

HOUSING NEED AND SITE SELECTION ASSESSMENT: BACKGROUND DOCUMENT

STAINFORTH NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN & DEVELOPMENT ORDER

ON BEHALF OF STAINFORTH TOWN COUNCIL

**TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (AS AMENDED)
PLANNING AND COMPULSORY PURCHASE ACT 2004**

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CONTENTS:

Page No:

1.0	Introduction	1
2.0	Planning Context	2
3.0	Evidence of Need	9
4.0	Unity Regeneration Project	20
5.0	Former Hatfield Main Colliery Regeneration.....	24
6.0	Sequential Approach to Site Selection	26
7.0	Bringing the Evidence Together	28
	Appendix 1: Neighbourhood Plan Proposals Map.....	30

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This evidence paper considers the housing needs within Stainforth. It has been provided by Pegasus Group on behalf of our client Stainforth Town Council. The evidence within this paper is provided to inform the development of the Stainforth Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) and the associated Neighbourhood Development Order (NDO) for the former Hatfield Colliery site.
- 1.2 This paper considers whether the provision of additional housing at the former Hatfield Colliery site is in principle justified and consistent with the strategic policies within the Doncaster Local Plan.
- 1.3 As part of the NDP and NDO the Town Council is considering allocating 16.8 hectares of land at the former colliery site for residential development. It is envisaged that the development of this site would accommodate circa 500 new homes.
- 1.4 The location of the proposed housing is identified on the Neighbourhood Plan proposals map, replicated in appendix 1.

2.0 Planning Context

- 2.1 This section considers the planning context for the housing needs assessment and how this relates to neighbourhood planning.

National Policy and Guidance

- 2.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published February 2019 sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework for how all local plans, including Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs), should be produced. The NPPF must be taken into account in preparing the development plan and is a material consideration in planning decisions.

- 2.3 In relation to housing need it identifies that¹:

"...strategic policies² should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses, as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas, unless:

- i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the plan area; or*
- ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole."*

- 2.4 It further notes that NDPs should support the delivery of strategic policies contained in local plans or spatial development strategies³.

- 2.5 Paragraph 59 of the NPPF identifies that:

"To support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without

¹ 2019 NPPF, paragraph 11 part b

² Strategic Policies are those set out within Local Plans or Spatial Development Strategies which address strategic priorities in line with the requirements of Section 19 (1B-E) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

³ 2019 NPPF, paragraph 13.

unnecessary delay.”

2.6 The NPPF goes on to identify that the local housing need figure, derived using the standard method in the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) should determine the minimum number of homes within an area⁴. The plan requirement within the Doncaster Local Plan is discussed below.

2.7 It further adds⁵ that:

“...the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies (including, but not limited to, those who require affordable housing, families with children, older people, students, people with disabilities, service families, travellers, people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes”.

2.8 In terms of housing need and neighbourhood plan areas the NPPF requires local authorities⁶ to:

2.9 *“...establish a housing requirement figure for their whole area, which shows the extent to which their identified housing need (and any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas) can be met over the plan period. **Within this overall requirement, strategic policies should also set out a housing requirement for designated neighbourhood areas which reflects the overall strategy for the pattern and scale of development and any relevant allocations.** Once the strategic policies have been adopted, these figures should not need retesting at the neighbourhood plan examination, unless there has been a significant change in circumstances that affects the requirement.”* (our emphasis) and;

“Where it is not possible to provide a requirement figure for a neighbourhood area, the local planning authority should provide an indicative figure, if requested to do so by the neighbourhood planning body. This figure should take into account factors such as the latest evidence of local housing need, the population of the neighbourhood area and the most recently available planning strategy of the local planning authority”

⁴ 2019 NPPF, paragraph 60

⁵ 2019 NPPF, paragraph 61

⁶ 2019 NPPF, paragraphs 65 and 66

2.10 The NPPF is supported by the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). This provides guidance upon how the NPPF should be interpreted. The PPG contains a specific section upon neighbourhood plans which amongst other issues covers housing need. Key sections of the PPG are identified below (our emphasis is provided).

How should neighbourhood planning bodies use a housing requirement figure that has been provided to them⁷?

Where neighbourhood planning bodies have decided to make provision for housing in their plan, the housing requirement figure and its origin are expected to be set out in the neighbourhood plan as a basis for their housing policies and any allocations that they wish to make.

Neighbourhood planning bodies are encouraged to plan to meet their housing requirement, and where possible to exceed it. A sustainable choice of sites to accommodate housing will provide flexibility if circumstances change, and allows plans to remain up to date over a longer time scale. ***Where neighbourhood planning bodies intend to exceed their housing requirement figure, proactive engagement with their local planning authority can help to assess whether the scale of additional housing numbers is considered to be in general conformity with the strategic policies.*** For example, whether the scale of proposed increase has a detrimental impact on the strategic spatial strategy, or whether sufficient infrastructure is proposed to support the scale of development and whether it has a realistic prospect of being delivered in accordance with development plan policies on viability. ***Any neighbourhood plan policies on the size or type of housing required will need to be informed by the evidence prepared to support relevant strategic policies, supplemented where necessary by locally-produced information.***

When strategic housing policies are being updated, neighbourhood planning bodies may wish to consider whether it is an appropriate time to review and update their neighbourhood plan as well. This should be in light of the local planning authority's reasons for updating, and any up-to-date evidence that has become available which may affect the continuing relevance of the policies set out in the neighbourhood plan.

⁷ PPG ID 41-103-20190509

Are housing requirement figures for neighbourhood areas binding⁸?

The scope of neighbourhood plans is up to the neighbourhood planning body. Where strategic policies set out a housing requirement figure for a designated neighbourhood area, the neighbourhood planning body does not have to make specific provision for housing, or seek to allocate sites to accommodate the requirement (which may have already been done through the strategic policies or through non-strategic policies produced by the local planning authority). The strategic policies will, however, have established the scale of housing expected to take place in the neighbourhood area.

Housing requirement figures for neighbourhood plan areas are not binding as neighbourhood planning groups are not required to plan for housing. However, there is an expectation that [housing requirement figures will be set in strategic policies, or an indicative figure provided on request](#). Where the figure is set in strategic policies, this figure will not need retesting at examination of the neighbourhood plan. Where it is set as an indicative figure, it will need to be tested at examination.

- 2.11 Given the guidance above it is clear that an NDP can provide housing and are encouraged to exceed the identified housing requirements for the area within the Local Plan. In providing for housing the NDP must set out how the housing figure has been derived, be it through the Local Plan or other evidence base. The housing requirement figure within an NDP will only require testing where it is not set by the Local Plan.

Doncaster Local Plan

- 2.12 The Doncaster Local Plan 2015-2035 (Local Plan) was adopted later on 23rd September 2021 and therefore represents an up to date local plan. The following policies are considered the most relevant in considering housing need and the NDP⁹.
- 2.13 Policy 1: Settlement Hierarchy identifies that Stainforth is part of a larger 'Main Town' including the adjoining settlements of Dunscroft, Dunsville and Hatfield. The policy identifies that approximately 40% of the housing growth will be

⁸ PPG ID 41-104-20190509

delivered in the 'Main Towns' and to:

*"...maintain and enhance their roles as main towns, which each provide a high number of services for their own needs and their wider catchment areas, and in order to aid economic growth and regeneration, **these settlements will be the focus for substantial housing growth**, supported by appropriate levels of employment and retail growth and wider service provision."* (our emphasis).

- 2.14 Policy 2: Level of Growth provides a minimum housing requirement of 15,640 dwellings over the period 2018 to 2035. This equates to an average of at least 920 dwellings per annum.
- 2.15 The Doncaster Local Plan housing requirement is based upon evidence provided by the 'Economic Forecasts and Housing Needs Assessment' document undertaken by Peter Brett Associates on behalf of the Council and published in June 2018. This assessment considers the needs and targets for employment land and housing over the plan period, 2015 to 2032. The assessment uses two possible economic futures:
- Business as usual – based upon the standard or baseline forecast from Experian; and
 - Policy-led – based upon an assumed 1% per annum rate of job growth.
- 2.16 The housing requirement within the Doncaster Local Plan is based upon the 'Policy-led' scenario which identified a requirement of 912 dwellings each year (dpa). The Council's March 2020 '*Doncaster Local Plan Topic Paper 4: Housing*' identified that the 912dpa has been 'rounded up' to 920dpa.
- 2.17 The housing requirement within the Local Plan sits comfortably above the housing requirement which would be derived by using the Government's standard method (circa 585dpa). The economic uplift therefore represents circa 335 dwellings per annum. This evidence paper does not break down the housing requirement to a sub-district level.
- 2.18 Table 3 of the Local Plan identifies that the Main Urban Area and Main Towns, which includes Stainforth, Dunscroft, Dunsville and Hatfield should not only receive a proportion of the baseline but also assist in delivering the housing associated with the economic uplift.
- 2.19 Tables 4 and 8 of the Local Plan identify that 1,968 dwellings are allocated for delivery in Dunscroft, Dunsville, Hatfield and Stainforth to the end of the plan

period, 2035. A total of 1,860 of these allocations already benefit from permission the vast majority of these relate to the Unity scheme, discussed later in this report.

- 2.20 In relation to housing requirements and Neighbourhood Plans the Local Plan provides explanatory text at paragraph 4.44. This identifies:

*"The Local Plan does not make specific housing requirements for individual areas. This is because the Local Plan identifies sufficient sites overall to meet its housing allocation requirements, and does not rely on neighbourhood plans making additional housing allocations therefore. Given national guidance is clear that the Council should seek to avoid conflicts where possible between respective plans, and avoid duplication of the process, a number of sites allocated in the Local Plan have already been identified as allocations in 'made' and emerging neighbourhood plans. **Whilst there is no requirement for neighbourhood plans to allocate housing sites, they are able to identify additional housing sites if they wish to do so, and provided that they are in general conformity with the strategic policies in the Local Plan.**"* (our emphasis).

- 2.21 In terms of the range of homes to be delivered Policy 7: Delivering the Necessary Range of Housing identifies those new developments will be required to deliver an appropriate mix of house size, type and tenure having regard to the Council's latest Housing Needs Study or other robust evidence.

- 2.22 Paragraph 6.8 of the Local Plan identifies that the current Housing Needs Study suggests:

"With regards to type and size, this report finds that whilst proportions vary across the Borough, generally the greatest need identified is for 3 bed houses, followed by larger 4+ bed houses and 2 bed bungalows.

- 2.23 Appendix 4 of the Local Plan identifies that the greatest need within Dunscoft, Dunsville, Hatfield and Stainforth is aligned with these findings. Greater detail is provided in later sections of this report.

- 2.24 Policy 69 of the Local Plan refers to the Unity Regeneration Project, which is a Strategic Policy. The policy area covers a large area between Stainforth, Dunscoft, Dunsville and Hatfield, including the former Hatfield Colliery site which sits within the neighbourhood plan area. The policy identifies that the

site will be a new mixed-use development consisting of up to 3,100 homes with at least 1,015 anticipated to be delivered within the plan period. This scheme is considered in greater detail later in this report.

Discussion

- 2.25 The NPPF is clearly supportive of Neighbourhood Plans planning for growth and exceeding targets where possible. Whilst the Local Plan MM does not provide a housing requirement for the Neighbourhood Plan area it identifies that additional housing growth can occur providing it remains in general conformity with strategic policies.
- 2.26 The housing requirement identified in Policy 2 is a minimum requirement and as such should not be seen as a cap to appropriately sited new housing development. The 'Main Towns', of which Stainforth forms part of, are identified as a location for substantial growth, amounting to about 40% of the housing requirement. Stainforth is, therefore, an appropriate location for housing development.
- 2.27 In addition, the housing growth proposed within the NDP would be sited within an identified mixed-use allocation within the Doncaster Local Plan. Whilst the area of land, proposed for housing, is not identified for housing in the indicative masterplan, the policy does not tie development to the indicative masterplan. The principle is, therefore, acceptable under the terms of the allocation. Further housing growth in Stainforth is therefore clearly 'in principle' acceptable.
- 2.28 The scale of housing growth proposed on the potential neighbourhood plan allocation is circa 210 dwellings. This represents a small proportion of the growth within the overall Local Plan and is approximately 7% of the total development identified at the Unity Regeneration scheme. This level of growth would not unbalance the Development Strategy identified in the Local Plan.

3.0 Evidence of Need

- 3.1 The discussion with section 2 of this report identifies that the provision of additional housing within the NDP is in general conformity with both national policy and the Doncaster Local Plan. As such this report does not seek to challenge the Council's housing requirement figure, nor does it seek to set a housing requirement for the neighbourhood plan.
- 3.2 This assessment of the available evidence seeks to identify local housing needs within Stainforth. It aims to identify how the additional growth proposed would assist in meeting these needs. Unfortunately, not all data is available at the parish level. It has, therefore, been necessary to consider some elements of the evidence at higher level geographies. This does cause some issues, for example Stainforth is within the same ward as Barnby Dun but they are quite different places. This inevitably has an impact upon the data.

Population

- 3.3 The population of Stainforth stood at 6,282 persons at the previous census in 2011. This represented a small decrease of 60 persons compared to 2001. However, since 2011 there has been population growth within the parish. It is estimated by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) that in 2019 the population of Stainforth had grown to 6,657 persons¹⁰, representing a 0.7% annual rate of growth since 2011. This rate of population growth is on a par with national (England) averages (0.78%) and is significantly above the district average (0.38%)¹¹ over the same period.
- 3.4 The 2018 subnational population projections¹² are, at the time of writing, the latest available population projections. Whilst these are not available below district level, they do suggest a growth in the population of Doncaster. Over the plan period 2018 to 2035 the population of Doncaster is projected to increase from 310,542 to 329,641 persons, an increase of 19,099 persons. This represents an annual average growth rate of approximately 0.36%, marginally below the district average over the period 2011 to 2019.
- 3.5 If Stainforth were to retain the growth rate attained between 2011 and 2019

¹⁰ ONS 2020, Parish Population Estimates (Mid-year 2001 to 2019)

¹¹ ONS 2020, 2019 Mid-Year Population Estimates

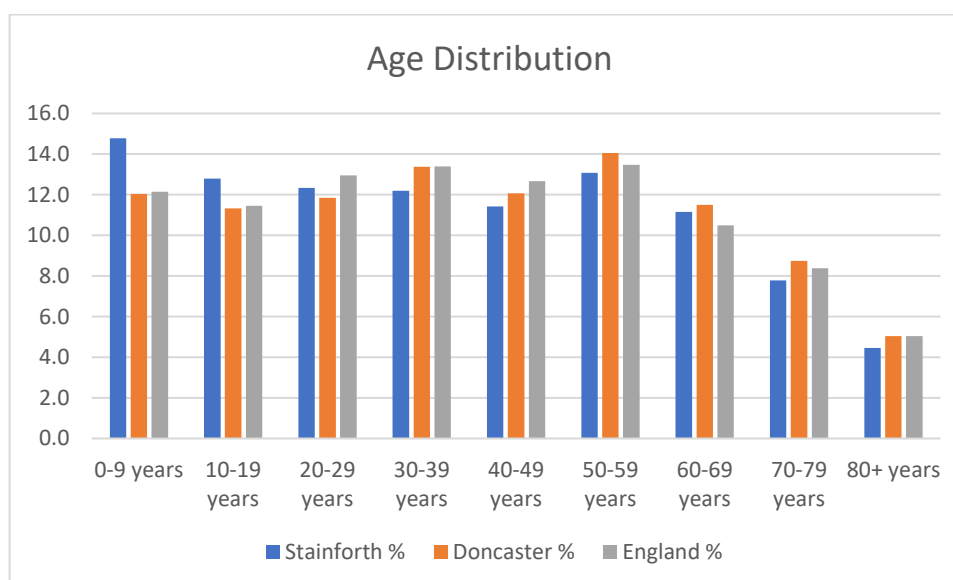
¹² ONS 2020

(0.7%) this would lead to an additional 746 persons by 2035, increasing the population of Stainforth to 7,403 persons.

3.6 The population of Stainforth is proportionately younger than national and district averages. Figure 3.1 demonstrates that in 2019 the ONS estimate a significantly higher proportion of those aged below 20 compared to national and district rates. Conversely there are proportionately less of those aged 30 and above.

3.7 Discussions with members of Stainforth Town Council identify that the comparative lack of 30+ residents is because many move out of the area, to surrounding villages and towns to seek more desirable homes. Whilst this is clearly anecdotal it does marry with the demographic evidence.

Figure 3.1: Population age distribution comparison



Source: ONS Parish Population Estimates (Mid-year 2001 to 2019) ONS 2020, 2019 Mid-Year Population Estimates

Household Growth

3.8 On census day in 2011 there were 2,683 households, this was an increase of 149 dwellings from the census in 2001. This is an increase of 5.9% over the 10-year period. This is a markedly slower rate than the Doncaster Local Authority area where the number of households grew by 10.2% over the same period¹³.

¹³ 2001 and 2011 census data

3.9 Since 2011 additional new housing has been provided within Stainforth, most notably the Kings Park development by Gleeson Homes. This development is now largely complete and upon completion will provide an additional 170 homes.

3.10 Stainforth has proportionately fewer detached properties, accounting for just 12.1% of the stock in 2011, compared to 23% in Doncaster as a whole. Conversely, and typically of a mining town, it has a significant proportion of terraced dwellings, accounting for nearly a third of all stock. Comparatively across Doncaster terraced housing consists of less than a quarter of all stock.

Table 3.1: Housing type

	Stainforth		Doncaster	
	Houses	%	Houses	%
Household spaces with no usual residents	87	3.2	4,520	3.5
Whole house or bungalow: Detached	325	12.1	30,115	23.0
Whole house or bungalow: Semi-detached	1,202	44.8	58,631	44.8
Whole house or bungalow: Terraced (including end-terrace)	867	32.3	30,944	23.6
Flat, maisonette or apartment: Purpose-built block of flats or tenement	179	6.7	8,080	6.2
Flat, maisonette or apartment: Part of a converted or shared house (including bed-sits)	10	0.4	1,416	1.1
Flat, maisonette or apartment: In a commercial building	27	1.0	1,003	0.8
Caravan or other mobile or temporary structure	73	2.7	818	0.6

Source: ONS Census 2011

3.11 Home ownership is also significantly lower within Stainforth compared to the average for Doncaster, being 46.9% and 65.4% respectively. Over half of all properties in Stainforth are rented. A third of all stock within Stainforth is social rented (36.3%) compared to just 17.7% in Doncaster as a whole. The majority of this was in 2011 rented from the Council.

Table 3.2: Housing tenure

	Stainforth		Doncaster	
	Houses	%	Houses	%
All households	2,596	100.0	126,487	100.0
Owned	1,217	46.9	82,760	65.4
Owned outright	561	21.6	39,253	31.0
Owned with a mortgage or loan	656	25.3	43,507	34.4

Shared ownership (part owned and part rented)	4	0.2	418	0.3
Social rented	942	36.3	22,403	17.7
Rented from council (Local Authority)	834	32.1	19,173	15.2
Other	108	4.2	3,230	2.6
Private rented	374	14.4	18,774	14.8
Private landlord or letting agency	343	13.2	17,084	13.5
Other	31	1.2	1,690	1.3
Living rent free	59	2.3	2,132	1.7

Source: ONS Census 2011

- 3.12 The data identifies that the rate of housing growth within Stainforth has been proportionately slower than the average for Doncaster. In addition, there is a significant proportion of terraced properties and rented properties compared to the Doncaster averages.

Doncaster Housing Needs Study, 2019

- 3.13 The 2019 *Doncaster Housing Needs Study* (HNS), undertaken by Arc4 on behalf of the Council provides the most up to date assessment of district-wide need. It considers the need for affordable housing and the size, type and tenure of housing need for different groups within the community. A district wide household survey was undertaken as part of the HNS which was completed by 4,966 households. This survey usefully provides data at a sub-regional level, albeit this is largely confined to the Main Town of Stainforth, Dunscoft, Dunsville and Hatfield, rather than Stainforth itself.

- 3.14 The HNS provides a significant amount of data, some of which is relevant to this study. This can be distilled into four key areas:

- Affordability;
- Household size;
- Aspiration and Expectation; and
- House Moves

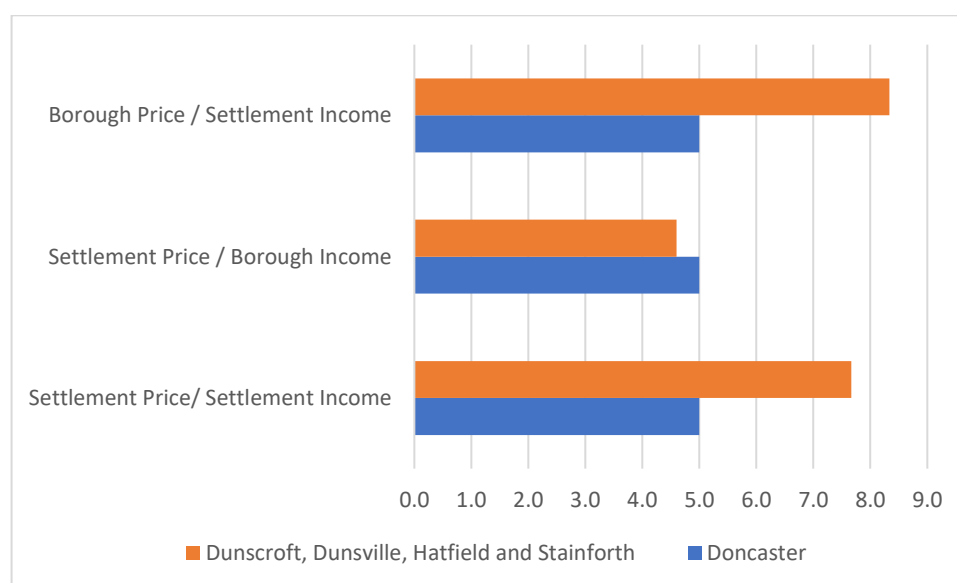
Each is considered in turn below.

Affordability

- 3.15 In terms of affordability the data suggests that house prices within the Main Town of Dunscoft, Dunsville, Hatfield and Stainforth is comparably affordable

to the borough average when compared to borough-wide incomes. However, the data also indicates that the price of property both locally and borough-wide is significantly less affordable for the residents of Duncroft, Dunsville, Hatfield and Stainforth than the average resident. The reason for this is due to the lower incomes of those residing within the settlement. This is consistent with the high-level of social rented accommodation within Stainforth.

Figure 3.2: Median house price / income ratio

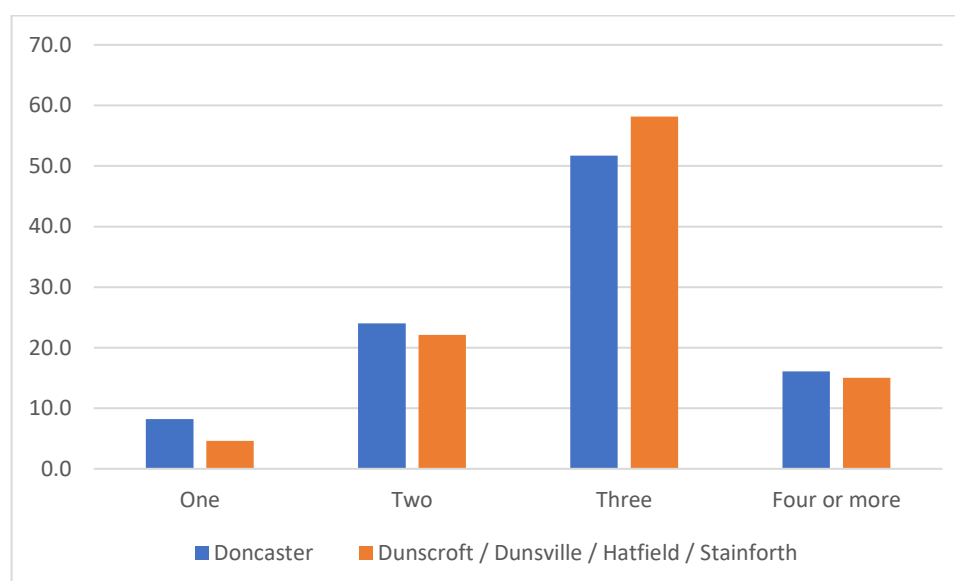


Source: 2019 HNS

House-size

- 3.16 In addition to the census data identified in tables 3.1 and 3.2 above the HNS provides a significant amount of data regarding household size and composition. Once again, this provided at the level of the Main Town of Duncroft, Dunsville, Hatfield and Stainforth.
- 3.17 In terms of dwelling size Duncroft, Dunsville, Hatfield and Stainforth has a greater proportion of 3-bedroom properties and less one-, two- and four or more-bedroom properties than the average across Doncaster. It must, however, be recognised that these differences are not significant.

Figure 3.3: Number of bedrooms



Source: 2019 HNS

- 3.18 The 2019 HNS analysis concludes¹⁴ there is a particular need for three and four or more-bedroom houses across Doncaster as well as an increasing proportion of bungalows is identified. The findings for Dunscoft, Dunsville, Hatfield and Stainforth suggest a very similar pattern of need to the borough-wide requirement¹⁵.

Aspiration and Expectation

- 3.19 The 2019 HNS also provides analysis of aspirations and expectations of home movers within Doncaster. It noted that across the borough there is a particular aspiration from families for houses with three, four or more bedrooms (79% of families)¹⁶. In Dunscoft, Dunsville, Hatfield and Stainforth the aspiration for four or more bedrooms from those surveyed is higher with all families within the area surveyed aspiring to a three, four or more-bedroom property.
- 3.20 Of these families, 46.4% within Doncaster would like to move to a dwelling with 4 or more-bedrooms. In Dunscoft, Dunsville, Hatfield and Stainforth it is significantly higher at 81% of those surveyed.
- 3.21 In comparison to aspiration, 28% of those families across the borough would expect a move to a 4 or more-bedroom homes. In contrast within Dunscoft,

¹⁴ 2019 HNS Paragraph 8.4

¹⁵ 2019 HNS Table 7.10.

¹⁶ 2019 HNS Paragraph 6.13

Dunsville, Hatfield and Stainforth expectations are higher with 54% expecting to move to a 4 or more-bedroom home. Relatively few families aspire or expect to move to a flat and whilst 10.8% of those sampled in Doncaster expect to move to a bungalow, none of those sampled in Dunscoft, Dunsville, Hatfield and Stainforth expect or aspire to this¹⁷.

- 3.22 In relation to older households there are strong aspirations and expectations towards bungalows, 'other' property types which includes specialist provision and small flats across the borough¹⁸ and in Dunscoft, Dunsville, Hatfield and Stainforth¹⁹.

Home Moves

- 3.23 The 2019 HNS identifies that from its household survey around 30.5% (around 39,600) of households had moved home in the preceding five years. Of these households, 76% had moved within the borough and 24% had moved into Doncaster borough. Within Dunscoft, Dunsville, Hatfield and Stainforth²⁰ the proportion of those moving intra-borough is slightly higher at approximately 81%. Conversely 19% of recent home movers in Dunscoft, Dunsville, Hatfield and Stainforth moved into the borough.
- 3.24 The proportion of recent movers who have moved within Dunscoft, Dunsville, Hatfield and Stainforth is also high at over 51%. This is one of the highest containment rates of home movers in any settlement across the whole of the borough. The next most significant settlement for recent home movers originating from Dunscoft, Dunsville, Hatfield and Stainforth is the neighbouring Main Town of Thorne and Moorends at approximately 15%. Discussions with the Town Council have identified that at least anecdotally this high containment appears to be due to emotional attachments to the area and wishing to 'stay local'.

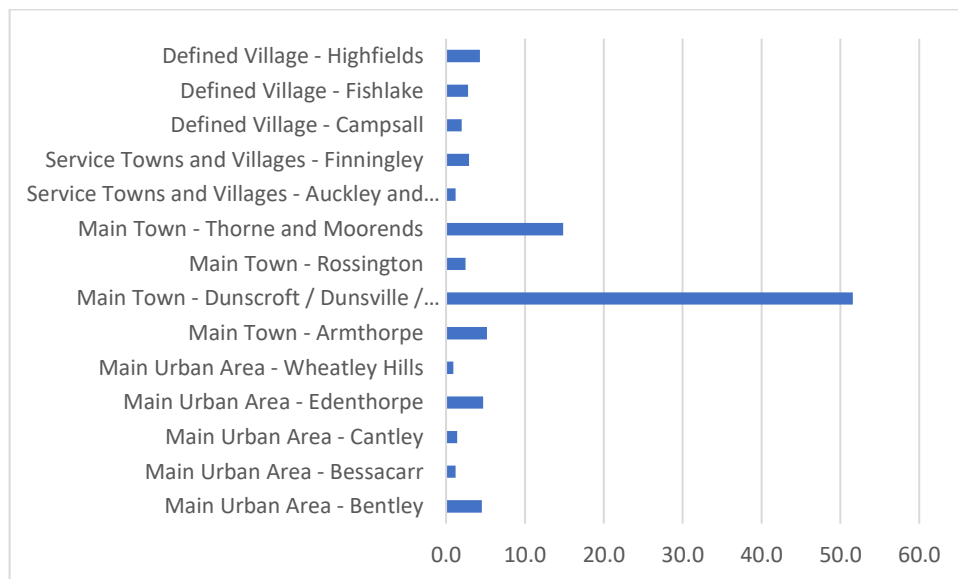
¹⁷ Table 6.1

¹⁸ Paragraph 6.18

¹⁹ Table 6.2

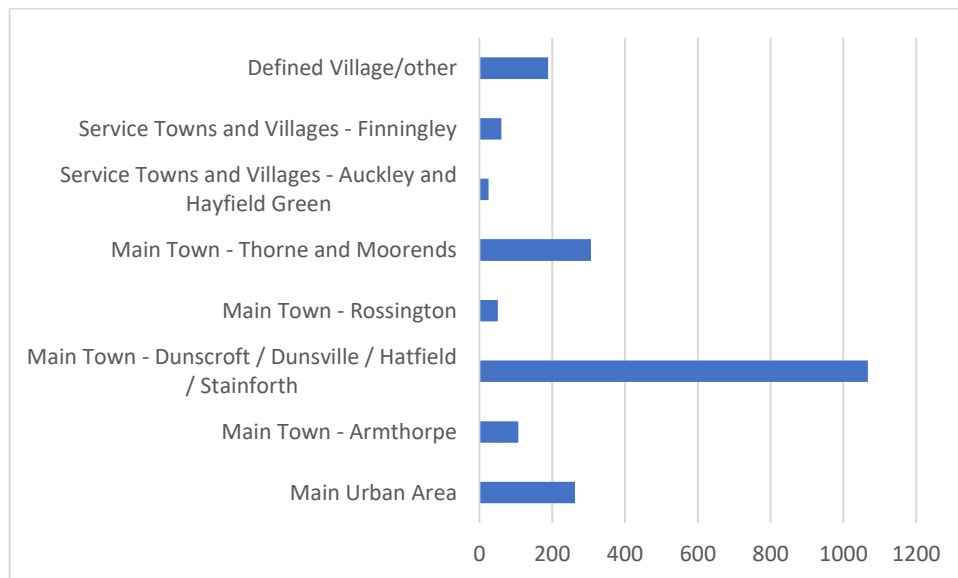
²⁰ Table 9.1

Figure 3.4: Origin of home movers to Dunscroft, Dunsville, Hatfield and Stainforth



Source: 2019 HNS

Figure 3.5: Destination of home movers from Dunscroft, Dunsville, Hatfield and Stainforth



Source: 2019 HNS

3.25 Similarly, those moving from Dunscroft, Dunsville, Hatfield and Stainforth the main destination outside of the area is the Main Town of Thorne and Moorends, closely followed by the Doncaster Main Urban Area and the villages.

Neighbourhood Plan Community Consultation

- 3.26 Stainforth Town Council has undertaken consultation upon the NDP throughout 2018 and 2019. This involved a questionnaire, issues and options document and meetings with various community bodies. The questionnaire (question 9) specifically asked whether housing was appropriate on the old pit. Whilst the proposed location of the housing has since moved from the 'far end of the pit' between Kirton Lane and the railway line the response was a resounding 'yes'. With 85.6% of all respondents indicating they would support new housing on the old pit.
- 3.27 Support for housing on the Pithead site was also evident at an NDP Issues and Options workshop on 27th October 2018. Comments relating to the provision of housing on this site at the workshop included:
- Need for better quality housing as an option for local residents;
 - Currently very few 4 bed or detached properties;
 - Need to make sure we don't create a 'new' Stainforth area, separate from the existing community;
 - The new houses need to be connected to the pitgears too;
 - If the headgears are done up then it will be an attractive place to live, right next to the country park;
 - Will add an attractive area in Stainforth to live in;
 - Armthorpe is a good model of success, having residential next to the country park; and
 - It is important for Stainforth to have good housing so people who do well don't leave but remain local.
- 3.28 The re-siting of the housing allocation does address some of these issues. It ensures that the housing does not create a 'new' Stainforth area by situating the allocation directly adjoining the existing built-up area of Stianforth. The new development will need to integrate and create links with the existing settlement and the country park and pit head sites. The proposed new location is also more sustainable being closely related to the existing services and facilities within Stainforth and the railway station.

Discussion

- 3.29 Stainforth has a youthful population with a higher proportion of those under 20 but has fewer in the older age groups categories compared to district and

national averages. Despite relatively strong population growth in recent years, there has been limited new housing provided when compared to the average for the borough.

- 3.30 The housing stock in Stainforth is dominated by semi-detached properties, this is in line with the borough average. It is, however, notable that there are significantly more terraced properties. Making up nearly a third of all houses. It is also notable that there is an abundance of rented properties (either social or private), making up over half of the properties in Stainforth in 2011.
- 3.31 Property sizes within Dunscroft, Dunsville, Hatfield and Stainforth are similar to the borough average. Indeed, the 2019 HNS identifies a need for three and four or more-bedroom houses as well as an increasing proportion of bungalows both for the borough as a whole and the settlement.
- 3.32 Affordability is identified as a particular issue for those living within Dunscroft, Dunsville, Hatfield and Stainforth. This is largely due to the lower incomes of residents within the area. Despite these apparent affordability challenges there remains a strong aspiration and expectation of those surveyed to move to a larger property with over half of all families anticipating being within a four or more-bedroom property in the future.
- 3.33 There is also a strong sense of self-containment within Dunscroft, Dunsville, Hatfield and Stainforth. Most of the property moves originating within the settlement remain within Doncaster (81%) with over half of those remaining within Dunscroft, Dunsville, Hatfield and Stainforth. Of those that move out of the area the majority move to neighbouring towns and villages within the borough. It is notable that the most popular moves outside of Dunscroft, Dunsville, Hatfield and Stainforth is to neighbouring North East Doncaster area of Thorne. Further suggesting a strong desire to remain local to the area. The NDP consultation undertaken by the Town Council provides anecdotal evidence of the more affluent residents from Stainforth moving out of the town to find more appropriate and 'aspirational' properties in neighbouring settlements.
- 3.34 Given this strong desire and expectation to move to larger homes within the same area it is perhaps unsurprising that there is strong support for new homes on the former Hatfield Main Colliery as identified through the consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan. If families and older age groups are to be retained within the area it is imperative that additional new housing is provided.

3.35 It is equally important that the housing provided meets the needs of the residents of Stainforth, particularly given the aspiration for larger homes but the affordability issues apparent within the town. The NDP and NDO will need to provide a clear steer on the relevant mix of house types on the proposed allocation. This should include larger 'aspirational' family housing. However, to ensure that the needs of current Stainforth residents are being met it is recommended that the provision of local housing need assessment is made a condition of any detailed application for the site. This assessment will need to consider the appropriate mix of house type and size given the identified needs within the Stainforth NDP area. This work should be undertaken in collaboration with the Town Council.

4.0 Unity Regeneration Project

- 4.1 The Unity Regeneration Project is stated as an ambitious project which aims to deliver 7,000 new jobs to the region through a wide range of employment opportunities and create a new community for South Yorkshire, transforming some of the most challenged wards in Doncaster²¹. Unity will be transformational by stimulating economic regeneration, promoting social inclusion and improving the health and wellbeing of people living in the area through access to quality community and leisure spaces.
- 4.2 As discussed earlier in this report Policy 69 of the Local Plan refers to the Unity Regeneration Project. This is a Strategic Policy and as such the NDP should be in general conformity with the policy.
- 4.3 The policy covers a large area between Stainforth, Dunscroft, Dunsville and Hatfield, including the former Hatfield Colliery site which sits within the neighbourhood plan area. The policy identifies that the site will be a new mixed-use development consisting of up to 3,100 homes with at least 1,015 anticipated to be delivered within the plan period. Table H1(E) of the Doncaster Local Plan identifies the rate at which this is anticipated to be delivered. This is replicated below.

Table 4.1: Anticipated Delivery Unity Project

Years	2018-2023	2023-2028	2028-2033	2033-2035	Beyond plan period
Delivery (dwellings)	175	350	350	140	2,085

Source: Doncaster Local Plan MM

- 4.4 To date there is outline permission (ref: 15/01300/OUTA) for a mixed-use development comprising residential development (3100 units), community facilities, industrial and logistical development, commercial development and a local centre with associated infrastructure and details of access. This permission was granted on 21st April 2017. Whilst some elements, such as the primary road infrastructure, now have detailed permission, none of the housing has been delivered or benefits from reserved matters consent. It is, therefore, difficult to envisage how 175 dwellings will be delivered by 2023. It is, however,

²¹ Unity website <http://unity-yorkshire.com/>

recognised that the Local Plan examining inspector did not seek to challenge this assumption.

- 4.5 Some elements of the extant Unity Regeneration Project permission fall within the area covered by the NDP. This is mainly around the colliery site and the Stainforth and Keadby Canal.
- 4.6 The phasing plan, submitted alongside the outline application indicates some residential parcels are anticipated to be delivered in the plan period within the Unity Life area around the canal. However, the vast majority of the initial phases of the residential development are identified to be delivered in Unity Town and Unity Living which are more closely linked with Dunsroft and Hatfield. However, neither the indicative masterplan nor phasing plan identify the number of dwellings anticipated in each parcel prior to 2035.
- 4.7 It is, therefore, unclear how many homes will be delivered within and immediately adjacent to Stainforth by the outline permission during the Doncaster Local Plan period, up to 2035.
- 4.8 The circa 210 homes proposed to be delivered within the NDP area represents just 7% of the 3,100 dwellings identified in Policy 69 and within the outline application. It is noted that the Doncaster Local Plan (paragraph 16.85) identifies that:

"Unity will provide a total of 3,100 homes but delivery is currently conditioned to no more than 1200 homes up to 2028 in line with the previous Development Plan for Doncaster. The Local Plan assumes a build-out rate for the project of 1,015 new homes within the plan period to 2035 (and 595 by 2028) so is significantly less than the condition allows for at present by around 50%. Nevertheless, we would support applications to vary this condition (and so increase the supply of land to address the target) provided:

- there is evidence (primarily from completions) that the number of houses sought could be delivered in the proposed new timescale; and*
- the proposed amendment would not undermine delivery against Local Plan targets for other towns and villages. We would expect any such amendments to be incremental as development progresses."*

[illegible]

4.9 Whilst the condition relating to the outline approval is not relevant to the site proposed to be allocated for housing in the NDP it is notable that even if all of the circa 210 dwellings proposed to be allocated within the NDP were to be delivered by 2028, which appears unlikely, the threshold of development within the area would not be exceeded. Table 4.2 provides a potential build out trajectory of the site. This is based upon the Council's assumptions that large

sites can deliver up to 70dpa²². The trajectory is based upon the assumption that the NDO is 'made' in 2022 and detailed planning and site preparation takes 24 months. Furthermore, if this trajectory is exceeded the plan supports additional growth over the plan period, providing certain conditions are met.

4.10 In conclusion, there remains some uncertainty as to when the residential development will occur within and around Stainforth as identified by the Unity Regeneration Project. It is, however, recognised that the trajectory for delivery at Unity was not challenged during the recent examination of the Local Plan.

4.11 The masterplan for the scheme is indicative and as such is subject to change. Furthermore, a significant proportion of the residential development is peripheral to the settlement of Stainforth. The addition of an additional 500 homes through the NDP would not only conform with the general principles of Policy 69 but also would not interfere with the wider delivery.

Table 4.2: Potential Delivery of the Proposed Housing Allocation

Year	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031
Delivery	0	0	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	10
Cumulative Delivery	0	0	70	140	210	280	350	420	490	500

²² Doncaster MBC (2020) Doncaster Local Plan Topic Paper 4: Housing

5.0 Former Hatfield Main Colliery Regeneration

- 5.1 Stainforth is intrinsically linked to its mining heritage. Prior to the sinking of the pit, Stainforth was primarily an agricultural area. Once the colliery was sunk in 1911, Stainforth expanded and by 1930 there were 3600 people working in Stainforth, and many houses, shops and entertainment facilities were built. The colliery was indeed the most significant development in Stainforth in recent times and its winding down and eventual closure in July 2015 brought about massive deprivation and led to generations of unemployment.
- 5.2 The town has some of the worst areas of deprivation in the country, being ranked within the 5% most deprived areas nationally²³. Particular areas of concern within the deprivation indices relate to: income, employment, education, childhood obesity, child poverty, and crime. The town also suffers from a poor perception which is not aided by the abandoned colliery. The need for change is clear and the former colliery provides a focus for regeneration and revitalization of the town which celebrates its past.
- 5.3 The Town Council has identified the regeneration and redevelopment of the former colliery site as a key priority. The responses to the consultation upon the Neighbourhood Development Plan identified the importance of bringing the Colliery back into meaningful use. Key aspirations for the former colliery are the creation of a country park, community space, small business units and retention and on-going maintenance of the listed headstocks.
- 5.4 Through the consultation upon the Neighbourhood Plan the inclusion of new housing was also welcomed. The proposed location of the housing is adjacent to the existing settlement boundary of Stainforth and near the railway station, ensuring it is sustainably located. An indicative masterplan has been provided which identifies that the development of circa 210 dwellings can be delivered. Whilst elements of the overall site is identified as being within flood zone 3 which benefit from flood defences, the indicative masterplan identifies that the residential development can be delivered outside of this area (see NDO).

²³ MHCLG, 2019 Indices of Deprivation

5.5 Whilst housing was considered appropriate through the consultation its provision will also assist in delivery the key aspirations of the Town Council and community for this site. Funding from various sources including the Towns Fund has been sought and secured this will provide a significant proportion of the funding required to enable the Town Council and community to deliver the country park and preservation of the headstocks. The development of housing will provide further enabling funding for the scheme and on-going maintenance.

6.0 Sequential Approach to Site Selection

- 6.1 Housing development which is linked to the regeneration of the former Colliery site, creation of a country park and restoration and retention of the pit gears is the preference for the Town Council. However, several other possible sites have been considered for housing.
- 6.2 These sites have been drawn from the Council's 'Call for Sites' exercise conducted as part of the preparation of the Local Plan. In addition, a separate 'Call for Sites' exercise has been undertaken as part of the development of the NDP. Finally, other localities on the former Colliery site have also been considered. The following section provides commentary upon these known reasonable alternative sites.

Doncaster Local Plan Call for Sites

- 6.3 During the production of the Doncaster Local Plan a formal 'Call for Sites' exercise was undertaken between October and December 2014. Following this formal consultation, the Council allowed further sites to be submitted which were added to the 'pool' of sites. A total of 10 sites were submitted. One of these sites (reference 418) is now identified as allocation MIX03 which is the Unity Project, Hatfield-Stainforth. Large swathes of this allocation already benefit from consent. It also includes the proposed neighbourhood plan housing allocation.
- 6.4 One of the other sites (ref:388 Kirton Lane, Stainforth) is identified as Open Space (policies 26 and 27). The Doncaster Council Open Space Audit identifies this area as informal open space (ref: 814). Given this is now a formal designation in the Local Plan this site has not been considered further. The Doncaster Council 2019 Site Selection Methodology identifies the reasons why each of these sites were discounted, this is summarised in the table below. All these previously identified reasons for discounting these sites persist. It is, therefore, not considered appropriate to consider them for inclusion within the NDP.

Table 6.1: Stainforth Site Selection

Reference	Address	Gross Site Area (Ha)	Reason for discounting
027	4.5 Acre Field, Doncaster Road, Stainforth	0.6	Flood Zone 3 Potential Access Issues
097	Land at Kirton Lane, Stainforth	0.7	Flood Zone 3a
230	Land at Oldfield Lane, Stainforth	3.2	Isolated development
346	Robinsons, Oldfield Lane, Stainforth	1.5	Flood Zone 3a
348	Oldfield Lane, Stainforth	3	Flood Zone 3a
378	Doncaster Road, Stainforth	18	See 027
457	Land off Waggons Way, Stainforth	0.5	Flood Zone 3a
1008	8 Acre Field, Townend Farm, Ramskir Lane, Stainforth	3.4	Flood Zone 3a

Stainforth Neighbourhood Development Plan 'Call for Sites'

- 6.5 A 'Call for Sites' consultation for sites within the Stainforth Neighbourhood Plan area took place between 26th July and 3rd September 2021. This process provided just one submission. This related to the need to adopt a section of highway to retain and attract further businesses to an existing employment location.
- 6.6 No further submissions relating to housing were submitted as part of this exercise.

Conclusions

- 6.7 A thorough investigation of other potential sites for housing has been undertaken considering evidence collected as part of the Doncaster Local Plan and a separate 'Call for Sites' exercise undertaken as part of the NDP. Neither provided any additional appropriate housing sites. The identified site upon the former colliery is, therefore, considered the most appropriate. This has the added advantage of assisting the Town Council and the community of Stainforth to realise their ambitions for the former colliery site.

7.0 Bringing the Evidence Together

- 7.1 The national policy context is supportive of Neighbourhood Plans planning for growth and exceeding targets where possible. The Local Plan also identifies that additional housing growth can occur within Neighbourhood Plans providing it remains in general conformity with strategic policies.
- 7.2 In terms of the strategic policies in the Doncaster Local Plan the housing requirement (Policy 2) is a minimum requirement, Stainforth, Dunscroft, Dunsville and Hatfield is identified as a 'Main Town' and as such is a location for growth. Furthermore, the proposed housing site sits within the area covered by Policy 69 of the plan which identifies that the Unity Regeneration Project is a mixed-use site, including residential.
- 7.3 Whilst the current outline application and indicative masterplan do not include the area identified for housing within the NDP neither do they preclude it. There is also significant uncertainty regarding when housing will be delivered in and around Stainforth through the extant outline permission.
- 7.4 It is, therefore, concluded that further housing on the site identified would not be in conflict with either national policy, the Doncaster Local Plan nor the extant outline permission. Providing this development is complementary to the overall aims of the Unity Regeneration Project and the needs of Stainforth.
- 7.5 There is a clear statement that the Unity Regeneration Project, as included in the outline permission, aims to 'create a new community' and provide significant new jobs. It is, however, unclear whether the new homes to be provided will meet the needs of the current population of Stainforth, particularly given the affordability issues discussed in section 3 of this report. The data provided by the 2019 HNS is clear that most movers within Stainforth and the wider Main Town wish to stay in this locality. It is, therefore, important that the housing provided meets their needs.
- 7.6 There is a clear aspiration and expectation of those living within the area to have larger homes with many families seeking 4 or more bedrooms and older age groups seeking bungalows. Stainforth currently has a plethora of rented accommodation. The NDP consultation identifies there is a lack of aspirational properties within the area which leads to a 'drain' of residents from Stainforth seeking opportunities elsewhere once they become financially secure. The

aspirational and expectation evidence within the 2019 HNS does support this.

- 7.7 The 2019 HNS identifies a need for a range of house types within Stainforth but identifies a greatest need for family homes, 3 or more bedrooms as well as bungalows. This aligns with the general need set out within the policy 7 of the Doncaster Local Plan and as such there is no need to demur from its requirements.
- 7.8 Other locations for the housing development have been considered including the sites submitted, but not allocated, as part of the recently adopted Doncaster Local Plan and a separate 'Call for Sites' exercise for the neighbourhood plan. None of the sites submitted to the Doncaster Local Plan are considered appropriate, due to the reasons set out within table 6.1. The NDP Call for Sites did not produce any additional housing sites.
- 7.9 In conclusion, there are no policy conflicts with the provision of additional housing through the NDP. Indeed, if the homes provide a sufficient quantum of 'aspirational' accommodation which is affordable to current residents it will assist in retaining significant elements of the community within Stainforth.
- 7.10 To determine the exact mix of size, type and tenure it is recommended that a local housing need assessment is made a condition of the NDO. This work should be undertaken in partnership with the Town Council. This will ensure that the housing allocation not only meets the needs of Stainforth but complements the wider regeneration ambitions of the Unity Regeneration Project.
- 7.11 The identified site provides a suitable and appropriate location for new housing which not only conforms with the Doncaster Local Plan but will enable the ambitions of the NDP for the former Hatfield Colliery site to be met.

Appendix 1: Neighbourhood Plan Proposals Map

