

Allocations and Designations Plan High Level Options Appraisal for Metro/Rail Station and Park & Ride Locations

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1. Introduction

Context

- 1.1 Sunderland City Council is currently preparing its Local Plan. Sunderland's Local Plan consists of three parts:
- Core Strategy and Development Management Plan (CSDP); –The CSDP was adopted in January 2020 and sets the overarching development strategy, strategic policies and strategic allocations and designations for the future change and growth of Sunderland. This Plan also includes local policies for Development Management purposes. This Plan covers the plan period 2015 to 2033 and is for development within Sunderland's administrative boundaries.
 - Allocations and Designations Plan (A&D); – will set out local policies including site-specific policy designations and allocations for the development, protection and conservation of land in the city in order to deliver the overall strategy as set out within the CSDP.
 - International Advance Manufacturing Park Area Action Plan (IAMP AAP). – The IAMP AAP was adopted by Sunderland City Council and South Tyneside Council in November 2017. This part of the Local Plan sets out site-specific policies for the comprehensive development of the IAMP and covers the period 2017-2032.
- 1.2 Having adopted the CSDP and IAMP AAP, Sunderland City Council (the Council) is preparing the first draft of the A&D Plan for consultation in December 2020. This plan provides the opportunity to identify and safeguard sites for rail extensions, new stations and park and ride schemes (P&R).
- 1.3 Land-use policy and the future development of the Metro and local rail network must therefore be mutually connected at all stages of development. The permanence and visibility of rail-based transport should be a powerful influence favouring the sustainable development of locations within easy walking distance of stations. Where major new development is proposed, wherever possible it should be located within reach of existing corridors; where this cannot be achieved then consideration needs to be given as to whether Metro or local rail is the best sustainable accessibility solution and, if so, how it can be accommodated and funded as part of the development process.

Purpose of this Report

- 1.4 The purpose of this paper is to set out the Council's high level options appraisal of safeguarded sites for extensions, new stations and P&R sites to justify each alignment/site.

Structure of Report

- 1.5 This report provides a national, regional and local policy context for the safeguarding of routes, stations and park and ride schemes (Section 2). A narrative and review of the key evidence and strategic context for safeguarding land for rail infrastructures is provided within sections 3 and 4. Section 5 of the report examines the routes to be safeguarded, providing a justification and a summary of the socio-economic benefits that Metro and rail route reintroduction would bring to Sunderland. Sections 6 and 7 identify potential station locations and park and ride schemes that would support the reopening of routes and promote sustainable travel within the city and beyond to Tyne and Wear and Durham.

2. Policy Context

National Planning Framework

- 2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework¹ (NPPF) advocates the consideration of transport issues at the earliest stage of plan development and recommends that sustainable transport opportunities are identified and pursued within plans (para 102).
- 2.2 The NPPF is clear that planning policies should “identify and protect, where there is robust evidence, sites and routes which could be critical in developing infrastructure to widen transport choice and realise opportunities for large scale development” (para 104).

National Planning Practice Guidance

- 2.3 Planning Practice Guidance² (PPG), supports the NPPF’s drive to identify and protect sites and routes that are critical in developing transport infrastructures. While the PPG does not specifically prescribe guidance for rail provision, it does set out the basic requirements that plans should adopt when identifying transport infrastructures, including:
 - assessing the opportunities to support a pattern of development that, where reasonable to do so, facilitates the use of sustainable modes of transport;
 - highlight and promote opportunities to reduce the need for travel where appropriate; and
 - identify opportunities to prioritise the use of alternative modes in both existing and new development locations if appropriate.

Regional Context

- 2.4 At the regional level Transport North East, the North East Combined Authority and The North of Tyne Combined Authority have released a consultation draft North East Transport Plan 2021-2035³ setting out the transport priorities for the North East to 2035. The overall vision for transport is to move to a green, healthy, dynamic and a thriving North East. One of the key objectives to achieving this vision is to introduce measures to make sustainable travel more attractive, greener and an easy alternative to getting around the North East. The Transport Plan identifies six policy areas required to facilitate travel choices towards more sustainable, healthier and green options. Of particular relevance to Metro and rail travel are policy areas seeking to encourage:
 - a. Public Transport – travelling by local Rail and Metro - invest in Metro and local rail to extend and improve the network. Take action to drive partners to make travelling and moving goods around our region more efficient and green;
 - b. Connectivity beyond our own boundaries - Work with partners to make movement of people and goods to and from the region, more efficient and greener. Work with partners to strengthen connections from destinations in the region to everywhere in the UK and beyond;
 - c. The draft Transport Plan identifies a timeline of strategic interventions to achieve the plan’s vision and objectives. Interventions identified within the plan which are relevant to Sunderland include;

¹ National Planning Policy Framework

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/810197/NPPF_Feb_2019_revised.pdf

² Planning Practice Guidance: Transport evidence bases in plan making and decision taking

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/transport-evidence-bases-in-plan-making-and-decision-taking>

³ <https://www.transportnortheast.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Full-Transport-Plan.pdf>

- i. Re-opening of the Leamside Line and operation of first trains on the extension to IAMP by 2029;
- ii. Re-opening of remainder of Leamside Line extension by 2035; and
- iii. Station improvements and frequency improvements on long distance services along the Durham Coast Line by 2025.

2.5 The policy interventions identified in the Transport Plan relevant to Sunderland, indicate the importance that rail infrastructure plays in the North East. The A&D Plan will play a key role in facilitating the delivery of local rail infrastructure schemes within Sunderland that will improve connectivity and encourage sustainable and greener travel choices.

3. Key Evidence Review

Metro Futures and Metro and Local Rail Strategy

- 3.1 Metro Futures was a document designed to stimulate discussion on how Metro and local rail will develop in the future. Since the opening of the Sunderland Metro extension in 2002 which operates on Network Rail infrastructure and shares this with national rail network trains, the distinction between Metro and local rail has become blurred. This has led to the Metro and Local Rail Strategy which considers both as a local rail network, supporting the local economy.
- 3.2 The Metro and Local Rail Strategy⁴ sets out how Metro and Local Rail will deliver a comprehensive network to improve the local economy, environment and society by better integrating rail-based services. The expansion, improvement and integration of Metro and Local Rail services is identified as fundamental to the economic growth plans of the North East and forms a key element of the ongoing devolution plans and agreements.
- 3.3 The North East of England is the birthplace of our railways. Transport North East's Metro and Local Rail Strategy recognises that "Our industrial heritage has left behind it a network of disused railways that thread across the region. Some are former passenger lines, although many are freight routes connecting mines and factories to ports. As new developments take place around them some could once again become important transport arteries, helping to move people around the North East along unobstructed, uncongested route corridors".
- 3.4 Most disused routes remain free from intrusion along their path with many being maintained as footpaths and cycleways.
- 3.5 Existing and disused local rail corridors have the potential to be combined with the Metro network to create a single Metro and local rail network, at a lower cost than new-build railways. We have focused our attention on those areas that had a railway and former use.
- 3.6 The economic value that Metro and Local Rail provides to our economy is very significant. Through a study undertaken for Nexus, we know that Metro and Local Rail plays a critical role as an economic enabler:
 - Metro and Local Rail contribute up to £224m of Gross Value Added (GVA) to the economy each year; and
 - In a wider measure of GDP and welfare benefits, the overall contribution increases to up to £437m per annum.
- 3.7 This value captures the benefits accruing to individuals, businesses and wider society from more efficient travel, greater productivity through better business connectivity and selected social and environmental impacts, which can also be more readily monetised. It recognises the part Metro and Local Rail has to play in helping businesses to connect, commuters to travel to and from work, students to learn in schools, colleges and universities and residents and visitors to access services and explore attractions across the region.

⁴ Metro and Local Rail Strategy, NECA and Nexus, July 2016; available at: https://www.nexus.org.uk/sites/default/files/Metro%20and%20Light%20Rail%20Strategy%20Draft_0.pdf

- 3.8 The NELEP's Strategic Economic Plan sets out that the economy holds the potential to grow further and into different sectors, over the coming years. However, this growth will not happen on its own. It will rely on the better transport connectivity an improved and expanded network will bring improved access to labour markets and new education and skills access.
- 3.9 The study confirmed the current network already delivers an economic value per passenger of £8.50 per passenger; and an expanded network will deliver at least £8.50 per additional passenger journey. With geographic expansion of the network, the benefits will be distributed across a wider cross-section of the North East's residential and business populations.
- 3.10 Reinstatement of the Leamside Line could "have the potential to open up access to suburban rail services for up to 1 million residents in Country Durham and Tyne and Wear, connecting them to jobs, commerce and the wider transport network" (p.44). The further connection to create the South of Tyne and Wearside Loop will improve regional and local connectivity for Sunderland and potentially South Shields and mid Tyne. It will provide access to employment for communities in the Coalfields area via the former railway line from South Hylton to Pelaw.

Transport Plan for the North East (Consultation Draft 2020)

- 3.11 A Transport Plan for the North East⁵ was released in November 2020 for consultation. This document sets out the strategic transport vision and objectives for the North East region, to 2035. The plan builds on the evidence within the Metro and Local Rail Strategy, providing a delivery framework to facilitate route extensions and new stations across the North East.
- 3.12 The plan seeks to achieve full devolution of local rail services in order to expand the reach of Metro and local rail into more communities across the North East. The potential for further rail devolution from Central Government to the North East, to specify and manage the operations of our current local rail network in line with the Tyne and Wear Metro, will enable the region to deliver a responsive, integrated and accountable rail network with improved services and reach. The region already benefits from partial devolution through Transport for the North (TfN) but this is not far enough to realise the full benefits of a truly integrated North East public transport system.
- 3.13 The plan aims to get more people travelling by local rail and Metro in the region. Part of the approach is to improve 'turn up and go' local rail service frequencies (similar to Metro) where demand exists. The plan also seeks to deliver new stations on existing lines and reopen routes, such as the Leamside Line, alongside Metro network extensions to widen access to jobs and training, grow the economy and reduce deprivation.
- 3.14 As identified in section 2 of this report, the key priorities within the plan of importance to Sunderland include:
- Re-opening of the Leamside Line and operation of first trains on the extension to IAMP (part of the Wearside Loop) by 2029 (assuming current Network Rail spending programmes);
 - Re-opening of remainder of Leamside Line extension by 2035; and

⁵ Transport Plan for the North East <https://www.transportnortheast.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Full-Transport-Plan.pdf>

- Station improvements and frequency improvements on long distance services along the Durham Coast Line by 2025.

4. Strategic Context for Metro and rail now and in the future

Existing Metro Network

4.1 The current Metro network can be summarised by the following three key statistics:

- 36 million passenger trips per year;
- 90 trains; and
- 60 stations.

4.2 The majority of stations were purpose-built in the 1980s and vary from large city centre transport interchanges to local suburban stations. Metro connects the key centres of population in Tyne and Wear, as shown in the network map below. Metro is readily accessible (defined as those who live within 800m of a Metro Station) to 350,000 individuals. Passenger surveys (Nexus Business Intelligence patronage figures, adjusted for the frequency of Metro travel) suggest that approximately one quarter of the Tyne and Wear population (297,600 i.e. 27% of 1.1m) uses Metro, with many Metro stations serving as interchanges with other modes of public transport, mainly local bus services but also taxi, national and local rail services and also air transportation.

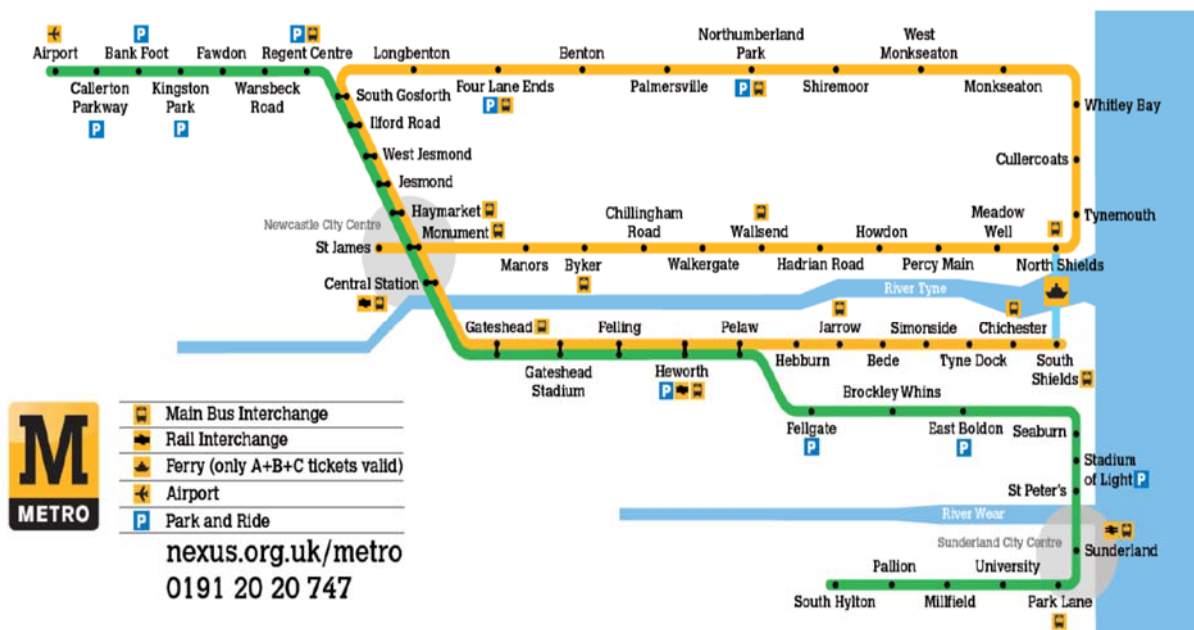


Figure 1 Current Metro System

4.3 Metro operations began in 1980 and services to South Shields began in 1984. The system was extended to Newcastle Airport in 1991, providing a 23 minute link to Newcastle city centre. A further extension of the Metro was then undertaken, in 2002, to Sunderland mainly using Railtrack (now Network Rail) infrastructure (Figure 1). Metro was the UK's first modern light rail service, the first to be designed with disabled people in mind, the first to be non-smoking and the first to provide mobile phone and internet reception throughout its underground sections.

- 4.4 The Sunderland line extends 18.5km through Sunderland city centre to South Hylton of which 14km is on existing heavy rail line between Pelaw and Sunderland and 4.5km - south of Sunderland along the south bank of the River Wear, to South Hylton - on a previously disused railway alignment.
- 4.5 Metro plays a role in offering transport choice for people with mode options. It assists in helping to reduce levels of urban road congestion in Tyne and Wear. Its dedicated infrastructure means that it places no reliance on the highway network, ensuring reliable, congestion-free journeys. This advantage particularly applies along the corridors into urban centres, for shopping, services, education and employment. Metro also provides direct access to major employment sites. From the outset, Metro was designed to be accessible for wheelchair users, with lifts and ramps and level boarding on to Metrocars.
- 4.6 Metro is central to future decisions on land-use planning and transport infrastructure investment. The National Planning Policy Framework confirms the need to actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable, for example in urban centres. It goes on to define sustainable transport modes as any efficient, safe and accessible means of transport with overall low impact on the environment. Although rail services are not cheap to provide, capital investment in the Metro network has already been made and the benefits it provides are substantial and durable. Metro is an instantly recognisable brand. It is popular and easily understood by the people who use it and the plans outlined in this strategy for further investment and closer integration with the local rail network will keep delivering benefits to users and non-users alike in terms of reducing congestion and providing sustainable accessibility.

Metro Current and Future Demand

- 4.7 In 2019 Metro carried 36 million passenger trips over 60 stations⁶. Nexus' monitoring data shows that the main journey purpose for Metro passengers is work (42%), followed by shopping (20%), education (11%) and leisure (11%). Nexus research shows that 47% of people travel five times a week or more by Metro, emphasising its importance for work and education trips. 18% of people use the network three or four times a week and a further 18% once or twice a week, showing the importance of the system to commuters and regular travellers.
- 4.8 Forecast increases in demand for Metro and local rail over the period to 2030 suggest that the existing networks will experience a continuing increase in passenger numbers, as has been the case in recent years following a period of falling demand for Metro. Whilst off-peak capacity is ample, peak-time trains are already at or approaching capacity over parts of the network. The future capacity challenge requires the flexibility to invest in additional or longer trains when needed to provide more frequent services to and from a more diverse range of destinations and in infrastructure to cope with greater passenger numbers.
- 4.9 Forecasting land-use patterns helps to define future movement patterns across the region. The emphasis in planning terms needs to be on ensuring the active support of stakeholders at

⁶ Transport Plan for the North East <https://www.transportnortheast.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Full-Transport-Plan.pdf>

all levels that will help ensure that sustainable development is concentrated along corridors easily accessible by Metro and that any network extensions are planned and promoted, in the knowledge that Metro will facilitate access requirements arising from future land-use planning decisions.

- 4.10 One of the trends since the opening of Metro has been an increase in the amount of development in locations which Metro cannot serve. The future priority in terms of large-scale development should be to maximise the use of brownfield and greenfield sites close to the existing network, then along corridors where there is consensus that the nature and scale of development is proportionate to a network extension, or where Metro would be key to opening-up sustainable transport opportunities.

Rail

- 4.11 Much of the local rail network in Tyne and Wear was converted into the Metro system. It has continued its role at the heart of the local economy by transporting tens of thousands of people by rail to work, education and other activities each day. The remainder of the local rail network has continued through decades of closures and cutbacks, maintaining some connectivity but characterised by poor-quality trains and low service frequencies. Rail connectivity remains a challenge to some of the more remote rural and deprived urban areas of the North East region.
- 4.12 The local rail network has not benefitted from the same focused investment that Metro has experienced. Investment in services and trains has lagged behind the rest of the North of England and it would be fair to say, that local rail investment in the North East, has lacked a clear plan for its long-term future.
- 4.13 There are 533 route km of rail lines in the North East, however, only 31% of lines are currently electrified, meaning that local rail trains operating across the region are diesel-powered. Although the unpopular 'pacer' trains have been withdrawn, they have been replaced with similar-aged trains that are only slightly more reliable. In 2019, they were refurbished with improved seating, at-seat power, fully accessible toilets, free wi-fi, digital customer information screens, sustainable lighting and improved CCTV. Despite this, the trains are showing their age and lag behind modern passenger needs and expectations.
- 4.14 There are 31 local rail stations in the region ranging from remote rural stations to major intercity stations. The level of passenger facilities varies considerably. The local stations carry five million passengers per annum around the North East each year.
- 4.15 The heavy rail network in the North East comprises several routes. The strategic East Coast Main Line or ECML (London to Edinburgh services) runs in a North – South direction in our region with station calling points including Durham, Newcastle, Morpeth, Alnmouth and Berwick-upon-Tweed. There is a corresponding alignment which connects Newcastle to Sunderland and then runs north-south from Sunderland, using the Durham Coast to the Tees Valley, served by local Northern Rail services. There is also an East-West route running from Newcastle to Carlisle via the Tyne Valley line, which offers predominately local services.
- 4.16 Local/regional rail services operate on the Durham Coast route through Sunderland and on the Tyne Valley line. These provided links between most of the region's larger towns and

across to Carlisle in the west. Services on the Tyne Valley were increased to half hourly frequency in 2019 whilst those on the Durham Coast route were due to increase to half hourly in 2020 but this has been deferred due to the pandemic.

- 4.17 Both the Durham Coast and East Coast Main Line suffer from a lack of capacity, particularly to accommodate paths for freight trains which operates at slower speeds and lower headways. A key scheme to address this is the reinstatement of the disused Leamside Line, from Tursdale, County Durham to Pelaw in Gateshead, for passenger and freight use. Passenger services on this line were withdrawn as a result of the Beeching Report in 1964 and rail freight stopped in 1991 when the line was mothballed, but its reintroduction is vital to the North East's success through freeing up capacity on parallel routes and bringing places like Washington back on to the national network.
- 4.18 Combined with the reintroduction of an old railway line between South Hylton and Peshaw, the Leamside Line can also create a South of Tyne and Wearside Loop. The Leamside Line and the reopening of connected alignments, has enormous opportunity to integrate our railways and Metro system and provide significant improvements in connectivity for our residents and businesses. A failure to develop it will result in continued pressures on the ECML and Durham Coast, poor access to jobs and economic under-activity.

Freight

- 4.19 Although the amount of freight carried on the region's rail network is a small proportion of its historical volume, that which remains is vitally important to the local and national economy. Freight has equal network rights with passenger trains, therefore any prospectus for improved Metro and local rail services must take account of current and known future flows, which can be difficult to predict. Over the last three decades, centuries of coal shipments from the region reversed to become flows of imported coal and these have also subsequently reduced considerably as the UK's dependence on coal for electricity production continues to diminish. Flows of imported wood pulp (biomass) for power station use have partly replaced coal, but it is not known for how long these will continue. At present there is comparatively little traffic in raw materials or finished goods processed within the North East, with most of the tonnage consisting of transit traffic.

5. Metro and Rail Expansion

- 5.1 Our industrial heritage has left behind it a network of disused railways that thread across the region. Some are former passenger lines, although many are freight routes connecting mines and factories to ports. As new developments take place around them some could once again become important transport arteries, helping to move people around the North East along unobstructed, uncongested route corridors. Most disused routes remain free from intrusion along their path with many being maintained as footpaths and cycleways, although in some cases new roads and buildings cross the alignments and would require business case feasibility work to establish the costs of restoring a route versus the expected benefits. The Joint Transport Committee and Nexus considers the existing and disused local rail corridors can be combined with the Metro network to create a single Metro and local rail network, at a lower cost than new-build railways. There are also a number of areas where the existing Metro network can be upgraded to create a more effective service.
- 5.2 Almost since the opening of Metro in the 1980s, there have been aspirations to extend the network to increase the proportion of the population who have easy access to the system. The planned ambitious expansion of the Metro and local rail network will deliver improved connectivity in itself, but the effect of this will be magnified by growth in interchange with private cars (through both park and ride and passenger drop-off points), taxis, bicycles (through high quality cycle storage), walking (through safe walking routes), buses and longer-distance rail services.
- 5.3 The expansion, improvement and integration of local rail and Metro services is fundamentally important to the economic growth plans of the North East and is reflected in the Transport Manifesto's ambitions for rail services.
- 5.4 The Metro and Local Rail Strategy⁷ sets out how Metro and Local Rail will deliver a comprehensive network to improve the local economy, environment and society by better integrating rail-based services. These priorities for extension and improvement are further supported in the recent Transport Plan for the North East (Consultation Draft)⁸. The expansion, improvement and integration of Metro and Local Rail services is identified as fundamental to the economic growth plans of the North East and forms a key element of the ongoing devolution plans and agreements. Figure 2 identified the expansion opportunities for

⁷ Metro and Local Rail Strategy, NECA and Nexus, July 2016; available at: https://www.nexus.org.uk/sites/default/files/Metro%20and%20Light%20Rail%20Strategy%20Draft_0.pdf

⁸ Transport Plan for the North East <https://www.transportnortheast.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Full-Transport-Plan.pdf>



Figure 2 Potential Metro Expansion

Safeguarding Metro/Rail Routes

5.5 The CSDP policy SP10 safeguards the following disused railway alignments for future use:

- Leamside line; and
- South Hylton to Penshaw.

5.6 The A&D Plan proposes to safeguard an alignment to Doxford Park. However, in order to support the expansion of rail services and the reopening of disused lines, there is a need to plan for a number of potential station locations and park and ride schemes to promote and support rail use as a sustainable public and freight transport option within Sunderland.

Leamside Line

5.7 The Leamside Line is a disused 21 mile rail alignment from Tursdale Junction south of Durham to Pelaw Junction east of Gateshead passing Bowburn, Belmont, Fencehouses, Penshaw and Washington, before connecting with the East Coast Main Line (Figure 3). Reopening the disused line has been a key long-term aspiration of the North East and is supported by the MPs of all the constituencies listed. It has featured as a significant element of previous local and upcoming regional transport plans. As a result, local authorities have continued to protect the Leamside alignment from development.

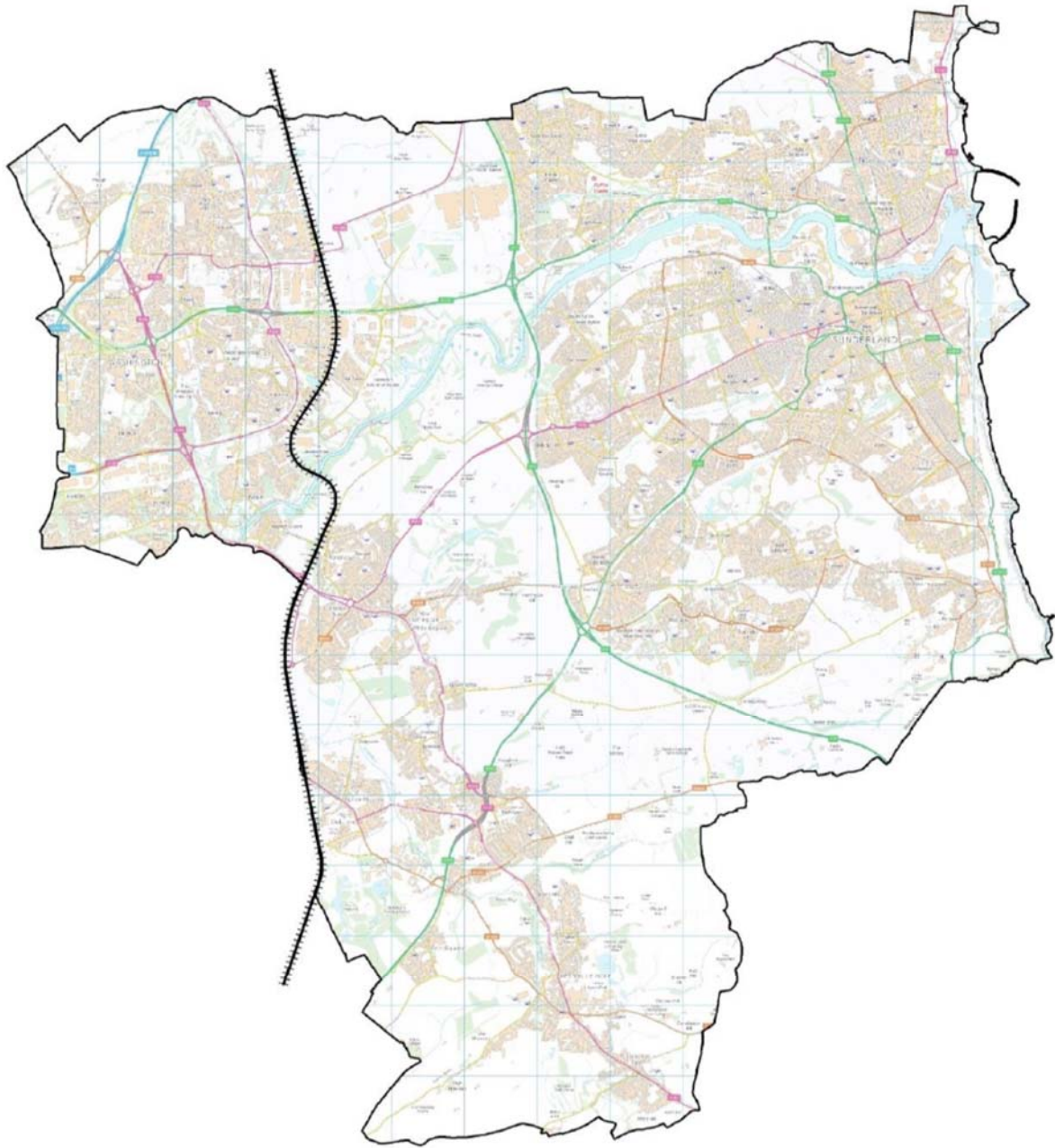


Figure 3 Leamside

5.8 The Line is of great significance to the future operation of Metro and local rail and the long-term strategic and socio-economic benefits of its reopening are identified further in this paper. Restoring track and services to this disused alignment would add capacity for both freight and passenger services operating at local, regional and national levels. It would relieve pressure on the East Coast Main Line, which is already at capacity and will face greater demands in years to come, but also offers significant opportunities to improve regional connectivity.

- 5.9 Another disused alignment, running west from the current Metro terminus at South Hylton, joins the Leamside Line just south of the River Wear at Penshaw. Acting together, these two alignments offer the potential to provide:
- A 'Wearside loop' Metro-style service connecting Sunderland and Washington (described below);
 - Local rail links between Durham (Belmont), Sunderland, South Shields and Newcastle (described below);
 - Along with an upgraded Durham Coast line, additional capacity for passenger and freight services to relieve pressure on the ECML; and
 - In the longer term, a potential route for a high speed rail link from the North East to Yorkshire and beyond.

Ownership

- 5.10 The Leamside alignment remains in Network Rail's ownership and consequently is relatively free from obstructive development, although much of its structural condition is not currently known to any great degree and there has been some adjacent development since it closed to rail traffic in 1991, since when it has been the subject of much discussion as to its future use. As part of the national rail network, at least in terms of ownership, wider planning considerations may come into play.
- 5.11 The connecting railway alignment between South Hylton and the Leamside Line at Penshaw is owned by Sunderland City Council and maintained as a footpath and cycleway.

Historical Support

- 5.12 Since closure of the Leamside Line in 1991 a number of historical studies have been undertaken looking into issues and opportunities that line reintroduction for passenger, freight and high speed trains would offer Sunderland and the North East region. Railtrack undertook some internal studies in the late 1990s examining the longer term potential of the Leamside Line as a high speed route similar to the French TGV routes. The reopening of the line was also included in successive Network Management Statements up until the creation of Network Rail in 2002.

Regional Support

- 5.13 Regionally, the Leamside Line is supported through the draft consultation Transport Plan for the North East and the North East Rail Statement, which both seek to implement rail improvements over the next fifteen year period, to deliver economic benefits to the north east region. Its protection is reinforced by the neighbouring local authorities of Newcastle, Gateshead and Durham, who support the line's protection within their respective Local Plans to deliver additional passenger services or freight services should the need arise.

Strategic and Socio-Economic Benefits

- 5.14 The Leamside Line is particularly important to Sunderland as it potentially provides direct access to the East Coast Main Line, which is one of the arterial rail links South and North. The reopening of the Leamside Line has significant potential to increase passenger rail capacity on the East Coast Main Line (ECML) and Durham Coast line through removal of freight trains from these routes. This would greatly assist to free up capacity for additional passenger trains on these lines, both of which serve larger populations providing arterial routes to London and Scotland, with potential for passenger services to Sunderland.

- 5.15 The Leamside Line would also afford opportunities to provide Metro operations to Washington if connected to a currently disused alignment running west from the current Metro terminus at South Hylton, connecting to the Leamside Line via a spur just south of the River Wear at Peshaw. If this were combined with the reinstatement of the spur, it would allow for the creation of a 'Wearside Loop' for Metro and the potential for a link between Sunderland station and the ECML for inter-city and Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR) trains. This would provide wider economic opportunities for Sunderland and open up opportunities for employees and goods to travel by rail.
- 5.16 The Leamside Line is supported in the T&WLTP3 and the draft Transport Plan for the North East as a route that offers multiple options for rail travel. The line has been safeguarded for future use within the Policy SP10 in order to secure wider economic benefits for the north east region and for Sunderland. The policy allows for sufficient flexibility deliver and support Metro/rail extensions and development of stations, should the line be reintroduced within the plan period and is supported by neighbouring local authorities in their Local Plans.
- 5.17 Nexus, on behalf of Transport North East, is developing network expansion proposals to GRIP2/SOBC stage and one of the most significant opportunities is the Leamside Line. Bringing the Leamside Line back into passenger use, supported by additional alignments, would provide the following benefits:
- At the national and strategic level it offers capacity relief for the congested East Coast Main Line and/or a diversionary route for freight and passengers;
 - At the regional level, linked with the reintroduction of the 'Stillington' Line for passenger use, it would improve regional connectivity between the Tyne and Wear and Tees Valley city regions and offers the potential to attract traffic from the A1(M) to rail; and
 - At the local level, restoring the Leamside Line for passenger use will unlock opportunities to expand the Metro and Local Rail service to serve communities at Follingsby, Washington, Peshaw, Fencehouses and create a Rail Park and Ride facility at Belmont, Durham at the junction of the A1 (M) and the A690. If linked with the introduction of a connection from South Hylton to Pelaw via the Victoria Viaduct, providing Sunderland and South Tyneside with a 'South of Tyne and Wearside loop'.
- 5.18 The Leamside Line was mothballed by Network Rail in 1991 after the East Coast Main Line was electrified and resignalled . Prior to this, the line was used as a diversionary route on the ECML until the mid-1980s when the mainline was electrified and re-signalled. At this time, the railways were not as busy as they are today. The Council is confident the demand for the reintroduction of the Leamside Line exists.
- 5.19 The main Leamside alignment and the formation remains free from obstruction, although the line has several at-grade level crossings which will need to be eliminated prior to re-opening. It is in the ownership of Network Rail. All communication and control equipment must be re-installed, along with the majority of the permanent way. Given the battery potential of the new Metro fleet this may limit or remove requirements to electrify the line at Metro's 1500DC operation but may be appropriate to electrify at 25KV for national rail.

- 5.20 The line will require the construction of several stations at Strategic Economic Sites namely Follingsby (Park and Ride/International Advanced Manufacturing Park) straddling Gateshead and South Tyneside Council areas, Washington North (in proximity to land safeguarded East of Washington), Washington East, Penshaw, Fencehouses, Belmont (Park and Ride) in East Gateshead and potentially Ferryhill in Durham.

South Hylton to Penshaw

- 5.21 The reintroduction of the Leamside Line can be a catalyst to further significant opportunities. The existing Metro route from the South Hylton Metro terminus has the potential to be extended westwards towards Penshaw (Figure 4), using the railway formerly linking Sunderland with Durham and then connect with the Leamside corridor via a new curve heading northwards over the River Wear, serving Washington towards Wardley. In the Wardley area a new spur would be built towards the east, joining up with the existing Network Rail line west of Fellgate Metro then heading back towards Sunderland via East Boldon. This becomes the South of Tyne and Wearside Loop. Similar new connections are feasible with the South Shields and Newcastle Metro routes east of Pelaw.
- 5.22 The need to link the Washington area to the Metro and local rail network has been evident since the early days of Metro operation, given its population and the need for better public transport links with Sunderland city centre in particular. Washington is the UK's 4th largest town without a rail connection, therefore the rail connections would bring significant socio-economic benefits to the town. Various options including re-use of the Leamside rail corridor and street-running trams have been considered in the past, but none have gained the necessary momentum towards delivery. However, in the context of the strategic development of disused alignments and connecting spurs and curves, there is now the potential to deliver a circular Metro-style service covering Sunderland and Washington with the reintroduction of the South Hylton to Penshaw line.

Ownership

- 5.23 The former line is currently used as a multi-user route and is in Council ownership.

Strategic and Socio-Economic Benefits

- 5.24 Due to the potential connection with the Leamside Line to create a Wearside Loop, many of the socio-economic benefits mirror those identified for the Leamside Line. However, the distinction is, the line will primarily be used by the Metro and will provide passenger links into Sunderland city centre via South Hylton, which has potential to increase footfall and visitors to the city centre.



Figure 4 South Hylton to Penshaw Line

Sunderland City Centre to Doxford Park

5.25 The A&D Plan Policy ST4 proposes to safeguard the alignment of the potential Doxford Park extension to allow this proposal to come forward in the future. Although the Metro Futures study identifies this as a potential future extension, the A&D Plan proposes to safeguard a route alignment to enable the route to come forward at some point in the future (Figure 5).

Allocations and Designations Plan

Sustainable transport

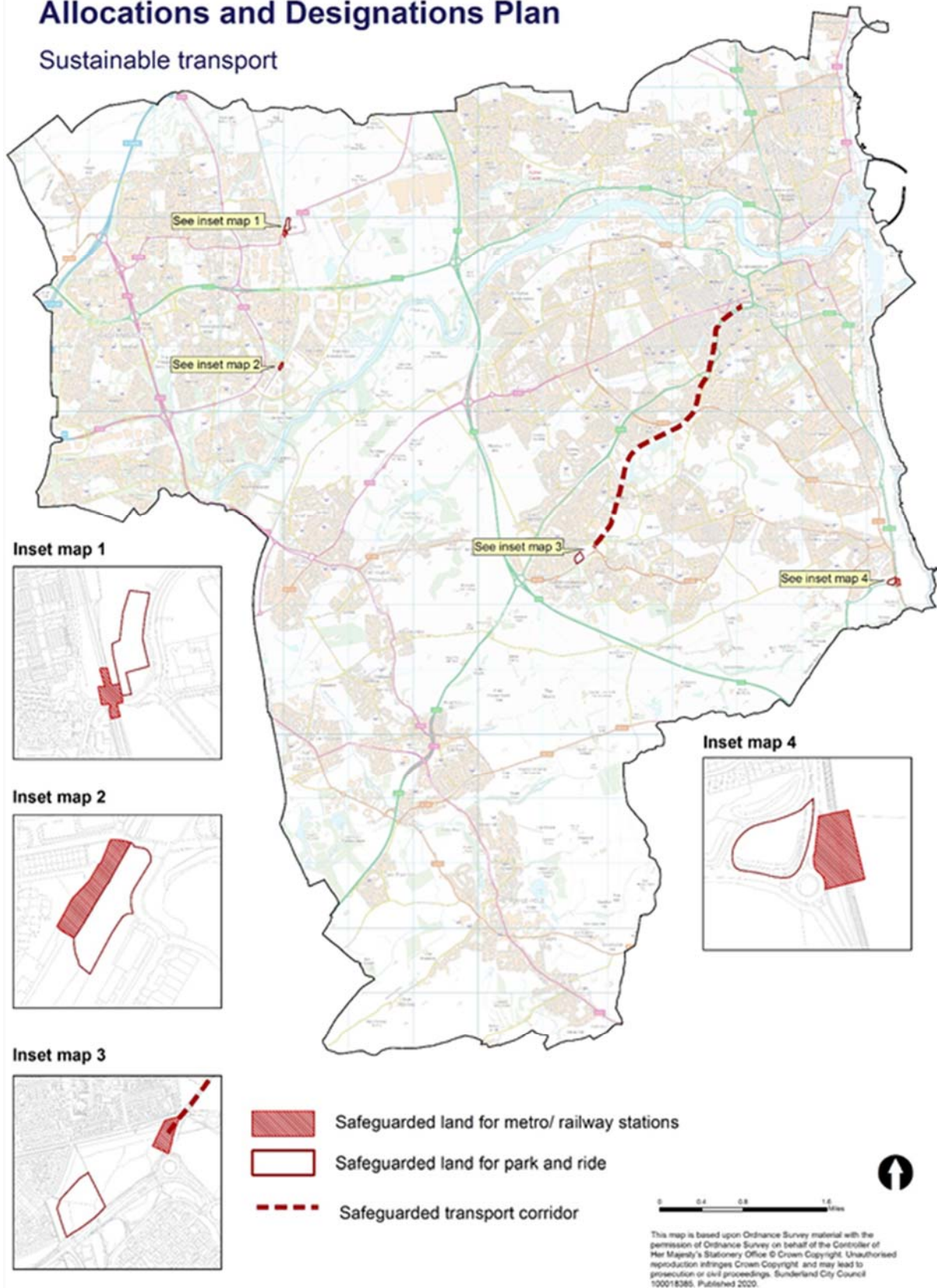


Figure 5 Indicative City Centre to Doxford Route

5.26 Consideration of a route between Doxford Park and Sunderland city centre suggests it may be possible to provide rail connections between the two by the use of the former Hetton Colliery railway, which originally used to transport coal to the banks of the River Wear.

- 5.27 Doxford Park is an established Sunderland suburb and is also home to the city's biggest business park, Doxford International, a 51ha site that provides 8,000+ jobs. The area surrounding the site experiences peak traffic congestion which impacts upon the adjacent A19 trunk road. Bringing Metro-style services to the Doxford area would offer an attractive alternative to car use. Most of the route between Doxford and the city centre is free from development however routes beneath or over Durham Road and Premier Road would need to be constructed, as well as a means of connecting with the existing Metro network west of University.
- 5.28 Sunderland Unitary Development Plan (UDP) protected a number of routes that could be used for various uses, including rail use, in policy T16. Policy SA48 identified fragments of routes to be protected and used as multi user routes, until a time when they may be required to fulfil a role as a transport corridor. An extension between Doxford Park and Sunderland city centre would be facilitated through the connection of a number of these multi user routes, in combination with connections beneath or over Durham Road and Premier Road, to ensure a complete route to Doxford Park.
- 5.29 The alignment of the Doxford Park extension is considered to have the least impact as it is free from development in most parts and is a series of existing multi user routes which have the capability to accommodate a rail route, due to provision made in UDP policies T16 and SA48. Identifying alternative routes for the extension is heavily constrained by the urban and built environment.
- 5.30 The route identified in the A&D Plan is the route of least impact that could feasibly deliver a Metro extension to Doxford Park and some point in the future. Inevitably, further work and assessment will be required to deliver an extension from the city centre to Doxford Park and the Council will work collaboratively with Nexus in the future, should they wish to implement a scheme in this location.
- 5.31 An extension to Doxford Park provides opportunities for a number of station locations in densely populated locations in addition to a terminus station at Doxford Park. Possible locations include Barnes roundabout, nearby Sainsburys at Premier Road and North Moor Lane (for Farringdon and Lakeside), all of which have council owned land within the vicinity of the locations and proposed extension alignments, that could accommodate a station.
- 5.32 It is understood that Nexus have commissioned consultants to explore various extensions across the North East region, which includes the Doxford Park extension. Therefore, station locations intersecting an extension line require further exploration.

Ownership

- 5.33 The route comprises of a combination of existing multiuser routes, adopted highways and would require some underground tunnelling to connect to the existing Metro rail line. The majority of the route is within Council ownership and has relatively limited engineering difficulties to overcome, with the exception of the route section from the A690 at Burn Park, which would require major tunnelling to connect to the existing Metro line at the University.

Deliverability of Metro & Rail Extensions

- 5.34 The cost of expanding the Metro system will be significant. Although the options identified in this document aim to explore the opportunity of using existing assets, nevertheless the capital construction costs of any new railway lines are likely to run in the hundreds of millions of pounds and new operating costs will be added. To achieve expansion of the system, investment decisions by NECA, Network Rail, Nexus and local authorities will need to be aligned and other opportunities such as the devolution of management of the Northern Rail franchise taken at the same time.
- 5.35 As part of the work to develop feasibility, Nexus will develop funding options looking at a wide variety of local, national and international sources of finance for both capital investment and associated operational costs. These could potentially include developer contributions, planning gain and investment from private sector partners.
- 5.36 Any future railway schemes will be subject to a Transport and Works Act Order which has the statutory authority of an Act of Parliament and will grant the scheme promoter planning and compulsory purchase powers that would override any designations in the Local Plan or the A&D Plan.

6. Metro/Rail Stations

- 6.1 In order to safeguard suitable sites for stations, it is prudent to build a robust case for protecting the site from future development. The A&D Plan identifies the following sites to be safeguarded as stations:
1. Washington North;
 2. Washington East;
 3. Ryhope; and
 4. Doxford Park

Metro/Rail Station Requirement

- 6.2 There are no set criteria for the siting of a new railway station, but the following factors should be taken into account:

Railway constraints:

- A minimum platform length of 70m, with up to 240m required for inter city trains;
- Spacing from other railway infrastructure including junctions, other stations, signalling (on existing lines), tunnels and topography;
- Timetabling and paths;
- Sight lines;
- Station design that enables rail alignments to avoid at-grade road crossings;
- Gradients; and
- Economic justification/market for services.

Local constraints:

- sufficient car parking space (dependent on whether a heavy rail 'parkway' or Metro station);
- Provision of bus/rail interchange facilities;
- Sufficient distances between stations; and
- Highway access and egress.

Land Ownership

- Land available should be in Council ownership or have a willing private owner who would allow the site to come forward for station use.

- 6.3 When identifying station locations along potential rail or Metro extension routes, the above factors were considered and a list of suitable locations for stations was collated. Station locations in Washington along the Leamside Line were extremely limited, due to the constraints of the existing built environment and its proximity to the alignment. However, two stations were identified (Washington North and Washington East, with no alternative locations suitable or available in Washington. The station at Washington North would likely require the route to be either lowered so that the existing A1290, which is currently served by a level crossing, could be eliminated, or accessed to the north via a skew bridge over the alignment.

- 6.4 A terminal station was identified at the end of the proposed Doxford Park extension. However, further work would need to be undertaken to establish additional stations location along the alignment. By its nature, the Metro requires a critical mass of population along its routes, to serve the population and generate ticket revenue for Nexus. Therefore, a number of additional stations between Doxford Park and its proposed connection point to the existing Metro network, will be required. Potential locations which require further consideration and review include Barnes, where the former rail alignment tunnel exists; nearby Sainsburys at Premier Road; and at North Moor Lane to serve the population at Lakeside and Farringdon. At this point in time, only the terminus station at Doxford Park has been identified.
- 6.5 In regard to the Durham Coast Railway, the former UDP allocation for a station at Ryhope has been retained and will provide rail access to the south of Sunderland. This location has been established through the UDP and protected from alternative development uses, therefore it remains a suitable location to retain in the A&D Plan, to support residential development in the South Sunderland Growth Area. There are also opportunities to provide additional station locations, northwards at Vilette Road, Hendon and Ocean Road at Grangetown on Council owned sites, should the line provide a Metro service.
- 6.6 With the proposed extension of the South Hylton to Penshaw line and its potential connection to the Leamside Line to create a Wearside Loop, there is also the potential for additional stations at Penshaw (land to the west of the A183) and Fencehouses (land to South of Morton Crescent) to serve the Coalfield area. However, both station locations require further consideration and review at this point in time.
- 6.7 Further detailed justification is provided for the stations of Washington North, Washington East, Doxford Park and Ryhope, below.

Washington North and East

Context and Policy

- 6.8 The A&D Plan identifies North East Washington as a strategic focus for regeneration and new development. North East Washington is also an area of the city with a significant amount of development potential. IAMP is located to the East of North East Washington and is the premiere location for advanced manufacturing and automotive technology. Additionally, safeguarded land at Land East of Washington provides an opportunity to create a new sustainable community delivering 1500 homes for the city. The strategic focus for regeneration and new development would support the potential reopening of the Leamside Line and could create sustainable transport connections to Tyne and Wear via metro/rail.
- 6.9 Within the Washington area it has been assumed that two stations would be provided. These are:
- Washington North – a site in the vicinity of where the line intersects with the A1290; and
 - Washington East – a site in the Columbia area in the vicinity of the original Washington station that closed in 1964.
- 6.10 Station sites in Washington were subject to detailed analysis as part of the Durham Coalfield Rail Study by Steer Davies Gleave in 2001. Demand forecasting work using rail industry

methodologies MOIRA and CAPRI at that time and the study concluded that the best location for a railway station on the Leamside Line was where the A1231 and A1290 crosses the line. Given development in the interim at Peel Centre and Hillthorn Farm, it seems a site at Sulgrave close to the present A1290 will be the best option (the site of the original Usworth Station).

- 6.11 A number of other studies into reopening Leamside have been undertaken since 1991. All envisaged a new Washington station in the vicinity of where the line crosses the A1290 and to the north of the A1231 rather than at the original Washington station site at Columbia. The expectation was that a station in this general location could serve the western parts of Sunderland as well as Washington.
- 6.12 Land availability in Washington is very limited along the route of the Leamside Line, due to the composition of the built environment and its proximity to the route alignment. Therefore, previous studies and a current review of available land has identified only two sites suitable for stations in Washington, with appropriate distances between the two.

Washington North

Site Description

- 6.13 The preferred Washington (North) station site lies alongside the Leamside Line where it is currently crossed by the A1290 (Figure 6). The site is currently occupied by deciduous trees, which occupy the land between Sulgrave Road to the west and the Leamside Line to the east. The A1290 currently crosses the alignment to the south of the station site, but would require realignment, most likely to the north through a skew bridge when the railway reopens. Parking and bus interchange facilities are proposed to be located in the envelope of land between the current A1290 and the railway.

Figure

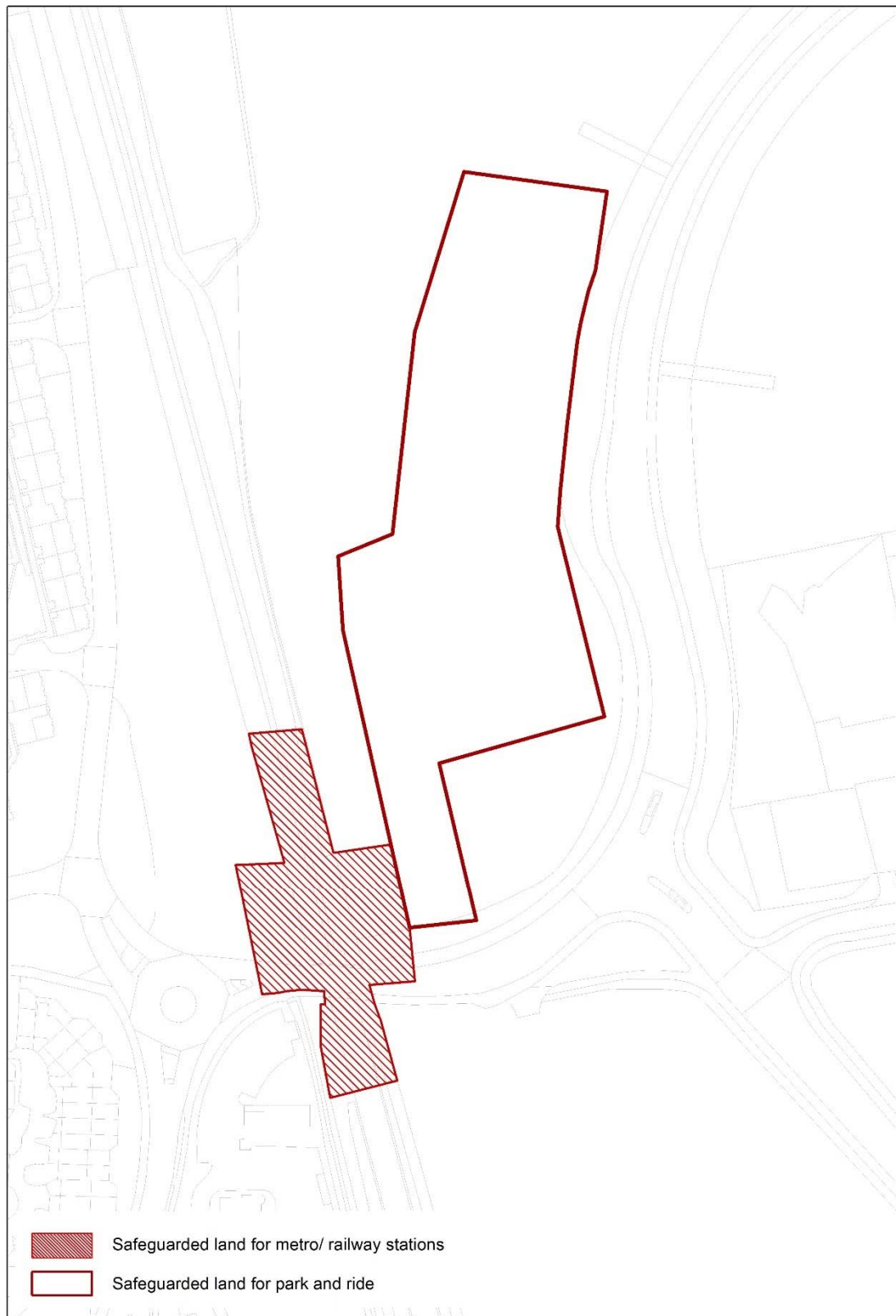


Figure 6 Allocation and Development Plan proposed safeguarding allocations at Washington North

Justification

- 6.14 Station sites in Washington were subject to detailed analysis as part of the Durham Coalfield Rail Study by Steer Davies Gleave in 2001. Demand forecasting work using rail industry methodologies MOIRA and CAPRI at that time and the study concluded that the best location for a railway station on the Leamside line was where the A1231 and A1290 crosses the line. Given development in the interim at Peel Centre and Hilthorn Farm, it seems a site at Sulgrave close to the present A1290 will be the best option.
- 6.15 A number of other studies into reopening Leamside have been undertaken since 1991. All envisaged a new Washington station in the vicinity of where the line crosses the A1290 and to the north of the A1231 rather than at the original Washington station site at Columbia. The expectation was that a station in this general location could serve the western parts of Sunderland as well as Washington.
- 6.16 The Unitary Development Plan adopted in 1998 did not include formal protection of the Leamside Line because it was deemed unlikely that the line would reopen during the plan period. However, potential reopening was a factor in determining planning applications in the vicinity of the line.
- 6.17 A planning application (98/00668/OUT) by Tesco in 1998 for a retail food store was refused, partially on the basis that it may prejudice a potential station in this area. A further application for the same site to extend the retail park through 3 non-food retail warehouses (03/00120/OUT) was refused but subsequently allowed on appeal (03/00023/CALLIN) with conditions attached.
- 6.18 Unfortunately, this uses the land on the western side of the railway that could have been used for station parking and bus interchange facilities. Any station parking will now have to be located to the east of the line or an alternative site identified further to the north where sufficient land is available.
- 6.19 More recent work by City Council officers in support of the A&D Plan has identified a site straddling the present A1290 level crossing with the A1290 itself diverted to a skew bridge/tunnel to the north of the site.

Washington East

- 6.20 The SDG study in 1991 also identified a site at Columbia, in the vicinity of the original Washington station as suitable for a Metro station. Proposals for this have evolved as 'Washington East' (Figure 7).

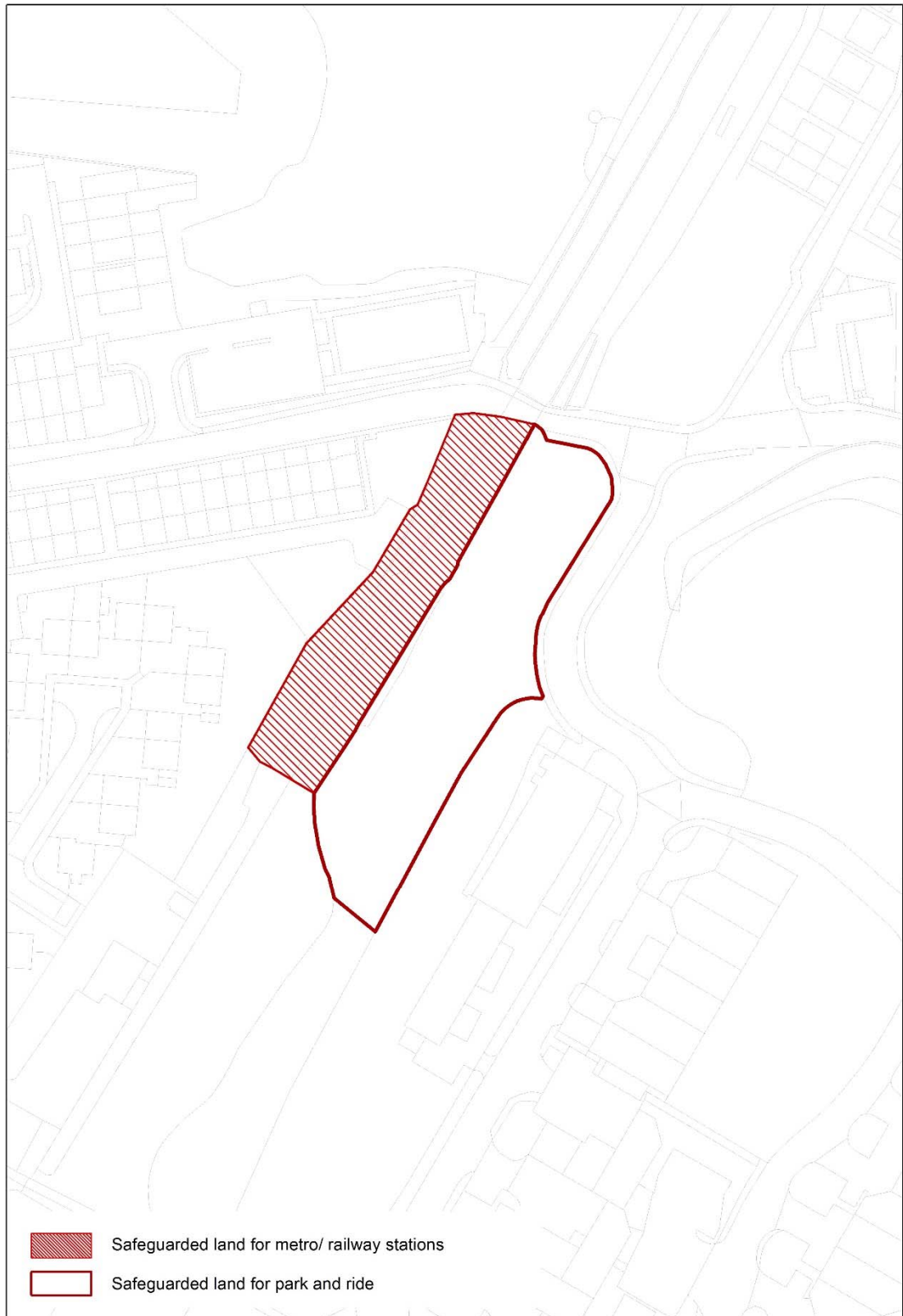


Figure 7 Allocation and Development Plan proposed safeguarding allocations at Washington East

6.21 Consultants Systra have recently been commissioned to undertake a study to review options for a station at Washington and to refresh the demand forecasting and market assessments for this.

6.22 This work will involve modelling demand based around four assumptions:

- Washington as a heavy rail station with a strategic function serving a wide catchment area;
- Washington as a Tyne & Wear Metro station serving a local catchment and providing local access to Sunderland and Newcastle;
- Washington as a Tyne & Wear Metro station, but set within the context of a Washington East station being developed serving the catchment to the south of the A1231; and
- Washington serving a dual function as a heavy rail and Metro station (combination of points 1 & 3).

6.23 It is anticipated that this work will be completed by the end of December 2020.

Land Ownership

6.24 The identified Washington East station is under the ownership of a number of organisations, the Council, Network Rail and a social housing organisation. The element owned by a social housing organisation composes a very small section of the station site.

Alternative options

6.25 The proposed SDG Study station location was considered as a potential station location (Figure 8). However, the land has been designated as a Key Employment Area in the CSDP and is currently the location of operational businesses. Access to the site could be provided from Pattinson Road, however additional road infrastructure would be required at additional cost.

6.26 The sites Local Plan designation discounts the site on availability grounds as it is not available for development at this point in time. Preference is given to the site further north (Figure 7) which has no Local Plan designation constraints, is supported by existing road connections and has the opportunity to deliver a park and ride scheme in close proximity to the site.

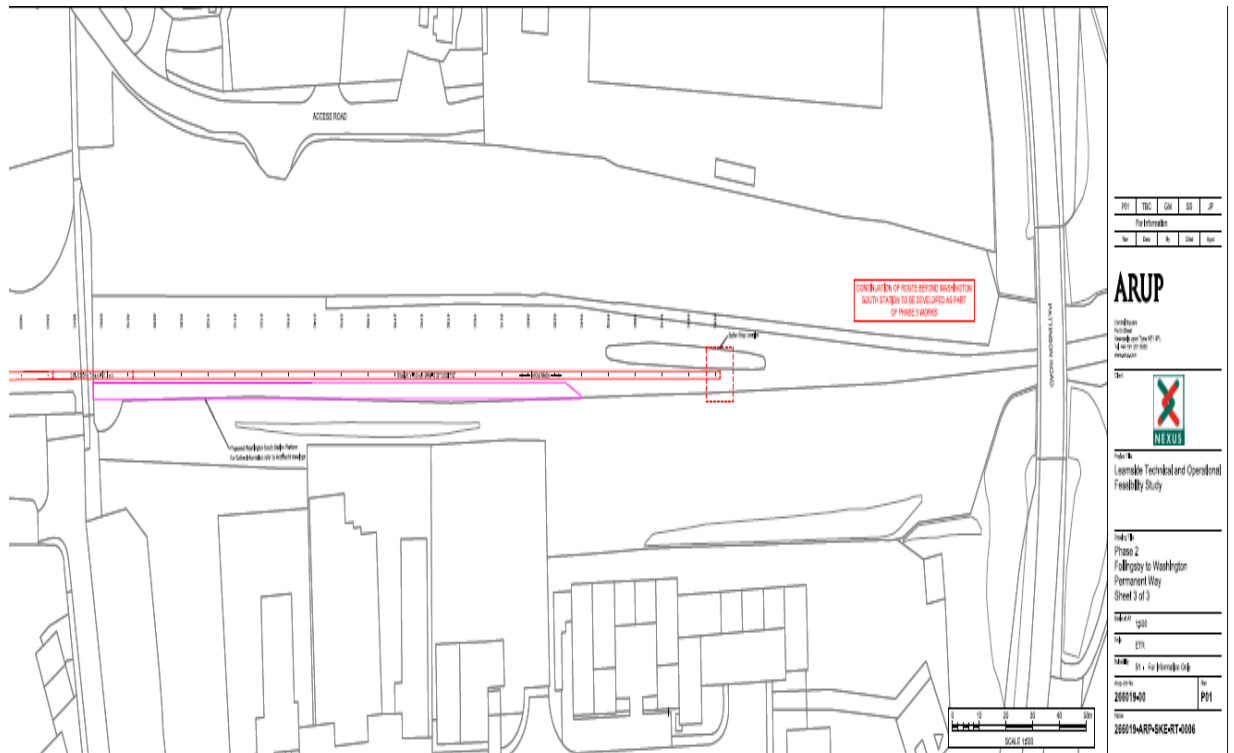


Figure 8 SDG Study alternative Washington East station location

6.27 No further alternative locations were identified, due to the proximity of the built-up environment to the Leamside Line, constraining land availability.

Context and Policy

6.28 A station site at Ryhope was protected in the UDP adjacent to the junction between the A1018 and the B1287. The UDP, Policy SA43, identified land at Ryhope as a potential station with associated park and ride facilities.

“A SITE AT RYHOPE WILL BE SAFEGUARDED FOR THE POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE LONGER-TERM OF A STATION, WITH PARK-AND-RIDE FACILITY ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROPOSED RYHOPE BY-PASS”

Figure 6 UDP Policy SA43 extract

6.29 The station was identified in the Durham Coalfield Rail Study in 1991 and replaces the station at Ryhope East on the Durham Coast Line that closed in 1964. If a station were to be reopened here it would be served by an hourly local rail service provided by Northern Rail.

6.30 Following construction of the Southern Radial route (St Nazaire Way) the potential for a viable station was considered appropriate at this location. This is based on road access, land availability and the future likely demand from around 3000 houses coming forward as part of the South Sunderland Growth Area.

6.31 There are no other sites nearby that have land readily available for station development nor within relatively easy walking distance from future residential catchment areas. Therefore, the UDP station boundary is proposed to be carried forward in the A&D Plan.

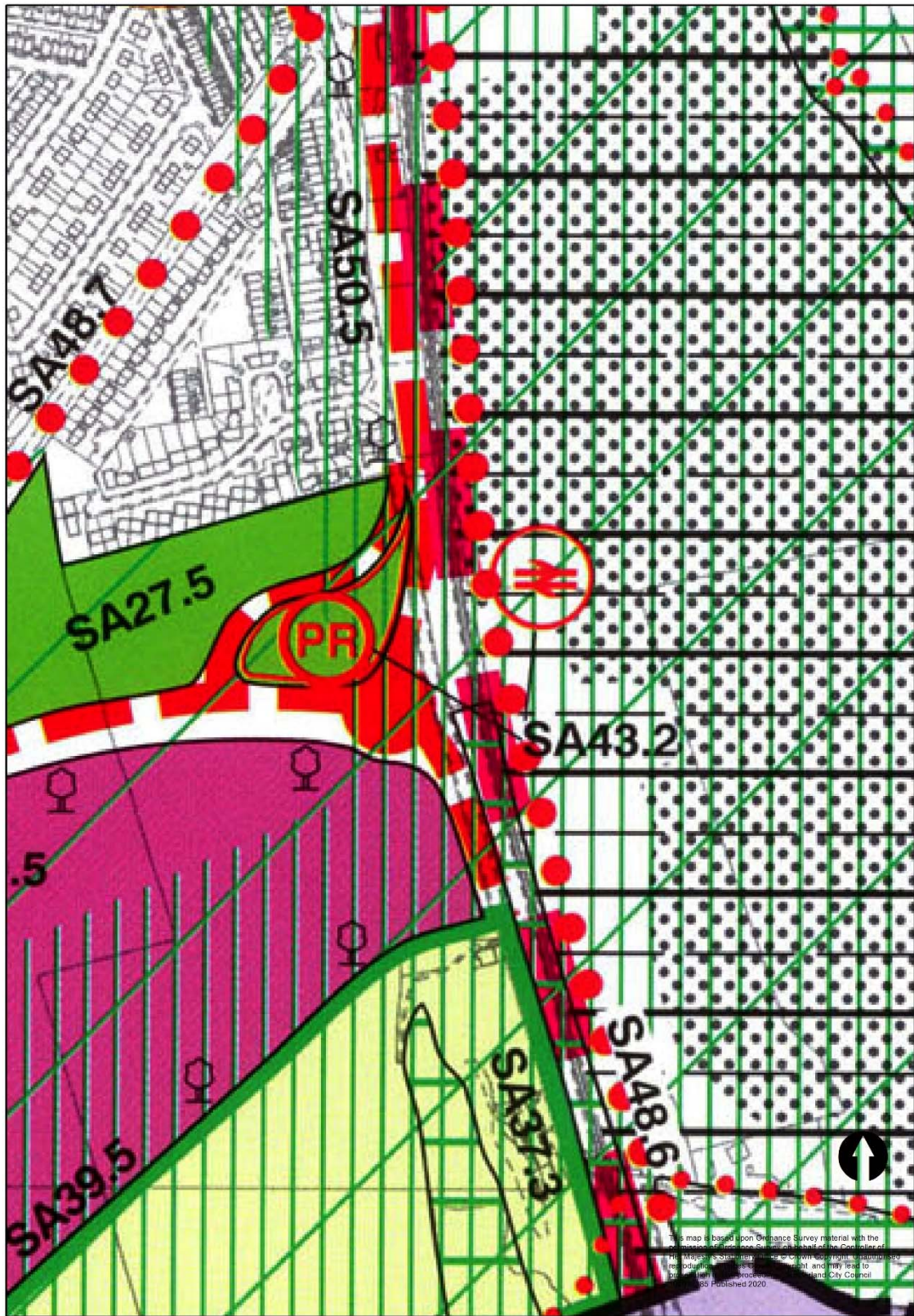


Figure 9 Unitary Development Plan Allocations

The A&D Plan proposes to include this former allocation in policy ST4, which identifies the site as a location to be safeguarded for the future expansion of the Metro and rail network in the city.

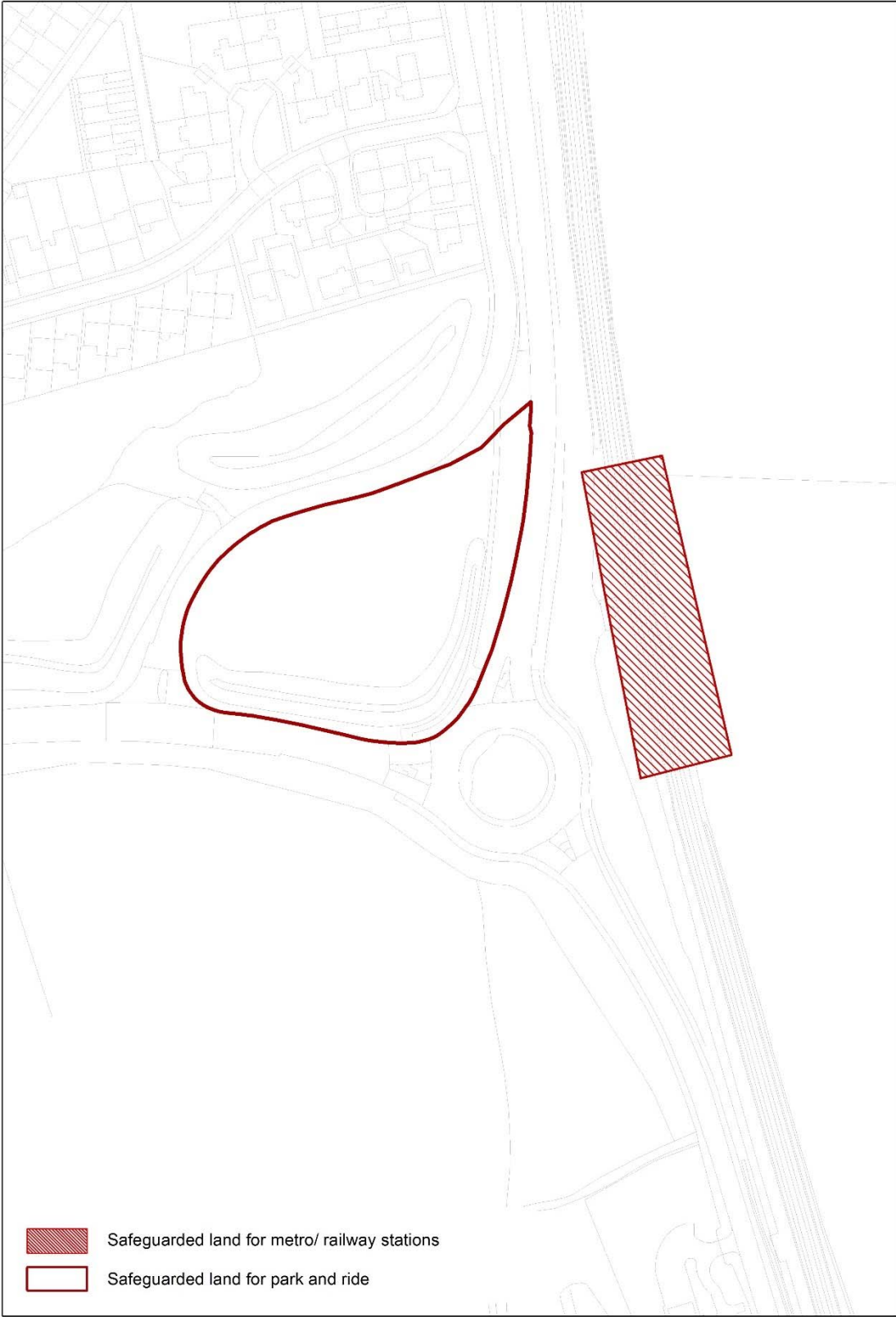


Figure 10 Allocation and Development Plan proposed safeguarding allocations at Ryhope

Site Description

6.32 The station site is located on the Durham Coast railway and would utilise railway land as well as some highway land adjacent to the A1018 road. The land either side of the Durham Coast Line is scrubland to the west and agricultural land to the east. The parking for the station would be located on the 'teardrop site' located between the A1018 and the local road to the west.

Justification for Location

6.33 As a UDP allocation, the principal of a station in this location has been long established. The station site was originally identified to provide a rail head for South Sunderland on the Durham Coast line and was safeguarded for future development. The station did not come forward for development during the UDP timeframe, however the Durham Coast Line has now been identified as a route priority within the Transport Plan for the North East, where frequency of train services will be improved along this line. There is therefore a requirement to retain the station location within the A&D Plan, to provide station facilities close to the existing communities of Ryhope and South Sunderland and also South Sunderland Growth Area, which will be the location of around 3000 new homes.

Land Ownership

6.34 The site identified for the station is owned by Network Rail and Sunderland Council.

Alternative Options

6.35 Alternative sites considered prior to the UDP allocation included a site at Ryhope East. However, this site was discounted and has since been used to provide for the A1018 Southern Radial Route. Due to the proximity of Ryhope to the Durham County border, alternative sites were limited further south and those that were considered were discounted due to level differences which made them unsuitable for station use.

[Doxford Park](#)

Policy and Context

6.36 The Doxford Park extension was identified as a potential Metro extension in Nexus's Metro Futures, Metro and Light Rail Strategy and in the consultation draft Transport Plan for the North East. However, a route alignment has never been identified or safeguarded for this extension and subsequently neither has a station location. Therefore, the proposed station location identified in the A&D Plan has been identified by the Council and provides a terminus station at the end of the proposed route alignment (Figure 11).

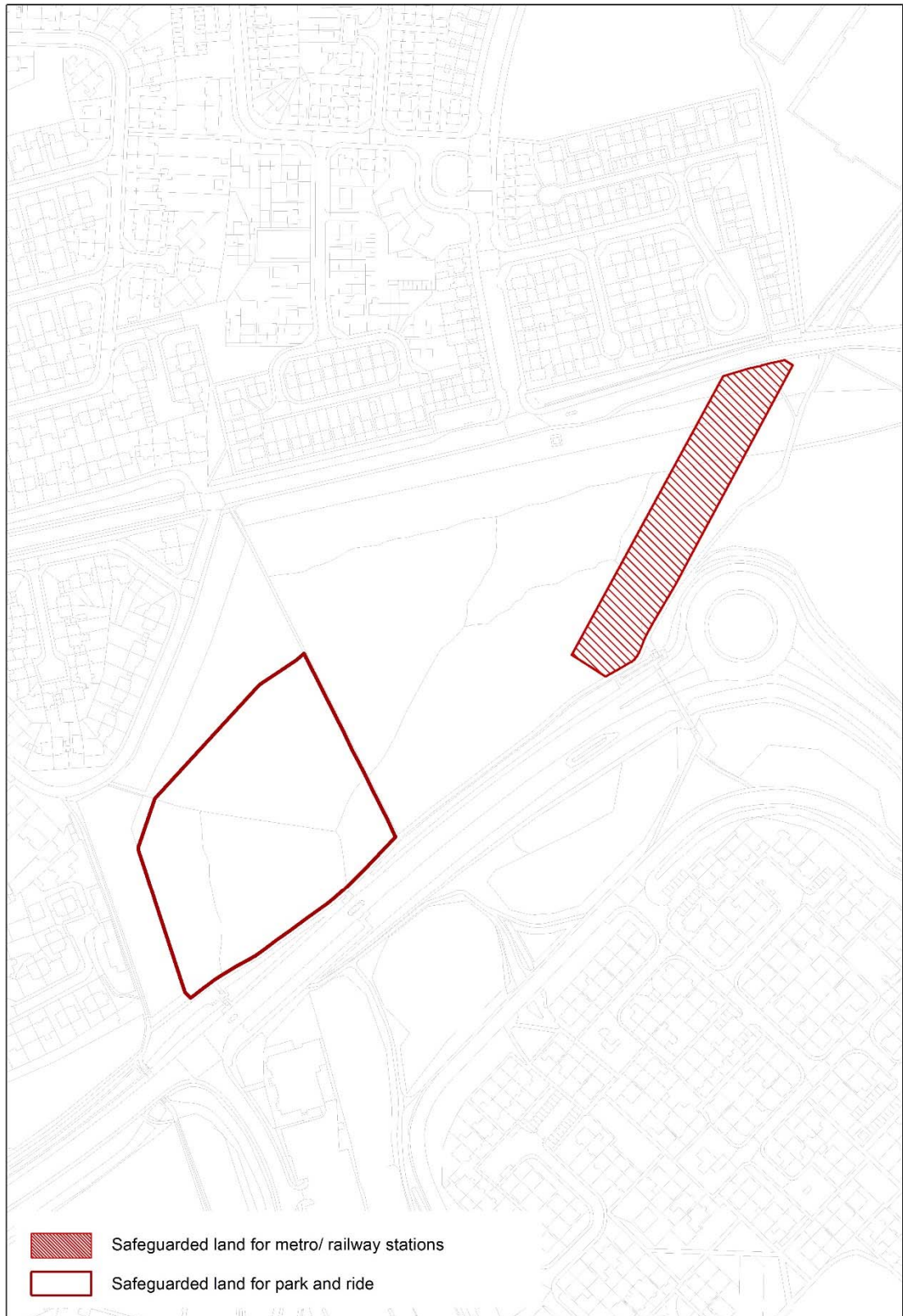


Figure 11 Allocations and Development Plan proposed safeguarding allocations at Doxford Park

6.37 This proposal requires further feasibility work, but it offers potential of bringing rail services to Doxford International and to areas of south Sunderland that are not currently served by

Metro. It is understood that Nexus have recently commissioned consultants to look at a number of different extension and potential station opportunities across the North East, one of which is the Doxford Park extension. Subject to the findings of this commission, the feasibility of this extension may change.

Site Description

The site is located between Silksworth Road to the north and the B1286 Doxford Park roundabout and is largely composed of open grassland, with a number of trees interspersed across the site. It is served by good road links and is within close proximity to residential areas and more than 8,000 jobs at Doxford International Business Park. A station located at Doxford International would be sited on Council Land adjacent to City Way.

- 6.38 This would be a “terminus” style station with a single, double length platform. The double length is to accommodate two Metro trains required in the event of a breakdown or other incident. Parking could be provided on adjacent land north of City way.

Justification

- 6.39 There is a clear priority to facilitate delivery of the Doxford Park extension to provide Metro services to South West, as this commitment has emerged within three external transport strategy documents. Therefore, it is necessary for the Council to identify and safeguard a suitable station location to ensure the extension can function as passenger transport route within Sunderland with a fit for purpose terminus station at Doxford International Business Park.

- 6.40 The potential for a terminus station was considered appropriate at this location, based upon suitable road access, land availability and the future likely demand from a large employment catchment area.

- 6.41 There are no other sites nearby that have land readily available for station development nor within relatively easy walking distance from the large employment catchment area.

Land Ownership

- 6.42 The proposed station location is council owned land. Therefore there are no issues with deliverability of the site for a terminus station.

Alternative Options

- 6.43 As the purpose of the extension is to provide connectivity to Doxford International Business Park, the terminus station is required to be located within close walking distance proximity of the business park. The station proposed is the closest possible location available and Council owned. Any further north and the site would be too far from the park to walk and the station and line can go no further south due to the built environment.

- 6.44 Alternative sites have not been considered at this point in time, as proximity to Doxford Park is critical.

7. Park and Ride

- 7.1 Encouraging the use of sustainable modes of transport and a move away from car use, is a challenging concept. In order to encourage sustainable transport choices amongst residents, businesses and visitors, it is imperative that transport services and facilities offer users excellent connectivity between destinations and are accessible from all locations across the city.
- 7.2 Sunderland offers a range of sustainable transport options for users. Bus services span the majority of the city area, connecting Sunderland city centre, Washington, the Coalfields and beyond to Newcastle/Gateshead, Durham and Newcastle International Airport. The city area also benefits from Metro/rail routes that intersect the built-up area and more sustainable routes that encourage cycling and walking. However, in order to influence the transport choices of residents, businesses and visitors, the planning system must make sustainable transport routes and services accessible to everyone, as not everyone lives or works close to these routes.
- 7.3 Park and Ride sites are one such scheme that can help to improve accessibility to sustainable transport routes and services in the city. In particular, they support Metro and rail routes in the city area, providing a convenient and safe location for users to park while they make use of Metro/rail services to travel to their destination. Schemes such as this assist to reduce vehicle congestion in city and town centres and contribute to lower carbon outputs.
- 7.4 The CSDP identifies strategic development sites for housing and employment across the city area, therefore it would be valuable to identify Park and Ride sites that have the potential to support this growth and offer sustainable transport choices within the vicinity of the development sites. Taking account of the housing allocations identified in this plan and the strategic sites identified in the CSDP, four potential Park and Ride locations have been safeguarded for future development, should a demand arise for such services as a result of Metro and rail extensions.
- 7.5 The benefits of P&R include:
- reducing the amount of car use in the City Centre;
 - increasing parking capacity without using land in the city centre;
 - reducing congestion; and
 - reducing air pollution and visual and noise intrusion of traffic.

Policy and Strategy Context

- 7.6 Although Park and Ride is not specifically referred to in the NPPF, promoting sustainable transport is a key theme in the document. Section 9 states that transport policies have an important role to play in facilitating sustainable development but also in contributing to wider sustainability and health objectives.
- 7.7 The transport system needs to be balanced in favour of sustainable transport modes, giving people a real choice about how they travel. Encouragement should be given to solutions which support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and reduce congestion.

Our Journey, A 20 year Transport Manifesto for the North East Combined Authority

- 7.8 The Tyne and Wear Integrated Transport Authority was replaced by the North East Combined Authority (NECA). NECA was established in April 2014 as a new legal body that brings together the seven councils which serve County Durham, Gateshead, Newcastle, North Tyneside, Northumberland, South Tyneside and Sunderland.
- 7.9 The Transport Manifesto identifies thirteen guiding principles, which include achieving more sustainable travel, better air quality and lower carbon emissions, healthy, active lifestyles, expanding the public transport network and efficient use of transport assets. The NECA Transport Manifesto will feed into the Local Transport Plan for the North East Combined Authority and will set out how the Combined Authority intends to deliver on its ambition “to provide affordable, attractive, reliable, safe, healthy transport choices for businesses, residents and visitors while enhancing the environment”.

Nexus Park and Ride Strategy 2013

- 7.10 This strategy covers the Tyne and Wear region and its objectives are to:
- Maximise use of sustainable, integrated, travel options;
 - Improve the utilisation of the existing P&R facilities on the Metro system;
 - Establish a best practice model for P&R schemes;
 - Identifying opportunities for new Metro P&R sites; and
 - Establish principles for charging at Metro car parks.
- 7.11 This will be achieved by:
- Studying and understanding the operation of P&R schemes elsewhere in the country;
 - Ensuring that Metro P&R product is consistent and well-advertised;
 - Exploring the potential of introducing a single charging regime at all Metro P&R sites;
 - Making an impartial assessment of the potential for further P&R development in Tyne and Wear; and
 - Developing guidelines on the relationship that is required with the five Tyne and Wear local authorities for the incorporation of P&R into parking policies.
- 7.12 The strategy states that there is a role for P&R within the overall transport and parking offer in Tyne and Wear but there needs to be a very clear demonstration of the financial, social and regeneration reasons justifying the investment on a case by case basis.

Overall approach to Park and Ride Locations

- 7.13 The location of P&R sites has been based on their proximity to station locations. The context of each site therefore reflects the context provided for each of the proposed station locations as patrons will expect to be within walking distance when transferring from their car to the Metro/train.

Ryhope Park and Ride

Context

- 7.14 A P&R at Ryhope was protected in the UDP to the north west of the then proposed A1018 roundabout and to the west of the land safeguarded for the station at Ryhope. The UDP, Policy SA43, identified land at Ryhope as a potential park and ride facility.

“A SITE AT RYHOPE WILL BE SAFEGUARDED FOR THE POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE LONGER-TERM OF A STATION, WITH PARK-AND-RIDE FACILITY ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROPOSED RYHOPE BY-PASS”

Figure 7 UDP Policy SA43 extract

Location

7.15 The site is located to the west of the proposed Ryhope station location. The A1018 borders the southern and eastern boundary of the site with the B1287 bordering the eastern and northern boundaries. The land is essentially sandwiched between roads and would require users to cross the A1018 to access the proposed station at Ryhope. The site is currently vacant and is currently grassland.

Justification

7.16 With the development of the South Sunderland Growth Area and around 3000 new homes, there is an opportunity to serve future development and current existing communities with a new station and P&R scheme in Ryhope.

7.17 When identifying potential suitable sites for P&R schemes, the key is proximity to a station. For P&R schemes to be successful they require to be located within close proximity to any proposed station location as patrons will expect to be within walking distance when transferring from their vehicle to the Metro/train. Therefore, the starting point when looking for sites was to identify potential sites with road access within a short walking distance of proposed stations.

7.18 The Council explored land ownership within the vicinity of the site, in order to establish if Council owned assets could deliver a P&R scheme. Private land ownership, whilst not always problematic to delivery, can be more difficult to manage due to third party interests.

7.19 The principle of the Ryhope P&R site was established through the UDP. Policy SA43 safeguarded the site for P&R use. As this land remains in Council ownership, the location continues to be suitable and in close proximity to the proposed Ryhope station. Therefore, the site remains the preferred site for a P&R scheme.

Land Ownership

7.20 The site is within Council ownership and there would be no issues regarding site deliverability.

Alternative Options considered

7.21 The site is within Council ownership therefore there would be no issues regarding bringing this site forwards or for site deliverability. Land ownership opportunities were explored within the vicinity of the site. However, the principle of development was established through the UDP and the site continues to be the closest location to the proposed station, which is capable of being delivered, with the benefit of Council land ownership.

Doxford Park Park and Ride

Context

- 7.22 The Doxford Park extension was identified as a potential Metro extension in Nexus's Metro Futures and the Metro and Light Rail Strategy. However, a route alignment has never been identified or safeguarded for this extension and subsequently neither has a station location nor supporting P&R scheme. Therefore, the proposed station location identified in the A&D Plan provides an indicative location and area where a P&R scheme could be located.
- 7.23 It is understood that Nexus have recently commissioned consultants to look at a number of different extension and potential station opportunities across the North East, one of which is the Doxford Park extension. Subject to the findings of this commission, the feasibility of this extension may change which may have an impact on station location and consequently P&R sites.

Location

- 7.24 The site is a vacant grassland site, interspersed with trees. The site is located north of the B1286 which would provide road access to the site. The site is bounded to the north and west by residential properties and to the east of the site, there is grassland and what is the current proposed location for the Doxford Park terminus station.

Justification

- 7.25 The P&R site is located within walking distance of the proposed terminus station. Patrons will be required to walk along the B1286 to access the station. The site is the preferred location at present although this may change subject to the outcomes of the Nexus consultation study.

Land Ownership

- 7.26 The site is within Council ownership, therefore there would be no issues regarding bringing this site forwards or for site deliverability.

Alternative Options considered

- 7.27 At this point in time no other suitable alternatives have been assessed for the location of the P&R scheme. However, the land surrounding the proposed terminus station is within council ownership, therefore a number of alternative sites could be brought forward, depending on the outcome of the Nexus commission, the route extension options and the final station locations.

Washington North Park and Ride

Context

- 7.28 The A&D Plan identifies North East Washington as a strategic focus for regeneration and new development. North East Washington is also an area of the city with a significant amount of development potential. IAMP is located to the East of North East Washington and is the premiere location for advanced manufacturing and automotive technology. Additionally, safeguarded land at Land East of Washington provides an opportunity to create a new sustainable community delivering 1500 homes for the city. The strategic focus for regeneration and new development would support the potential reopening of the Leamside Line and could create sustainable transport connections to Tyne and Wear via metro/rail.

Location

7.29 The proposed P&R site is located to the east of the Leamside Line and is currently vacant grassland.

Justification

7.30 The location of a station at Washington North will support the regeneration and new development existing and proposed developments to the East of Washington. The location of the P&R site must be within proximity to the station location. As identified earlier in this report, the station location has been determined based on previous studies and very limited land availability within the vicinity of the line to accommodate either a station or an alternative P&R site.

Land Ownership

7.31 The Park and Ride location is located on private land. The landowner is known to the Council.

Alternative Options Considered

7.32 No alternative locations were identified, due to the proximity of the built-up environment to the Leamside Line, constraining land availability for a station and P&R site.

Washington East Park and Ride

Context

7.33 As mentioned previously in this report, the SDG study in 1991 identified a proposed station site at Columbia, in the vicinity of the original Washington station, as suitable for a Metro station. Proposals for this have evolved as 'Washington East'. The proposed station location would require P&R facilities to support the station in providing an integrated public transport system.

Location

7.34 The P&R site is located to the north west of Pattinson Industrial Estate adjacent to the new station proposal. The site is currently a siding to the former Leamside Line which has greened over and is covered in thick vegetation. The P&R site would be accessed via Stirling Close.

Justification

7.35 A station at Washington East would serve the south of Washington and also the northern coalfield area. A P&R scheme would facilitate Metro patronage and rail use as it would provide a location for vehicle parking, which would attract those wishing to access public transport to various locations across Tyne and Wear.

7.36 In order for the P&R scheme to be used efficiently by users, it is required to be located in close walking proximity to a station location. Due to the composition of the built environment along the Leamside Line, there is very limited land available to build a station and a P&R scheme together, with appropriate access. This site represents the most appropriate and available location in proximity to the station.

Land Ownership

7.37 The Council is undertaking further work to establish land ownership of the P&R location to support a station at Washington East.

Alternative Options Considered

7.38 No alternative suitable locations were identified or considered for a P&R site to support a station at Washington East, due to the limited land availability alongside the Leamside Line and the proximity of the built environment to the alignment. This site represents the only site capable of supporting both a station and P&R site in close proximity to each other.

