

Supporting the Ambition for North Tyneside Through Housing Growth

**A 10-year Affordable Homes Delivery Plan for
North Tyneside Council**

Our Ambition – A Foreword by Councillor Steve Cox, Cabinet Member for Housing

North Tyneside Council has bold ambitions for making our borough an even greater place to live, work and visit and I am delighted to introduce this ambitious 10-year delivery plan which will aim to invest circa £50m and deliver around 350 new affordable homes by 2031 by directly building them or bringing back empty properties into use as affordable homes.

North Tyneside is a place of opportunity, prosperity and vibrancy; a place that is resilient to climate change, where everyone can be happy, healthy, safe, and able to participate in a flourishing economy. We want our residents to have the opportunity to live in sustainable communities accommodating all ages and abilities, with quality and affordable homes reflecting high standards of design and construction and with easy access to open space, leisure and recreation facilities.

In the 10-years to 2013, only 789 new affordable homes were delivered within the Borough. To increase the pace and scale of delivery, the Cabinet launched a new Affordable Homes Programme to significantly increase the pace and scale of delivery.

This programme has made a significant difference with 1,650 new affordable homes delivered since 2014 including over 170 new Council Homes.

Whilst we are proud of our efforts to date, demand for high-quality Council houses continues to grow. We are therefore delighted to introduce this new ambitious plan that will see a significant increase in much needed, high-quality council housing across the borough.

To realise our ambition, we need to provide a range and choice of housing to meet current and future needs. To ensure people are healthy and ready for work, life, and school we need to provide more homes and a more diverse housing offer, ensuring that our residents have access to a decent home at a price they can afford.

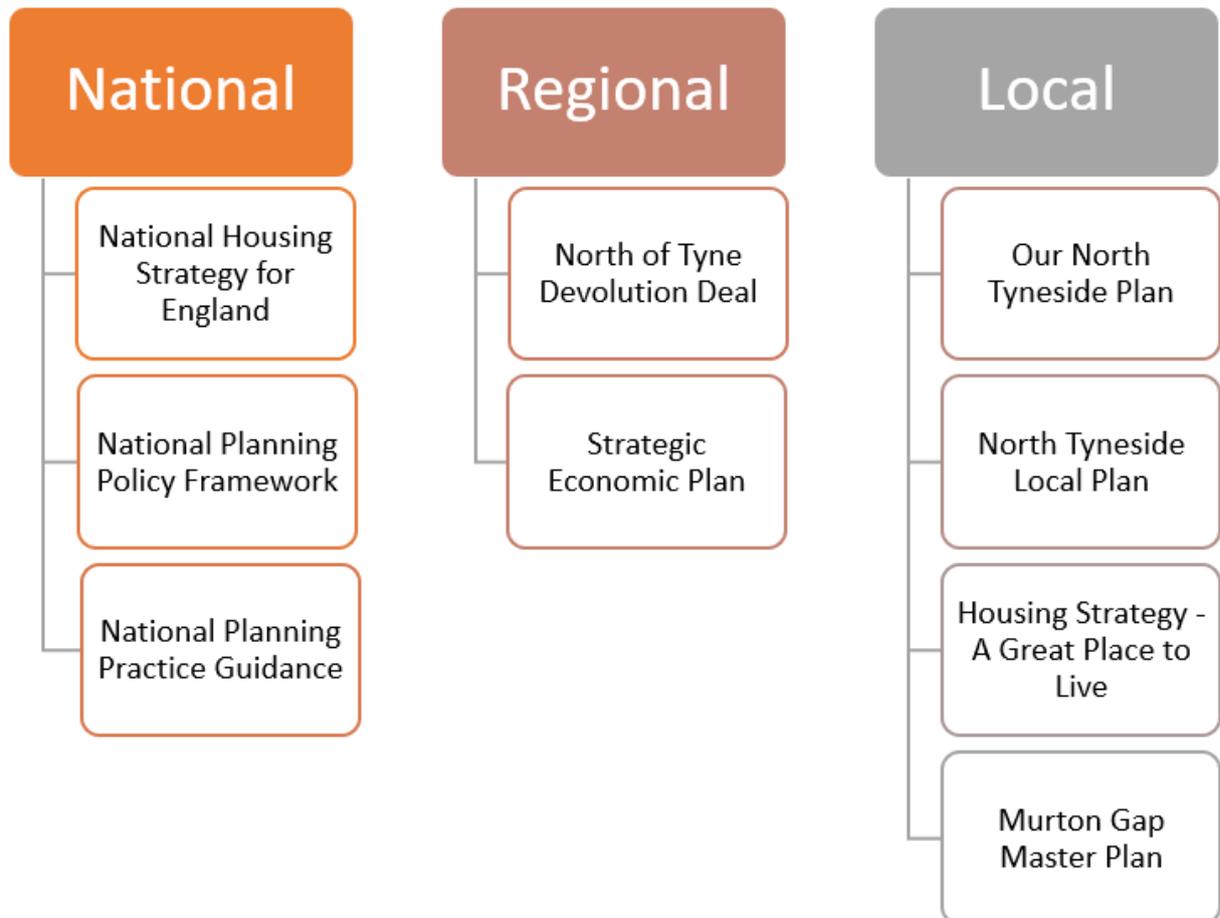
The Council has declared a climate emergency and it is important that homes delivered in the borough promote approaches to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and support the reduction of carbon. We realise that housing has the potential to make an important contribution to a clean, green, and sustainable environment by being energy efficient, and using renewable technologies where possible and this plan seeks to actively improve and enhance our approach to delivering efficient and sustainable homes.

North Tyneside Council, through a series of bold projects, is looking to transform our town centres, coastal region, and the North Bank of the Tyne into an environment where people choose to live, work and spend their leisure time. We also recognise the importance of housing in regeneration as it drives forward development, delivers opportunities for sustainable economic growth and creates jobs. This plan will continue to target and bring empty homes back into use to increase housing supply and improve community safety.

1. The Housing Environment

Policy Context

Our new 10-year Affordable Homes Plan is the result of leading and contributing to the achievement of a wide range of national, regional and local policies as can be seen in the diagram below.



National Context

The government wants to significantly increase the supply of new homes as house building has consistently fallen behind the levels necessary to meet growing demand. The onus is on planning to build homes in the right places, building homes faster (through investigating modern methods of construction) and diversifying the housing market. To support this the government has announced funding for housing in the following funds:

- Affordable Homes Programme
- Housing Infrastructure Fund
- Accelerated Construction Fund
- Small Sites Infrastructure Fund
- Land Assembly Fund

The government has also recently announced a reduction in the rate of interest of 1% for loans to build affordable homes.

A government priority is to help people to own their own homes. To support people to buy their own homes, government has introduced schemes such as Help to Buy and First Buy, helping first time buyers to buy new build homes. The government is also encouraging social tenants to buy their rented home by improving the terms of Right to Buy. This needs to be considered when new council homes are built.

Impact of Covid 19

The impact of the global pandemic has been felt across all sectors including construction. Delays to schemes and financial loss to contractors, developers and the supply chain due to the virus has already caused an impact to the delivery of all homes including affordable homes. Whilst the sector remains cautiously optimistic, the full effects of the virus on the housing market continue to evolve.

This aspirational plan considers the current situation and makes allowance for potential issues. The plan will be continually updated and adapted as required to mitigate any changes as they arise.

Regional Context

The North of Tyne authorities have agreed a deal to devolve a range of powers and responsibilities to the North of Tyne Combined Authority (NTCA). The Deal package, comprising the Investment Fund, new initiatives and new powers, is set to add £1.1bn to the economy, deliver over 10,000 new jobs, and leverage over £2.1bn in private sector investment.

A Housing and Land Board has been established giving powers to the Combined Authority to acquire and dispose of land, and mayoral powers to take forward compulsory purchases and establish Mayoral Development Corporations, as a foundation for North of Tyne's housing and regeneration ambitions.

The Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) seeks to create more than 100,000 jobs in the North East by 2024. Growth in better paid employment is adding pressure to the housing market which needs to increase supply to meet demand from this group. The SEP sets a target for the region to bring forward 6,000 new houses each year over the plan period. Murton Gap is a key site with regional benefit as it can be accelerated to make an impact (of 1,675 units) by the end of the SEP.

The Council has committed to a package of infrastructure projects that support the SEP. These are currently being implemented using capital funding from the LEPs Local Growth Fund.

Local Context

All North Tyneside's policies and strategies are based on a robust evidence base, such as the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. The evidence shows that population of North Tyneside is growing and aging. The plans and policies in place aim to provide housing growth with an appropriate range and choice of housing to meet current and future needs is a priority. Meeting this local housing need is crucial to ensuring enough homes are available in the Borough to meet forecasts of population and economic growth. This includes ensuring there are enough homes to accommodate the Borough's growing elderly population.

Land Supply

With homes in North Tyneside in high-demand, land prices in North Tyneside are very high, limiting the amount of land for affordable homes.

The SHLAA indicates that North Tyneside has enough developable land to meet its housing need, however the developable land that the council owns to deliver affordable homes on is limited. It is, therefore, essential that land we own is prioritised towards the delivery of affordable housing to get the best result for our residents.

Supporting Regeneration through Empty Homes

North Tyneside has fewer long-term empty properties than the regional average, however, at this time of high need for affordable housing we continue to aim to bring as many empty homes back as we can to maximise the use of our available housing stock.

Bringing empty properties back into use not only addresses housing need but can also assist in improving the sustainability of local communities and tackling anti-social behaviour. Empty homes are an eyesore and can affect local communities, often the reason for them remaining empty is due to the current owners being unable to invest in the property to bring it up to habitable standards. To address this, the council has developed a Private Sector Leasing Scheme that see the Council undertake the work on the property and add it to our stock for an agreed number of years. To date this approach has resulted in 17 additional units of accommodation procured through the council scheme alone and a further 21 units in partnership with the voluntary sector. These homes have been utilised to successfully house a range of tenants, including those with learning difficulties, veterans, homeless applicants and families fleeing domestic violence.

The Council will also undertake wider interventions and use Compulsory Purchase Orders where necessary to support regeneration. An example of this is the recent intervention to purchase 11 flats in a street in Wallsend which had been long-term

problematic empty properties. These properties will be converted to family homes in an approach which can be replicated elsewhere in the borough.

In order to support the aspirations of the Affordable Homes Delivery Plan we aim to return a minimum of a further 60 problematic empty homes over the life of the programme to use as affordable housing. In addition, we will seek to intervene directly to acquire properties in those areas of the borough that require a more intensive approach to support our regeneration ambitions.

Meeting Housing Need

The SHMA indicates North Tyneside has an annual net shortfall of 490 affordable homes. Currently the council aims to deliver 75% rented and 25% intermediate homes through section 106 agreements with developers on sites of over 10 homes.

The government wants to help households onto the property ladder and is currently carrying out a consultation on First Buy homes which may result in a change of policy to increase the number of intermediate affordable homes delivered through S106 agreements.

There are approximately 3,600 households registered on Tyne & Wear Homes needing affordable rented accommodation in North Tyneside, highlighting the need for more affordable rented homes.

Analysis of housing need in the SHMA indicates that there is a need for 1 bed homes, however Tyne & wear Homes bidding information shows households prefer 2 and 3 bed houses, whilst that demand is low for 1 and 2 bed flats. To maximise income and lower void times, most new build homes should be 2 and 3 bed houses.

Population projections indicate that there will be a demographic shift with the number (and proportion) of older people increasing. The Market Position Statement (MPS) for specialist housing indicates there is a need for more bungalows and extra care Housing. Analysis of bidding data shows that demand is higher for 2 bed bungalows.

The MPS also shows a need for specialist housing for people with learning or physical disabilities. Consultation with Adult Social Care takes place on new sites to see if they're suitable for the development of specialist housing.

The intelligence that we have on housing needs and demands will be factored into our 10-year plan. Each site will be subjected to a bespoke needs assessment to ensure that the right mix of homes are provided for that locality.

2. Our Ambition and Targets

Ambition

Our ambition is to significantly increase the delivery of Council homes across the borough. We will build and provide high-quality, environmentally conscious and sustainable new council homes that meet the housing needs of our population. This will include building new communities, targeting empty homes and using land resources within existing areas across the borough.

Our Priorities and Targets

To achieve our ambition, we have developed a programme that we believe will achieve the following targets by 2030:

- 1. Deliver at least 350 new affordable homes** – we will directly build new homes and target empty properties to bring them back into use.
- 2. Build new affordable residential estates** – As well as continuing to build smaller housing developments on our land; we will aim to build two large high-quality residential communities that are 100% affordable that will meet the needs of our population.
- 3. Put sustainability at the heart of what we do** – We will ensure that all our new homes are built sustainably, using a ‘fabric-first’ approach and explore and embrace new technologies where possible to support the work of the Council to respond to the climate emergency
- 4. Ensure the highest quality of design** – We will design attractive, well thought out homes and communities National Space Standard. This will ensure our homes are well designed, spacious and embracing of the ‘homes for life’ ethos.

Our 10-year Council Homes Ambition

The programme over the page details the proposed delivery programme for the Council. Detail of each of the opportunities is included within Appendix A.

At this early stage, many of these opportunities are aspirational and will require further consultation, feasibility work and planning applications.

3. 10-Year Affordable Homes Delivery Programme

Scheme	Scheme Description	Potential No. of Affordable Homes	Budget Estimate (£M)	2020/21		2021/22		2022/23		2023/24		2024/25		2025/26		2026/27		2027/28		2028/29																									
				Apr	Jun	Aug	Oct	Dec	Feb	Apr	Jun	Aug	Oct	Dec	Feb	Apr	Jun	Aug	Oct	Dec	Feb	Apr	Jun	Aug	Oct	Dec	Feb	Apr	Jun	Aug	Oct	Dec	Feb	Apr	Jun	Aug	Oct	Dec	Feb	Apr	Jun	Aug	Oct	Dec	Feb
Former Bawtry Court, Battle Hill Ward	Work is underway to provide a mix of affordable homes on the former Bawtry Care homes site in Battle Hill	9	£1.325	9 Homes																																									
Edwin Grove, Howdon Ward	Work is underway to provide three new general needs homes on a former children's home in the Howdon ward	3	£0.495	3 Homes																																									
The Cedars, Collingwood Ward	Work is underway to build 12 new affordable homes on the site of the former care home at the Cedars in Collingwood Ward	12	£1.762	12 Homes																																									
Charlotte Street, Wallsend Ward	The regeneration of Charlotte Street will see several long-term empty homes brought back into use as affordable	11	£0.647	7 Homes																																									
Garage Site, Falmouth Road - Collingwood Ward	It is proposed that a small brownfield garage site is used The proposal is to use the HUSK MMC solution to build new bungalows	9	£1.203	8 Homes																																									
Benton Lane - Benton Ward	Mid-sized site to provide new 2,3, and 4 bed affordable homes.	30	£3.900	30 Homes																																									
Various Garage Sites - Battle Hill	6 small brownfield garage sites across Battle Hill The proposal is to use the HUSK MMC solution to build new bungalows	10	£1.389	10 Homes																																									
Wellfield Avenue Refurbishment, St Mary's Ward	Based on a successful compulsory purchase of a long-term empty care home that was causing blight, these will be converted into general needs homes	2	£0.214	2 Homes																																									
Murton West – Collingwood Ward	Council owned land within the wider strategic site at Murton Gap will be used to build a new fully affordable council community. The scheme will include a mixture of bungalows and 2,3 & 4 bed affordable homes	120	£16.800	120 Homes																																									
Charlton Court, Monkseaton South	Charlton Court sheltered scheme was not included within the NT Living project. The plan is to demolish and rebuild the scheme to provide a new 40 bed sheltered scheme and 14 new Council owned, affordable apartments. This development would be contained within the footprint of the existing site	54 (net gain of 13 affordable homes)	£4.359	13 Homes																																									
Annitsford Farm, Weetslade Ward	This site has already been approved for development but to date has not been taken forward due to constraints. The plan is to design a new 100% owned Council community that considers the noise issues from the airport that is currently constraining the site	100	£14.000	100 Homes																																									
Total		319	£46.094																																										

Key
 Pre-construction / Planning / Design / Tender
 Construction Phase

4. Supporting the Council's Response to the Climate Emergency

We will design all our sites to minimise their environmental impact and hence promote global environmental sustainability. The minimisation of energy and water usage is of importance in relation to minimising tenants' bills, in addition to contributing to environmental sustainability in its broader sense.

All aspects of building design can and will impact upon how the new homes will perform in terms of sustainability. A holistic approach to the design of schemes will ensure that the civil and structural elements, mechanical and electrical services, and sustainable technologies are integrated into the overall architectural design.

The Authority has a strong commitment to the creation of homes that demonstrate a high degree of sustainability with regards to their impact on the environment. This will be encompassed by:

- the use of renewable energy and implement those technologies that are shown to be appropriate
- maximising the thermal efficiency of the building envelope in the way of adopting a fabric first approach
- maximising use of daylight and passive solar energy
- minimising energy usage and carbon dioxide emissions and avoid contributing to ozone depletion, global warming, air and water pollution and non-renewable resource depletion
- improve upon the carbon emissions stated in the Building Regulations, which are current at the time, of which the schemes are planned to start.
- avoid the use of environmentally harmful building products and processes.
- source materials and products from sustainable sources in relation to the BRE Green Guide to Specification.
- minimising waste during construction and operation, maximise the opportunity for recycling and the effectiveness with regards to the transport of waste.
- respect the local landscape and protect natural habitat and species taking due account of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan.

5. Financing and Resourcing the Plan

The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget for 2020-21 was approved by Cabinet on 3 February 2020 and included a refresh of the 30-year HRA Business Plan. The Plan included a total of £44.600m of funding for new build homes over the next 10-years, with £5.643m available in 2020-21.

A revised HRA Business Plan for the 10-year period from 2021-31 was approved in its draft form by Cabinet on 30 November 2020, with the final proposals for 2021-22 to be agreed by Cabinet at its' meeting on 1 February 2021. That plan would see over £50m of funding made available to deliver new build council housing over the ten-year period.

The only caveat to this is that the HRA Business Plan like the rest of the Council's budgets is reviewed every year and is often affected by national decisions beyond the control of this authority.

At this point the full impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the country's economy is yet to be felt, which may then influence further Government Policy decisions making it difficult to predict with certainty medium term funding.

At this stage we can only plan for what we do know and although the Covid-19 pandemic is likely to have a financial impact on the HRA, at this point it is not possible to estimate what that impact will be both for the overall HRA Business Plan and available new build sums.

If all elements of the aspirational plan were to be delivered to the timescales and costs identified, including the elements being delivered in 2020-21, then this would have a total estimated cost of circa £46.100m. These sums have been built into the draft HRA plan referred to above and as things stand would be fully funded. The programme and the budget will be subject to annual review and will be adjusted as required.

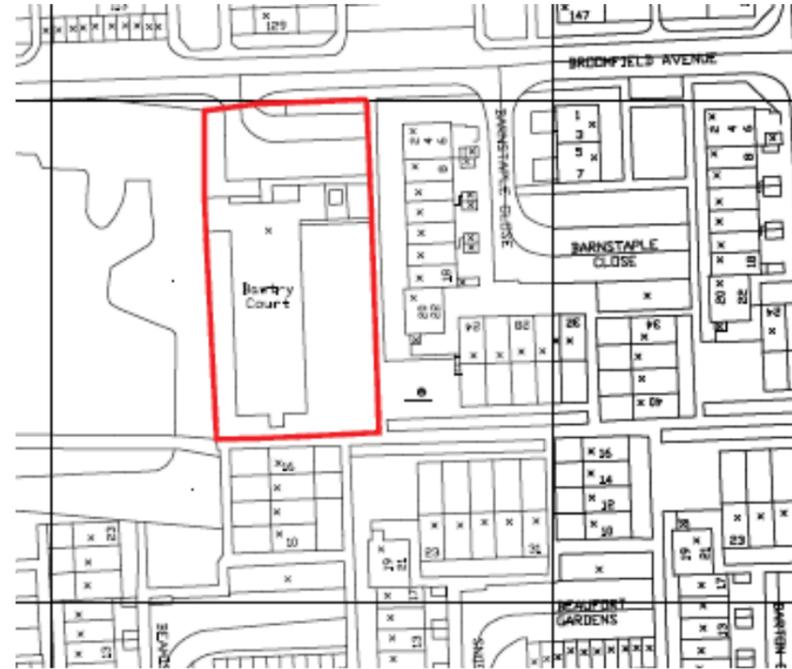
As stated above within the draft HRA Business Plan for 2021-51 the resources are provided which we believe are necessary to deliver this new build programme.

As it is highly likely that new opportunities outside of the ten-year plan will also present themselves within the life of this plan, it is important that flexibility in the budgeting and programming of work is maintained. Should new opportunities arise to exceed the target, or financial changes within the HRA business plan reduce the amount of available funding, borrowing within the HRA could be considered to ensure the delivery of the priorities within this and future development schemes.

Appendix 1 – Site Details

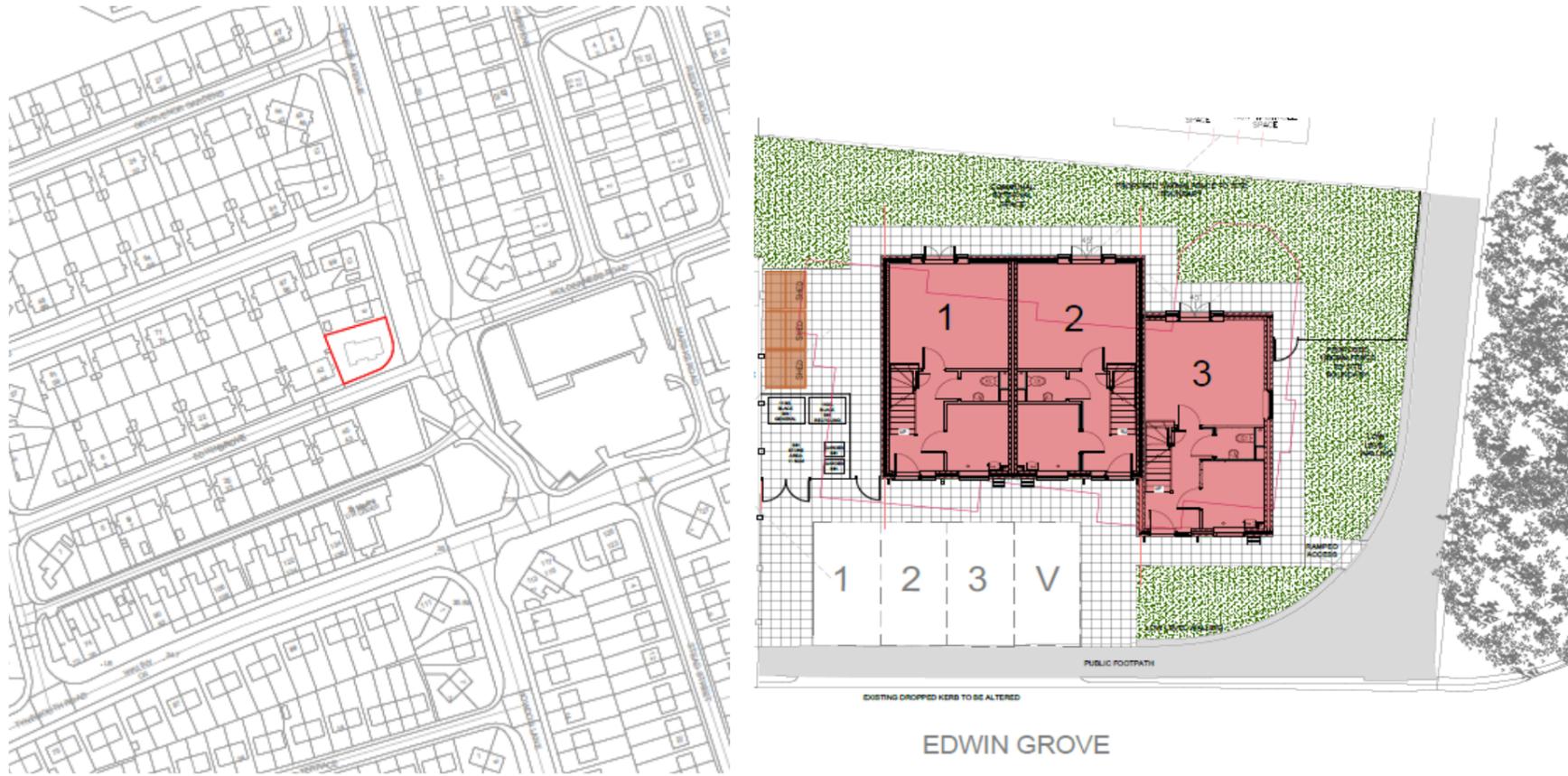
Former Bawtry Court, Wallsend (Battle Hill Ward)

Works have commenced to build 9 x 2-bedroom homes on the site of a former sheltered accommodation which was demolished in 2016. These homes will be allocated as general needs housing available to rent via Tyne & Wear Homes.



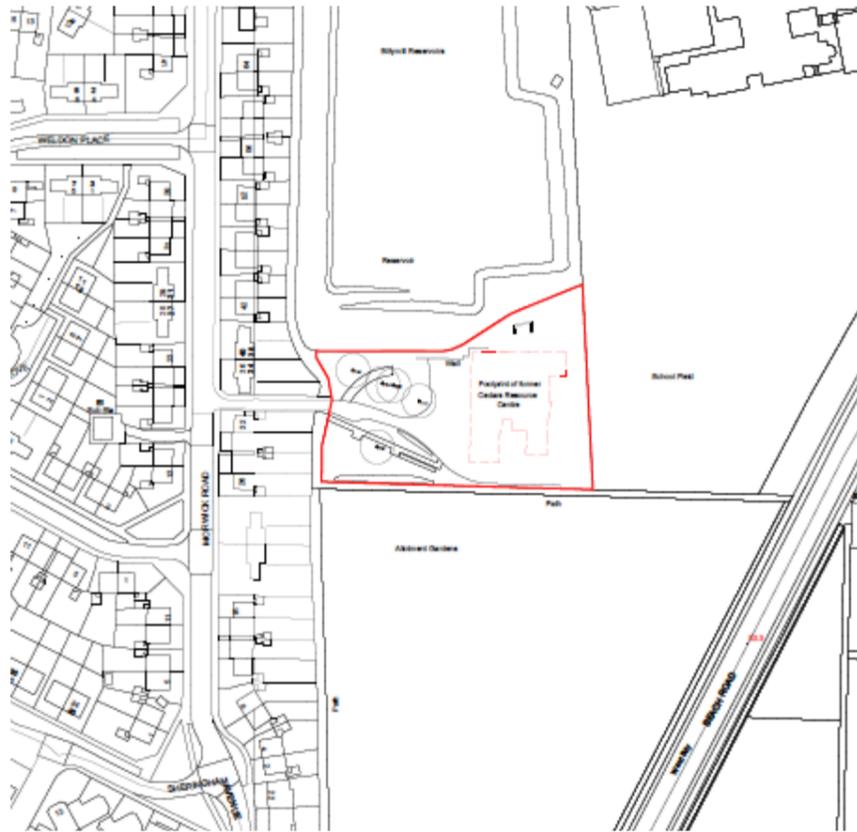
Former 46 Edwin Grove, Wallsend, (Howdon Ward)

Demolition of existing building and construction of 3 x 2-bedroom homes. These homes will be allocated as supported living accommodation with 24hr support via HECS service area.



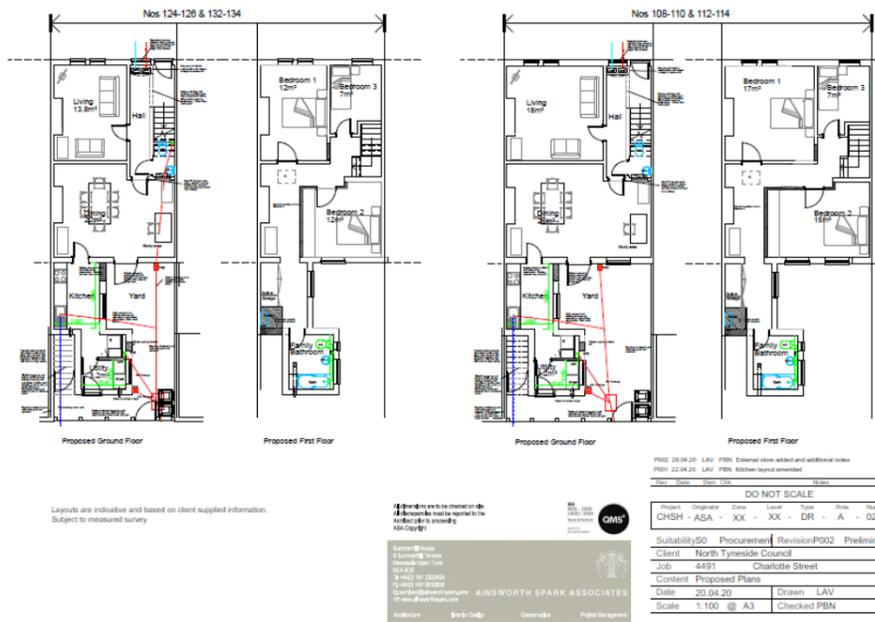
Former Care Home 'The Cedars' Morwick Road, North Shields (Collingwood Ward)

Works have commenced to build 12 new homes on the site of a former care home which was historically demolished. The scheme consists of 4 x 3 bedroom and 8 x 2 Bedroom homes. These homes will be allocated as general needs housing and available to rent via Tyne & Wear Homes.



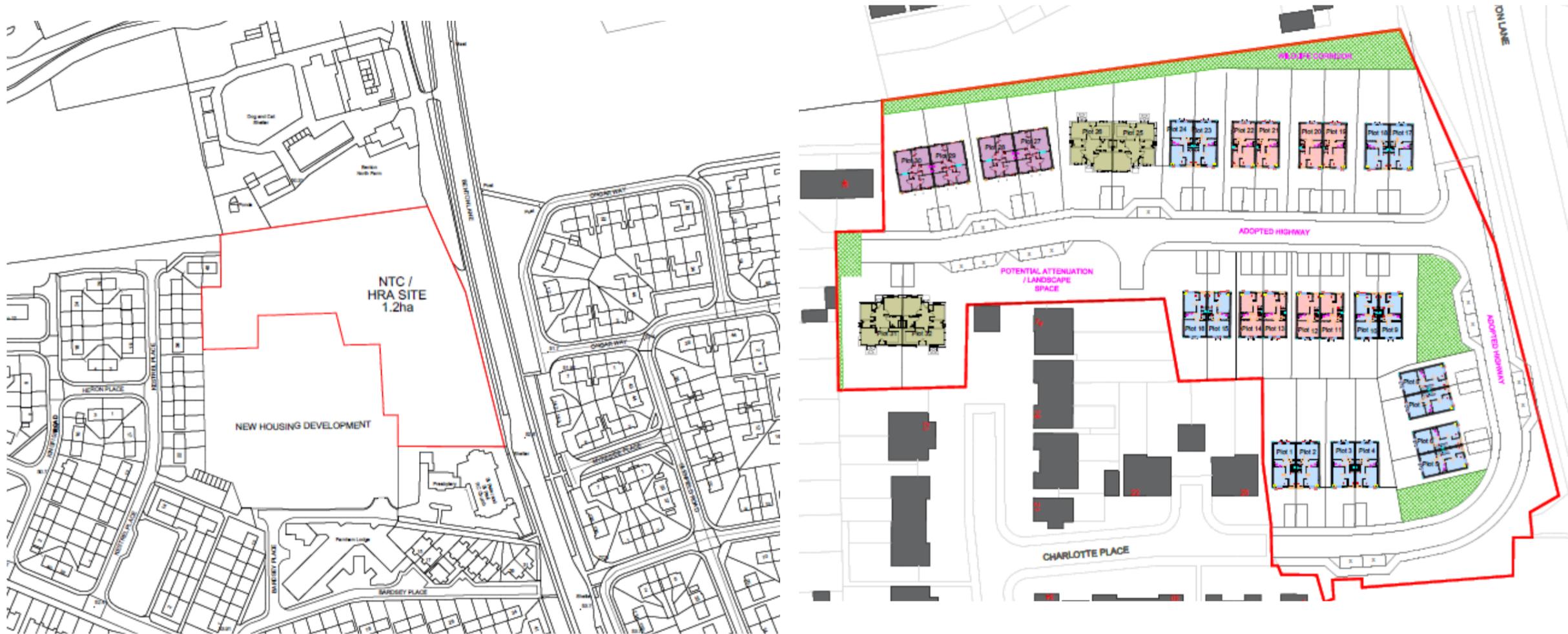
Charlotte Street, Wallsend, (Wallsend Ward)

11 empty flats in poor condition purchased in Charlotte Street Wallsend. 8 flats will be converted to 4 family homes and the remaining 3 flats refurbished to the decent homes standard. These homes will be allocated as general needs housing and available to rent via Tyne & Wear Homes. Design work has been completed ahead of the procurement of building contractors.



Benton Lane, (Longbenton Ward)

Area of land west of Benton Lane which is HRA owned and designated as Housing within the Local Plan. Pre-Planning Advice application has been submitted for a proposed scheme consisting of 32 homes. Which will see 8 x 2-bedroom bungalows, 8 x 3-bedroom houses and 16 x 2-bedroom houses.



Falmouth Road Garages, North Shields, (Collingwood Ward)

This site currently consists of 52 garages (2 x blocks of 14 and 2 x blocks of 12 Garages). Circa 50% of these garages are currently occupied. A Feasibility has been carried via a company called HUSK which would see the existing garages remodelled into 9 Bungalows (8 x 2 bedroom and 1 x 1 bedroom) by using the existing wall structures. Initial discussions have been held with Planning who were in support of the proposal.



Bellshill Close and Blackhill Avenue Garages, Battle Hill (Battle Hill Ward)

The residential estate consists of 6 individual garage sites with a total of 79 garages, circa 70% are currently occupied. A Feasibility has been carried via a company called HUSK which would see the existing garage sites remodelled into a total of 10 Bungalows (9 x 2 bedroom and 1 x 1 bedroom) by using the existing wall structures. Initial discussions have been held with Planning who were in support of the proposal.

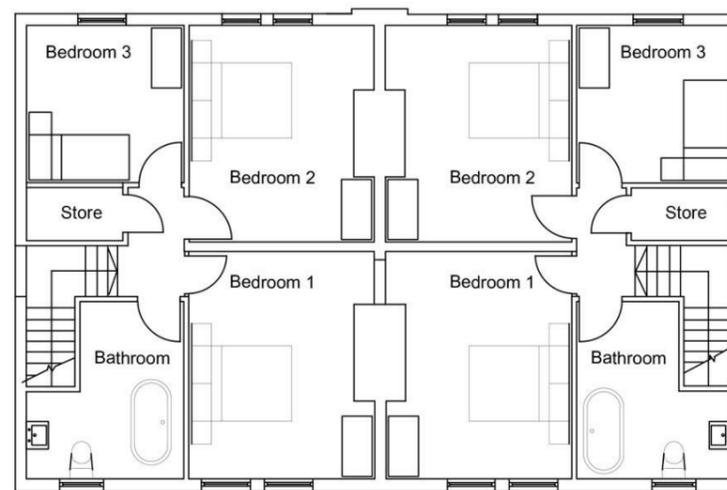


25 / 26 Wellington Avenue, Wellfield, Whitley Bay, (St Mary's Ward)

Former Supported living accommodation which was vacated in 2012. The current owner and landlord cannot be established. A Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) ~~can~~ is being progressed by the Authority to obtain possession. A conversion of the property would deliver 2 x 3-bedroom homes.



Proposed Ground Floor Plan



Proposed First Floor Plan

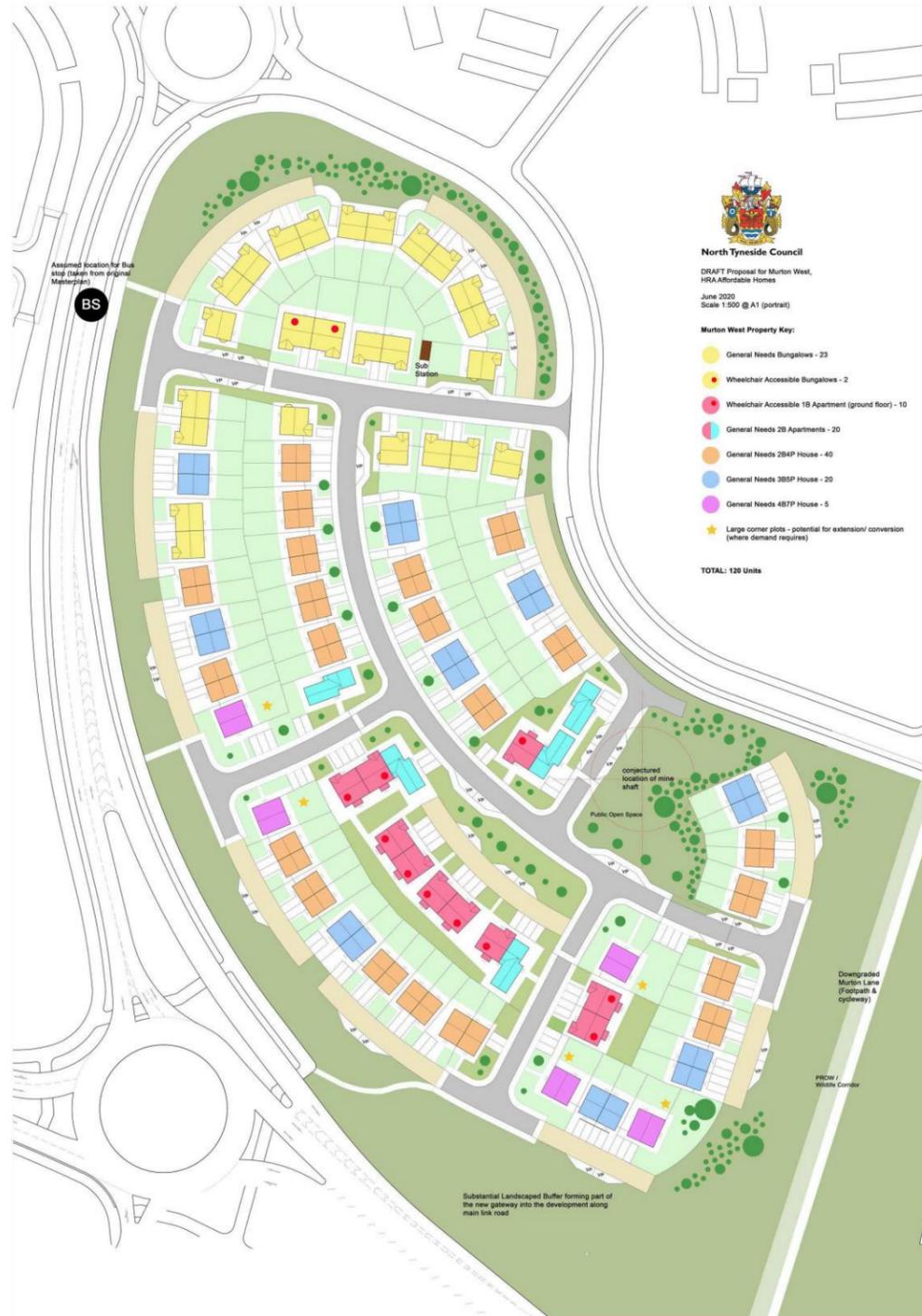
Charlton Court, Whitley Bay, (Monkseaton South Ward)

Existing supported living accommodation consisting of 41 flats (31 x 1 bedroom and 10 x 2 bedroom). These homes were not included as part of the NT Living remodelling project and the current arrangement does not suit the resident's needs. Options have been explored with a hybrid scheme of demolition and new build being the preferred option. The proposal would see 54 new homes built within the footprint of the existing scheme including a new sheltered accommodation scheme and a refurbished block for General Needs Housing. This would see a net gain of 13 new affordable homes.



Murton West, North Shields, (Collingwood Ward)

The plans for this site have yet to be finalised but will contain up to 120 new affordable homes



Annitsford Farm, Annitsford (Weetslade / Camperdown Wards)

Plans for this site have yet to be finalised but will contain up to 100 new affordable homes.

