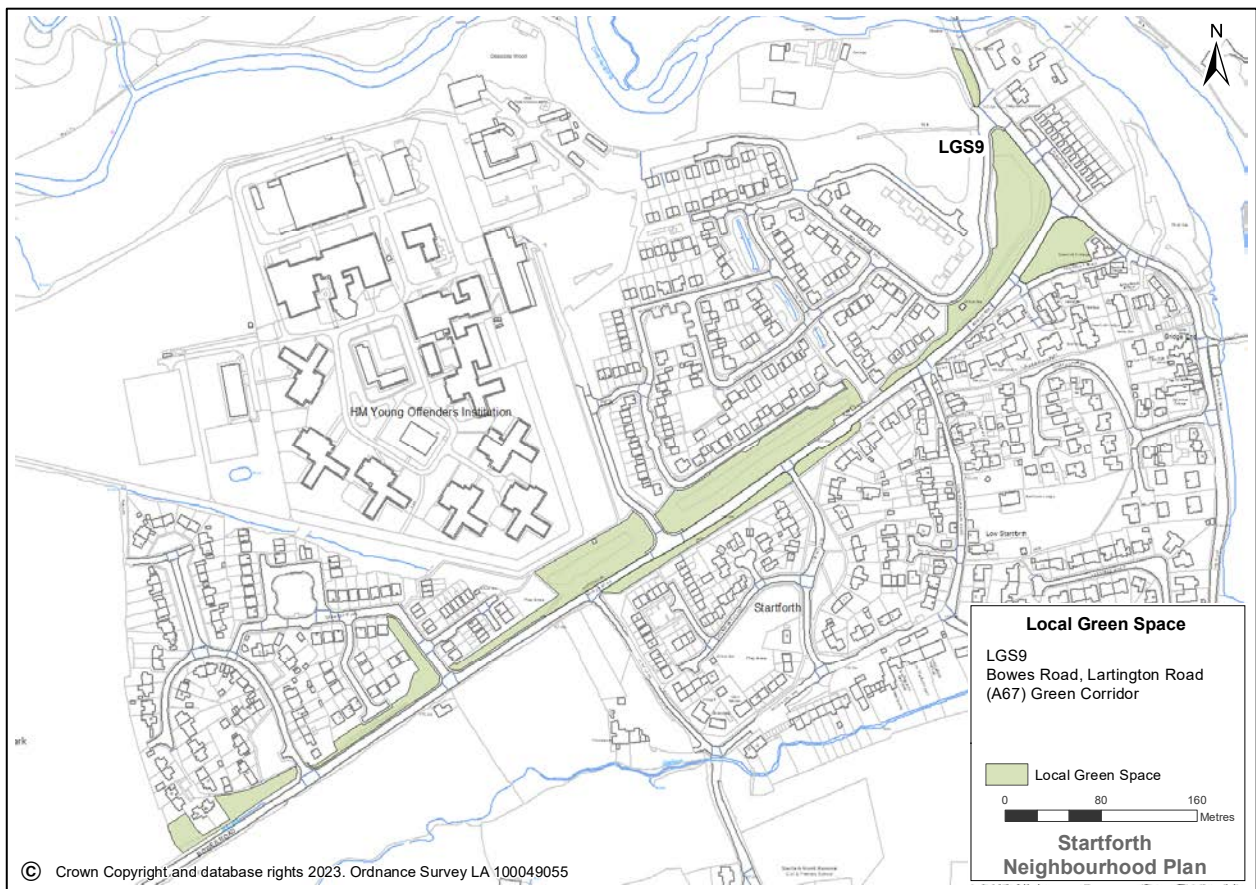
TABLE 1: QUALITIES OF THE LOCAL GREEN SPACE:		
Criteria	Y/N	Justification
1) BEAUTY	Y	Attractive landscaped green space as part of original housing layout and open setting for facing houses
2) HISTORY	N	
3) RECREATION	Y	Provides space for informal recreation and social interaction besides pedestrian access to housing
4) TRANQUILITY	N	
5) WILDLIFE	N	

TABLE 2: CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LOCAL GREEN SPACE:		
Criteria	Y/N	Observations
Does the site have planning permission for development?	N	
Is the site allocated for development in the Local Plan?	N	
Is the site in close proximity to the community it serves?	Y	Immediately to the front of housing within built up area of the village.
Is the site local in character?	Y	Small scale and defined by the road and front garden boundary fences and hedges and surrounding housing
Is the site an extensive tract of land?	N	
Is the site 'demonstrably special' to the local community?	Y	Forms part of the townscape, adding to local amenity and providing an attractive setting and outlook for surrounding residential properties.

TABLE 3: CONCLUSION OF ASSESSMENT:	
Criteria	Answer and further comments
Which criteria in Table 1 have been met?	1 & 3
Have all the criteria in Table 2 been met?	Yes
Is the site suitable for designation as LGS?	Yes
Ownership	Durham County Council
Landowner involvement?	Yes

Site Name	Bowes Road / Lartington Road (A67) Corridor
Site Reference	LGS9
Description of site	Grass verges and tree belts alongside the A67 through Startforth
Approximate size	2.0 Hectares
Date Assessed	1 st August 2022
Assessment Outcome	Can be designated as a local green space

Site Location Plan



Site Description and Summary of Assessment

Roadside grass verges and belts of trees lining the Bowes Road and its junction with Lartington Lane. This is the main road (A67) through Startforth. The varying width and position of the grass verges and trees form an attractive green corridor for the movement of pedestrians and motorised travellers and cyclists. The route is a former Roman road and at its North-Eastern end the triangle of trees between Deerbolt Bank and the Bowes Road is within the Barnard Castle Conservation Area.

Photographs of Site

View NE of Bowes Road at entrance to Startforth



View NE of Bowes Road at Grangefields



View NE past junction with Dark Lane



View NE of Bowes Road at road entrance to HMYOI



View NE of Bowes Road at Stainmore Close



View NE of Bowes Road at Corn Close junction



View NE of Bowes Road and Deerbolt Bank



View SW of Bowes Road from Lartington Road



Assessment Criteria

TABLE 1: QUALITIES OF THE LOCAL GREEN SPACE:

Criteria	Y/N	Justification
1) BEAUTY	Y	The belts of trees and varying width of grass verge provide an attractive green corridor for travelers along the main road through the village
2) HISTORY	Y	The Northeastern end of the green corridor is within the Barnard Castle Conservation Area. The Bowes Road is on the alignment of a Roman road between forts at Bowes and Binchester
3) RECREATION	Y	The green corridor provides an attractive route for walkers and cyclists
4) TRANQUILITY	N	
5) WILDLIFE	Y	The tree lined roadside provides habitat for nesting and feeding birds and a variety of other wildlife species. It also provides a corridor for their movement through the village from open countryside to the River Tees

TABLE 2: CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LOCAL GREEN SPACE:

Criteria	Y/N	Observations
Does the site have planning permission for development?	N	
Is the site allocated for development in the Local Plan?	N	
Is the site in close proximity to the community it serves?	Y	The site passes through the village with housing development to either side
Is the site local in character?	Y	The trees and houses to either side define a narrow corridor of mainly linear views

Is the site an extensive tract of land?	N	
Is the site 'demonstrably special' to the local community?	Y	The Bowes Road forms a green corridor and the main transport route through the village. It is an attractive sylvan route within the village and to Barnard Castle and affords recreation and for informal social interactions

TABLE 3: CONCLUSION OF ASSESSMENT:	
Criteria	Answer and further comments
Which criteria in Table 1 have been met?	1, 2, 3 & 5
Have all the criteria in Table 2 been met?	Yes
Is the site suitable for designation as LGS?	Yes
Ownership	Durham County Council, Ministry of Justice and private
Landowner involvement?	DCC

Site Name	Land around HMYOI & adjoining Grangefield housing estate
Site Reference	LGS10
Description of site	Open access areas around HMYOI and Grangefield equipped playground
Approximate size	1.3 Hectares
Date Assessed	1 st August 2022
Assessment Outcome	Can be designated as a local green space

Site Location Plan



Site Description and Summary of Assessment

Site consists of a contiguous mix of grassed and treed green spaces around the Eastern and Southern sides of HMYOI security fencing that have open public access. On the eastern side of the YOI the site consists of a wide grassed area, with a row of mixed deciduous trees and a footpath that extends southwards from the main YOI reception building to the junction of its access road with the A67. This area is overlooked by housing in Castle Croft. The grassed area with footpath turns South-westwards towards the Grangefields housing estate and includes a children's play area with timber log structures. The grassed site then turns North-westwards and includes a tarmacked footpath that enters Grangefields. Beyond that point the site is an informal grass pathway with trees on either side of a watercourse. The site ends at the point where a public footpath emerges from Startforth Park and follows the security fencing further Westwards to Deepdale Woods. The site forms an attractive,

landscaped open space adjacent to and overlooked from Grangefields and Castle Croft housing estates and is popular with walkers and dog owners.

Photographs of the Site

View NW towards main entrance to HMYOI



View SW along footpath to Grangefields



View looking West along path into Grangefields



View NW of path between Grangefields & HMYOI



Assessment Criteria

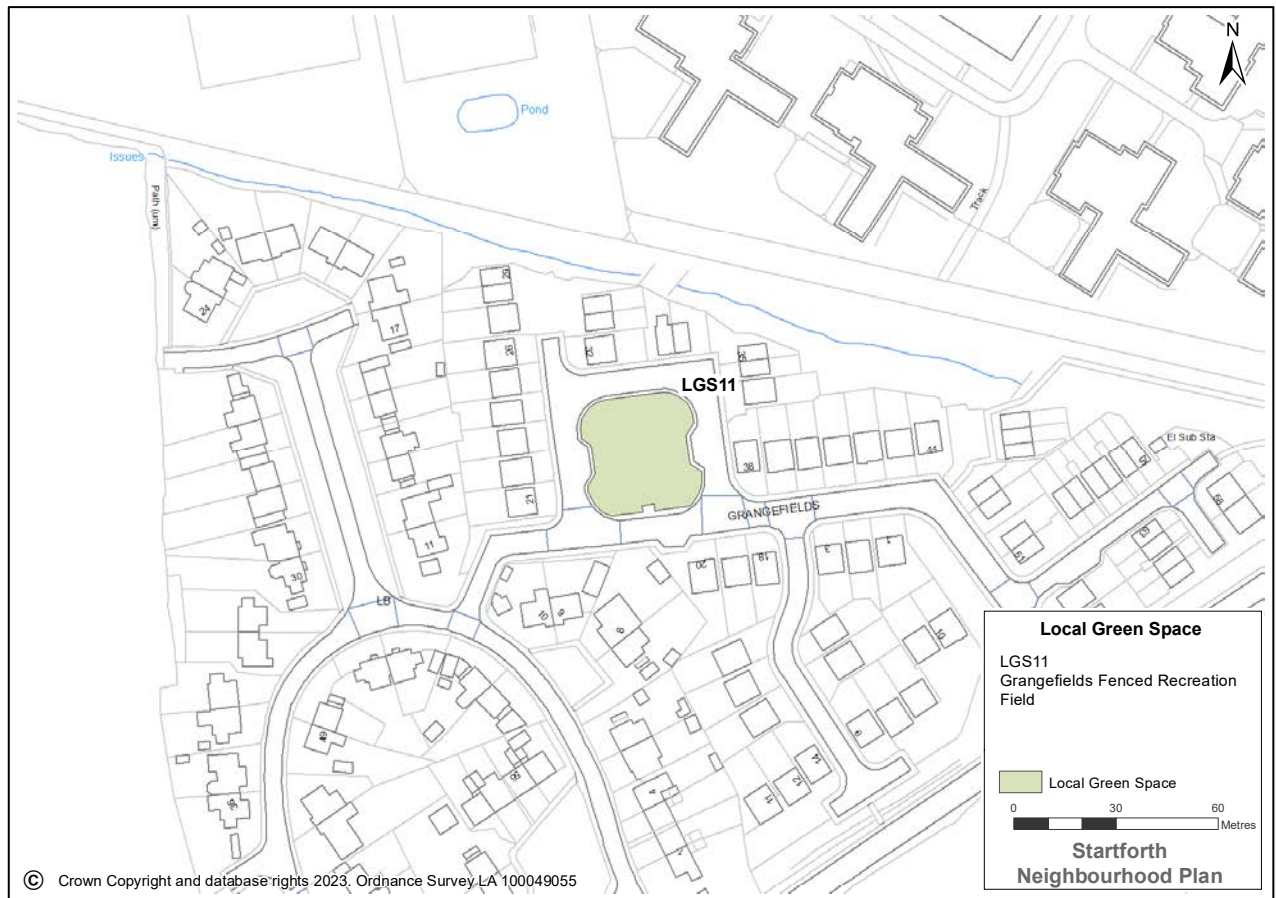
TABLE 1: QUALITIES OF THE LOCAL GREEN SPACE:		
Criteria	Y/N	Justification
1) BEAUTY	Y	Provides attractive access routes, children’s play area and space for informal recreation. The landscaped green spaces separate overlooking residential properties from the security fencing of HMYOI
2) HISTORY	N	
3) RECREATION	Y	Provides a children’s play area and forms a network of hard surfaced and grassed pathways that enable pedestrian movement and exercise.
4) TRANQUILITY	N	
5) WILDLIFE	Y	Provides habitat and a natural corridor for wildlife between built up areas

TABLE 2: CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LOCAL GREEN SPACE:		
Criteria	Y/N	Observations
Does the site have planning permission for development?	N	
Is the site allocated for development in the Local Plan?	N	
Is the site in close proximity to the community it serves?	Y	Overlooked by housing and used for movement within the village and for recreation
Is the site local in character?	Y	Visually defined and enclosed by HMYOI fencing, housing and garden fences and belts of roadside trees
Is the site an extensive tract of land?	N	
Is the site 'demonstrably special' to the local community?	Y	Forms visual buffer and separation for housing from HMYOI besides green access routes and children's play area

TABLE 3: CONCLUSION OF ASSESSMENT:	
Criteria	Answer and further comments
Which criteria in Table 1 have been met?	1, 3 & 5
Have all the criteria in Table 2 been met?	Yes
Is the site suitable for designation as LGS?	Yes
Ownership	Ministry of Justice and Grangefields Management Company
Landowner involvement?	No

Site Name	Grangefields Playing Field
Site Reference	LGS11
Description of site	Fenced grass field for children’s play and exercise
Approximate size	0.1 Hectares
Date Assessed	1 st August 2022
Assessment Outcome	Can be designated as a local green space

Site Location Plan



Site Description and Summary of Assessment

An ‘island’ of open space surrounded by a road with housing facing onto it that provides a valued recreational and visual amenity for local residents.

Photographs of Site

View Northeast across playing field



View East along Southern side of playing field



Assessment Criteria

TABLE 1: QUALITIES OF THE LOCAL GREEN SPACE:

Criteria	Y/N	Justification
1) BEAUTY	N	
2) HISTORY	N	
3) RECREATION	Y	A designed recreational space as part of the original housing layout
4) TRANQUILITY	N	
5) WILDLIFE	N	

TABLE 2: CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LOCAL GREEN SPACE:

Criteria	Y/N	Observations
Does the site have planning permission for development?	N	
Is the site allocated for development in the Local Plan?	N	
Is the site in close proximity to the community it serves?	Y	Serves the immediately surrounding housing estate
Is the site local in character?	Y	A clearly defined grass recreational space designed to serve the local residents, especially children's open air activities
Is the site an extensive tract of land?	N	

Is the site 'demonstrably special' to the local community?	Y	The field is the only flat open space on the housing estate designed for ball games and other informal open play
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TABLE 3: CONCLUSION OF ASSESSMENT:

Criteria	Answer and further comments
Which criteria in Table 1 have been met?	3
Have all the criteria in Table 2 been met?	Yes
Is the site suitable for designation as LGS?	Yes
Ownership	Private management company on behalf of residents of Grangefields
Landowner involvement?	No

Site Name	Castle Croft Greens North and South
Site Reference	LGS12
Description of site	Two roughly rectangular grass open spaces within the original layout of the housing estate, that are each based around a protected oak tree
Approximate size	0.22 Hectares
Date Assessed	1 st August 2022
Assessment Outcome	Can be designated as a local green space

Site Location Plan



Site Description and Summary of Assessment

Attractive areas of public open space specifically designed around protected mature oak trees as integral parts of the masterplan layout of Castle Croft. They provide a ‘village green’ style of space for residents on the housing estate. They are valuable both visually and for informal play and relaxation.

Photographs of Site

View SW from junction of Hisehope Close and Burnhope Way



View South from Burnhope Way



View SW from Hisehope Close



Assessment Criteria

TABLE 1: QUALITIES OF THE LOCAL GREEN SPACE:		
Criteria	Y/N	Justification
1) BEAUTY	Y	Open greens around mature oak trees give 'village green' setting for housing
2) HISTORY	N	
3) RECREATION	Y	Open grass areas for informal recreation and exercise
4) TRANQUILITY	N	
5) WILDLIFE	Y	The oaks are important for wildlife and stepping stones between other trees and wooded areas surrounding the housing estate

TABLE 2: CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LOCAL GREEN SPACE:		
Criteria	Y/N	Observations
Does the site have planning permission for development?	N	
Is the site allocated for development in the Local Plan?	N	
Is the site in close proximity to the community it serves?	Y	The 'village greens' are integral to the housing estate layout of Castle Croft
Is the site local in character?	Y	The open areas are surrounded and faced onto by housing
Is the site an extensive tract of land?	N	
Is the site 'demonstrably special' to the local community?	Y	Recreational green spaces based around mature oak trees provide green lungs and visual amenity within the Castle Croft housing estate

TABLE 3: CONCLUSION OF ASSESSMENT:	
Criteria	Answer and further comments
Which criteria in Table 1 have been met?	1, 3 & 5
Have all the criteria in Table 2 been met?	Yes
Is the site suitable for designation as LGS?	Yes
Ownership	Private
Landowner involvement?	No

Site Name	Castle Croft Green Corridor (Sustainable Urban Drainage System)
Site Reference	LGS13
Description of site	A series of linear green spaces that divide the Castle Croft housing estate and provide linked run-off ditches and a transport corridor
Approximate size	0.24 Hectares
Date Assessed	1 st August 2022
Assessment Outcome	Can be designated as a local green space

Site Location Plan



Site Description and Summary of Assessment

Visually prominent green corridor running through the heart of the site which provides a landscaped pedestrian link from Bowes Road to the footpath in the Northeast corner of the Castle Croft housing estate. Important green space visually, for informal recreation and wildlife.

Photographs of Site

View SE from junction of Tunstall Walk and Burnhope Way



View SE from junction of Tunstall Walk with Hisehope Close



View SE of Tunstall Walk from Burnhope Way



View NW from Burnhope Way



View North along Tunstall Walk



View NW along Tunstall Walk



Assessment Criteria

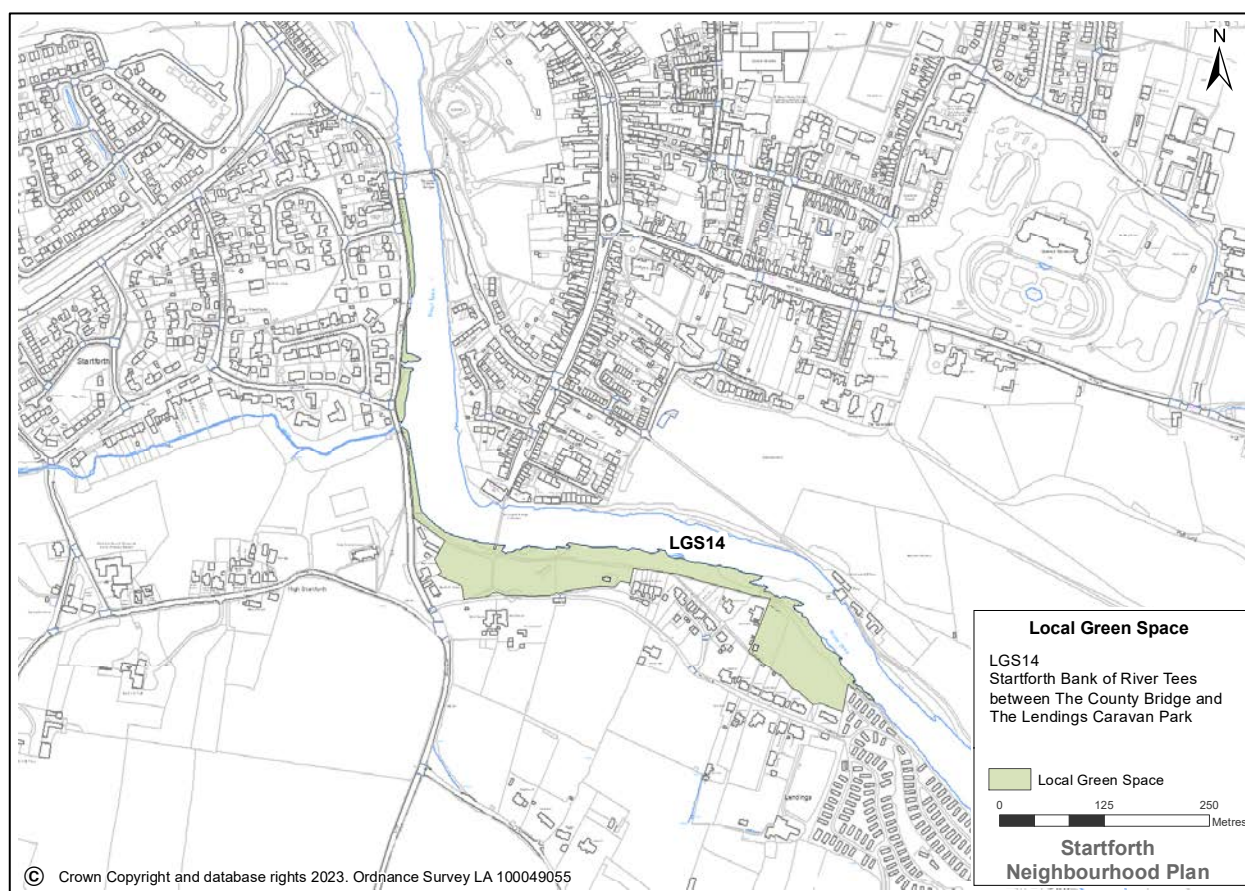
TABLE 1: QUALITIES OF THE LOCAL GREEN SPACE:		
Criteria	Y/N	Justification
1) BEAUTY	Y	Green corridor along water feature provides visual amenity to housing estate
2) HISTORY	N	
3) RECREATION	Y	Linked green spaces provide open air access route for walkers for exercise
4) TRANQUILITY	N	
5) WILDLIFE	Y	Open landscaped ditches provide water for wildlife and a corridor through the housing estate

TABLE 2: CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LOCAL GREEN SPACE:		
Criteria	Y/N	Observations
Does the site have planning permission for development?	N	
Is the site allocated for development in the Local Plan?	N	
Is the site in close proximity to the community it serves?	Y	The open space links most of the residential roads within the housing estate
Is the site local in character?	Y	An integral internal part of the housing layout
Is the site an extensive tract of land?	N	
Is the site 'demonstrably special' to the local community?	Y	Provides visual amenity and attractive access route for pedestrians

TABLE 3: CONCLUSION OF ASSESSMENT:	
Criteria	Answer and further comments
Which criteria in Table 1 have been met?	1, 3 & 5
Have all the criteria in Table 2 been met?	Yes
Is the site suitable for designation as LGS?	Yes
Ownership	Private
Landowner involvement?	No

Site Name	Startforth Bank of River Tees
Site Reference	LGS14
Description of site	The green spaces forming the bank of the River Tees within Startforth Parish
Approximate size	2.5 Hectares
Date Assessed	1 st August 2022
Assessment Outcome	Can be designated as a local green space

Site Location Plan



Site Description and Summary of Assessment

The bankside of the River Tees within the Parish of Startforth between the County Bridge in the north and the River View Leisure Park in the south including the adjoining paddocks and incidental fields and wooded areas between the river and the roadways of the The Sills and The Lendings. The riverbank is accessible from The Sills and a public footpath follows the riverbank and connects with the pedestrian only Thorngate Bridge that crosses the river to Barnard Castle. The trees growing on the bankside provide a green corridor and add to the visual amenity of the riverside with its views of Barnard Castle. The whole area is within the Barnard Castle Conservation Area. The riverside affords visually important views of many listed buildings, including the Listed Grade I Barnard Castle and County Bridge.

Photographs of Site

The view north from the footpath between The Sills and the Thorngate Bridge



The view East towards Thorngate Bridge



The view North from The Lendings



View NE from footpath to Thorngate Bridge



The view East along the riverside footpath and field below The Lendings



Looking East along the riverside path and the field below The Lendings before the Caravan Park



Assessment Criteria

TABLE 1: QUALITIES OF THE LOCAL GREEN SPACE:		
Criteria	Y/N	Justification
1) BEAUTY	Y	The trees and open spaces along the bankside of the River Tees are of major visual importance in their contribution to creating the very attractive appearance and character of the river environment and in the views of Startforth and Barnard Castle.
2) HISTORY	Y	The site is within the Barnard Castle Conservation Area and setting of listed buildings
3) RECREATION	Y	The riverside footpath is a well-used walking route and provides access for passive and more active recreation, such as swimming, fishing and canoeing
4) TRANQUILITY	Y	The wooded banks provide a tranquil atmosphere
5) WILDLIFE	Y	The river bank provides feeding and breeding habitat and a major wildlife corridor for protected wildlife species and nesting birds

TABLE 2: CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LOCAL GREEN SPACE:		
Criteria	Y/N	Observations
Does the site have planning permission for development?	N	
Is the site allocated for development in the Local Plan?	N	
Is the site in close proximity to the community it serves?	Y	The riverbank adjoins residential properties and is accessible by walking from all the village
Is the site local in character?	Y	The riverbank is a narrow corridor lying between the village housing and the River Tees
Is the site an extensive tract of land?	N	
Is the site 'demonstrably special' to the local community?	Y	The riverbank is fundamentally important to the visual setting of the village in the landscape and as an accessible walking route for work, pleasure and recreation

TABLE 3: CONCLUSION OF ASSESSMENT:	
Criteria	Answer and further comments
Which criteria in Table 1 have been met?	1, 2, 3, 4 & 5
Have all the criteria in Table 2 been met?	Yes
Is the site suitable for designation as LGS?	Yes
Ownership	Various private owners
Landowner involvement?	No

Appendix 4

Valued View Assessments

OXFORD CHARACTER ASSESSMENT TOOLKIT (SHORTHAND)
Valued View One – Ullathorne Mill

IN ADDITION TO COMMENTS, SCORE EACH CATEGORY FROM - 5 TO + 5.
 ASSESSOR SHOULD BE FAMILIAR WITH TOOLKIT GUIDANCE NOTES PRIOR TO
 SURVEY. THIS TECHNIQUE IS IMPROVED IF USED IN CONJUNCTION WITH A
 STREET PLAN ON WHICH TO ANNOTATE KEY FEATURES

SPACES: GAPS BETWEEN BUILT ELEMENTS – STREETS, GARDENS, ETC.	
Hints: Formal, building plots (size, building position, etc), means of enclosure, gaps, open, narrow, winding, straight, type of use, paving/surface materials, street furniture, usability, impact of traffic.	
This is an area of open green/grassed space and is a designated picnic area. The area is enclosed by tress on three sides. There are buildings to the right if facing directly towards the County Bridge	SCORE: 4
BUILDINGS:	
Hints: Contribution of buildings to the space, size, scale, form (terraced, etc), frontage onto street, materials, windows, doors, condition, use, visible alterations.	
There is a mixture of buildings visible from this area– old and more modern housing. Barnard Castle, castle can also be seen from here.	SCORE: 5
VIEWS:	
Hints: Within the space (long, short, intimate, glimpsed, channelled, wide), focal points, streetscape (how buildings and streets work together), roofscape, views out of the space (long/short distance, high level).	
There is a wide view of Barnard Castle, castle and down the road from this site (The Sills). Visitors often stand on this site to take photos of the castle. Quite picturesque through the trees. There are artefacts relating to the mill that once stood on this site. Good view of trees down the road (The Sills) from this site.	SCORE: 5
GREENERY & LANDSCAPE FEATURES:	
Hints: Contribution of trees and plants (colours, shade), hard/urban, private or public, water, changing levels	
This is a green/grassed space next to the River Tees. It is a public recreation area with picnic tables and seating. .	SCORE: 5
LIGHT/DARK: SHADING, TIME OF DAY/NIGHT	
Time 15:15 approx. Light good today as sun shining. Shaded areas under trees.	SCORE: 4
NOISE & SMELL: MAN MADE OR NATURAL	
Noise of flowing river dominates traffic noise.	SCORE: 3
SPIRIT OF PLACE: Relaxing space though spoilt at times by noise of some heavy vehicles.-	TOTAL: 26

OXFORD CHARACTER ASSESSMENT TOOL (SHORTHAND)
Valued View Two – Boldron Lane



IN ADDITION TO COMMENTS, SCORE EACH CATEGORY FROM - 5 TO + 5.
 ASSESSOR SHOULD BE FAMILIAR WITH TOOLKIT GUIDANCE NOTES PRIOR TO SURVEY. THIS TECHNIQUE IS IMPROVED IF USED IN CONJUNCTION WITH A STREET PLAN ON WHICH TO ANNOTATE KEY FEATURES

SPACES: GAPS BETWEEN BUILT ELEMENTS – STREETS, GARDENS, ETC.	
Hints: Formal, building plots (size, building position, etc), means of enclosure, gaps, open, narrow, winding, straight, type of use, paving/surface materials, street furniture, usability, impact of traffic.	
This area is a field between houses/gardens and hedge line which borders Community Centre field.	SCORE: 4
BUILDINGS:	
Hints: Contribution of buildings to the space, size, scale, form (terraced, etc), frontage onto street, materials, windows, doors, condition, use, visible alterations.	
As you stand looking down the field there is a stone wall. In front of the stone wall there is a bench marking the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II	SCORE: 0
VIEWS:	
Hints: Within the space (long, short, intimate, glimpsed, channelled, wide), focal points, streetscape (how buildings and streets work together), roofscape, views out of the space (long/short distance, high level).	
Long view of St Marys Church (in Barnard Castle) and surrounding buildings	SCORE: 5
GREENERY & LANDSCAPE FEATURES:	
Hints: Contribution of trees and plants (colours, shade), hard/urban, private or public, water, changing levels	
Trees and hedges channel the view of St Marys Church down the field. The field is privately owned. On most occasions there are sheep grazing in this field.	SCORE: 4
LIGHT/DARK: SHADING, TIME OF DAY/NIGHT	
Time approx: 13:30 hrs. Bright sunny day. Dappled shade in some parts of field created by trees.	SCORE: 4
NOISE & SMELL: MAN MADE OR NATURAL	
No unpleasant smells. Natural noise of birds singing.	SCORE: 5
SPIRIT OF PLACE: Quiet and peaceful! Nice place to sit and ponder!!	TOTAL: 22

OXFORD CHARACTER ASSESSMENT TOOL (SHORTHAND)
Valued View Three – High Startforth



IN ADDITION TO COMMENTS, SCORE EACH CATEGORY FROM - 5 TO + 5. ASSESSOR SHOULD BE FAMILIAR WITH TOOLKIT GUIDANCE NOTES PRIOR TO SURVEY. THIS TECHNIQUE IS IMPROVED IF USED IN CONJUNCTION WITH A STREET PLAN ON WHICH TO ANNOTATE KEY FEATURES

SPACES: GAPS BETWEEN BUILT ELEMENTS – STREETS, GARDENS, ETC.	
Hints: Formal, building plots (size, building position, etc), means of enclosure, gaps, open, narrow, winding, straight, type of use, paving/surface materials, street furniture, usability, impact of traffic.	
<p>Gap - which is a field between houses .Sheep in field. Enclosed by stone wall. Stone wall to rear of us – high wall around grounds of Startforth Hall.</p> <p>Open view across field gives views of Barnard Castle castle and houses in the town of Barnard Castle</p>	<p>SCORE: 5</p>
BUILDINGS:	
Hints: Contribution of buildings to the space, size, scale, form (terraced, etc), frontage onto street, materials, windows, doors, condition, use, visible alterations.	
<p>Stone walls and houses. Houses vary in age. Can also view Castle in the distance.</p>	<p>SCORE: 5</p>
VIEWS:	
Hints: Within the space (long, short, intimate, glimpsed, channelled, wide), focal points, streetscape (how buildings and streets work together), roofscape, views out of the space (long/short distance, high level).	
<p>Long view featuring Barnard Castle. Town house and castle can be seen. Also able to see trees in Flatts Wood. Tress also frame this view.</p>	<p>SCORE: 5</p>
GREENERY & LANDSCAPE FEATURES:	
Hints: Contribution of trees and plants (colours, shade), hard/urban, private or public, water, changing levels	
<p>Street light and phone cables. Green field. Trees around three aspects of the field. Also trees to rear of where we are standing. Observed different colours and shades of green leaves on trees.</p>	<p>SCORE: 5</p>
LIGHT/DARK: SHADING, TIME OF DAY/NIGHT	
<p>Time approx: 14:20pm. Bright sunny day when assessment conducted</p>	<p>SCORE: 5</p>
NOISE & SMELL: MAN MADE OR NATURAL	
<p>Noise – natural. Birds singing. Otherwise quiet</p>	<p>SCORE: 5</p>
<p>SPIRIT OF PLACE: Quiet and peaceful. No traffic</p>	<p>TOTAL: 30</p>

OXFORD CHARACTER ASSESSMENT TOOL (SHORTHAND) Valued View Four – Church Bank Field

IN ADDITION TO COMMENTS, SCORE EACH CATEGORY FROM - 5 TO + 5.
ASSESSOR SHOULD BE FAMILIAR WITH TOOLKIT GUIDANCE NOTES PRIOR TO
SURVEY. THIS TECHNIQUE IS IMPROVED IF USED IN CONJUNCTION WITH A
STREET PLAN ON WHICH TO ANNOTATE KEY FEATURES

SPACES: GAPS BETWEEN BUILT ELEMENTS – STREETS, GARDENS, ETC.	
Hints: Formal, building plots (size, building position, etc), means of enclosure, gaps, open, narrow, winding, straight, type of use, paving/surface materials, street furniture, usability, impact of traffic.	
Informal garden/field area with seating. Enclosed by stone wall. Holy Trinity Church to left side. Field with hedge to rear of seat where assessment was being conducted.	SCORE: 3
BUILDINGS:	
Hints: Contribution of buildings to the space, size, scale, form (terraced, etc), frontage onto street, materials, windows, doors, condition, use, visible alterations.	
Holy Trinity Church to left. Direct view of house. Houses in distance and St Mary's old school can be seen. Can see to top path of Demesnes and field above Rugby field	SCORE: 3
VIEWS:	
Hints: Within the space (long, short, intimate, glimpsed, channelled, wide), focal points, streetscape (how buildings and streets work together), roofscape, views out of the space (long/short distance, high level).	
View as above. Can see houses in distance and St Mary's old school. Also can see as far as Demesnes and field above rugby field. Long view across to Barnard Castle town. View of river obstructed by trees currently in leaf.	SCORE: 3
GREENERY & LANDSCAPE FEATURES:	
Hints: Contribution of trees and plants (colours, shade), hard/urban, private or public, water, changing levels	
Lots of greenery. Area is unkempt field/garden area. There are trees around seated area. Large tree overhanging from church yard. Hedge to rear of field.	SCORE: 5
LIGHT/DARK: SHADING, TIME OF DAY/NIGHT	
Time approx: 14:30pm Dappled shade due to trees.	SCORE: 4
NOISE & SMELL: MAN MADE OR NATURAL	
Near road leading to and from A66. Occasional traffic consisting of cars, wagons and motor bikes. Workmen drilling at nearby house. However, when drilling stops birds singing and flowing river can be heard.	SCORE: 3
SPIRIT OF PLACE: Nice place to sit but can be noisy at times.	TOTAL: 20

OXFORD CHARACTER ASSESSMENT TOOL (SHORTHAND)
Valued View Five – The Lendings (from top road)



IN ADDITION TO COMMENTS, SCORE EACH CATEGORY FROM - 5 TO + 5.
 ASSESSOR SHOULD BE FAMILIAR WITH TOOLKIT GUIDANCE NOTES PRIOR TO SURVEY. THIS TECHNIQUE IS IMPROVED IF USED IN CONJUNCTION WITH A STREET PLAN ON WHICH TO ANNOTATE KEY FEATURES

SPACES: GAPS BETWEEN BUILT ELEMENTS – STREETS, GARDENS, ETC.	
Hints: Formal, building plots (size, building position, etc), means of enclosure, gaps, open, narrow, winding, straight, type of use, paving/surface materials, street furniture, usability, impact of traffic.	
Space is both formal and informal. View from The Lendings above the River Tees. Footpath can be seen below and green bridge over river	SCORE: 5
BUILDINGS:	
Hints: Contribution of buildings to the space, size, scale, form (terraced, etc), frontage onto street, materials, windows, doors, condition, use, visible alterations.	
Buildings - mostly houses. These are a mixture of ages. Some listed buildings visible. A house which was built at the turn of the century directly behind assessors. To left , in Startforth village, some more modern houses can be seen.	SCORE: 5
VIEWS:	
Hints: Within the space (long, short, intimate, glimpsed, channelled, wide), focal points, streetscape (how buildings and streets work together), roofscape, views out of the space (long/short distance, high level).	
Panoramic views. Long distance view of moors. Distant views to Barnard Castle town. Closer view includes areas known as The Bank, Butter Mart and St Mary’s church.	SCORE: 5
GREENERY & LANDSCAPE FEATURES:	
Hints: Contribution of trees and plants (colours, shade), hard/urban, private or public, water, changing levels	
This view is surrounded by greenery. Trees visible across vista.	SCORE: 5
LIGHT/DARK: SHADING, TIME OF DAY/NIGHT	
Time approx: 14:45pm. Bright and sunny	SCORE: 4
NOISE & SMELL: MAN MADE OR NATURAL	
Bird song and flowing river can be heard. Very little other noises.	SCORE: 4
SPIRIT OF PLACE: Pleasant/peaceful.	TOTAL: 28

OXFORD CHARACTER ASSESSMENT TOOL (SHORTHAND)

Valued View Six – The Lendings – riverside path

IN ADDITION TO COMMENTS, SCORE EACH CATEGORY FROM - 5 TO + 5.
ASSESSOR SHOULD BE FAMILIAR WITH TOOLKIT GUIDANCE NOTES PRIOR TO SURVEY. THIS TECHNIQUE IS IMPROVED IF USED IN CONJUNCTION WITH A STREET PLAN ON WHICH TO ANNOTATE KEY FEATURES

SPACES: GAPS BETWEEN BUILT ELEMENTS – STREETS, GARDENS, ETC.	
Hints: Formal, building plots (size, building position, etc), means of enclosure, gaps, open, narrow, winding, straight, type of use, paving/surface materials, street furniture, usability, impact of traffic.	
Well defined space due to river and cottages and mill on opposite side of river.	SCORE: 4
BUILDINGS:	
Hints: Contribution of buildings to the space, size, scale, form (terraced, etc), frontage onto street, materials, windows, doors, condition, use, visible alterations.	
View of old mill and cottages which are listed buildings. Houses to rear of view	SCORE: 5
VIEWS:	
Hints: Within the space (long, short, intimate, glimpsed, channelled, wide), focal points, streetscape (how buildings and streets work together), roofscape, views out of the space (long/short distance, high level).	
Focal point view Very picturesque view. Framed by trees either side. View encompasses, old mill, cottages, River Tees and small waterfall	SCORE: 5
GREENERY & LANDSCAPE FEATURES:	
Hints: Contribution of trees and plants (colours, shade), hard/urban, private or public, water, changing levels	
Lots of trees. Fields to rear. Grassed area to stand and admire view. Bluebells in bloom. Houses with nice gardens to rear	SCORE: 5
LIGHT/DARK: SHADING, TIME OF DAY/NIGHT	
Time approx 15:00 hrs. Assessors in shade due to trees. Areas of shade and light enhance this view	SCORE: 5
NOISE & SMELL: MAN MADE OR NATURAL	
Natural noise. Bird song and sound of river cascading over small waterfall.	SCORE: 5
SPIRIT OF PLACE: Beautiful. Peaceful. Noise of river comforting.	TOTAL: 29

OXFORD CHARACTER ASSESSMENT TOOL (SHORTHAND)
Valued View Seven – River View Leisure Park – formerly The
Lendings Caravan Park.



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ASSESSOR SHOULD BE FAMILIAR WITH TOOLKIT GUIDANCE NOTES PRIOR TO
SURVEY. THIS TECHNIQUE IS IMPROVED IF USED IN CONJUNCTION WITH A
STREET PLAN ON WHICH TO ANNOTATE KEY FEATURES

SPACES: GAPS BETWEEN BUILT ELEMENTS – STREETS, GARDENS, ETC.	
Hints: Formal, building plots (size, building position, etc), means of enclosure, gaps, open, narrow, winding, straight, type of use, paving/surface materials, street furniture, usability, impact of traffic.	
Areas enclosed by fields and trees.	SCORE: 4
BUILDINGS:	
Hints: Contribution of buildings to the space, size, scale, form (terraced, etc), frontage onto street, materials, windows, doors, condition, use, visible alterations.	
Caravans in caravan park can be seen but are partly obscured by field. Some houses n also see along The Lendings can be seen. Can also see some town houses in Barnard Castle, roofs of houses in Demesnes area, house to right hand side of assessor and a dry stone wall in front and to right of assessors. Central point is The Bowes Museum.	SCORE: 4
VIEWS:	
Hints: Within the space (long, short, intimate, glimpsed, channelled, wide), focal points, streetscape (how buildings and streets work together), roofscape, views out of the space (long/short distance, high level).	
Panoramic view. Focal point is The Bowes Museum. To right of assessors are fields. To the left – houses situated at the top of the Demesnes and Park Terrace. Further to the left Egglestone Moors are visible.	SCORE: 5
GREENERY & LANDSCAPE FEATURES:	
Hints: Contribution of trees and plants (colours, shade), hard/urban, private or public, water, changing levels	
Trees and fields segregate view of rugby field and The Bowes Museum. Trees and fields to left and right of assessors. Hedge and field behind assessors. Greenery +++	SCORE: 5
LIGHT/DARK: SHADING, TIME OF DAY/NIGHT	
Time approx 13:45pm Over cast day. No shadows.	SCORE: 4
NOISE & SMELL: MAN MADE OR NATURAL	
Birds and sheep can be heard. Traffic in the distance can be heard.	SCORE: 4
SPIRIT OF PLACE: Quiet and peaceful with a lovely view.	TOTAL: 26