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Housing – Optional Technical Standards Update

June 2016

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1. Introduction

The Housing- Optional Technical Standards document was first published in November 2015 as part of the suite of evidence documents supporting the Local Plan Pre-submission draft consultation. At that time a viability assessment considering the impact of implementing accessibility and space standards was still to be completed. This update provides information on the findings of the viability assessment and the impact on the introduction of the housing optional technical standards. It should be read in conjunction with the Area Wide Viability Assessment Update June 2016.

On 25 March 2015 the Government set out, in a [Written Ministerial Statement](#), information on the new “housing technical standards” in England. The standards include three optional standards. From October 1st 2015, local authorities have the option to set additional technical requirements exceeding the minimum standards required by Building Regulations in respect of **access** and **water efficiency**, and a **Nationally Described Space Standard** (NDSS). In this context access relates to how people access and use a dwelling and its facilities and for space, this relates to the internal space of a dwelling. The Government’s intention is that local planning authorities should not apply any additional local technical standards or requirements relating to the construction, internal layout or performance of new dwellings

In order to apply the optional standards through its statutory development plan, a local authority must demonstrate that there is both a need for the standards and that they have considered the viability implications of adopting them.

Significant work has been undertaken to prepare a new Local Plan for the borough, including extensive consultation with stakeholders. This report is one of a range of documents that provides evidence to support the development of the Local Plan and its policies. Specifically, this report sets out the evidence that has been considered in deciding whether to implement the optional standards (in whole or part) through the emerging North Tyneside Local Plan.

2. Policy Context

In August 2013, the Government consulted on its intention to introduce national housing standards to replace existing standards used by local authorities across England. The aim was to rationalise the large number of different standards that local authorities apply to new homes. In September 2014, the Government issued, for further consultation, the technical matters related to the review.

The Government introduced amendments to the Building Act 1984¹ to enable the Building Regulations to set ‘optional requirements’ above the basic minimum set out in the Building Regulations 2010 in relation to access and water. The Government has also introduced an optional national standard for space, known as the Nationally Described Space Standard (NDSS); this is not part of the Building Regulations.

All optional requirements must be applied through planning policy by way of a condition attached to planning consents. However, the optional standards for water efficiency and access will be enforced through Building Regulations and the space standards will be enforced through the planning process.

In assessing the need for the optional housing technical standards, local authorities must be able to satisfy the statutory requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012). This requires local planning authorities to ensure that *“the Local Plan is based on adequate, up-to-date and relevant evidence about the economic, social and environmental characteristics and prospects of the area”* (para 158).

The NPPF also sets out the requirements for local planning authorities to *“assess the likely cumulative impacts on development in their area of all existing and proposed local standards, supplementary planning documents and policies that support the development plan, when added to nationally required standards...evidence supporting the assessment should be proportionate, using only appropriate available evidence”* (para 174).

¹ As amended by the Deregulation Act 2015

In March 2014 the Department for Communities and Local Government launched the National Planning Practice Guidance as a web-based resource to provide additional clarification to the NPPF on key policy areas. With specific regard to these Housing Optional Technical Standards, it introduced information on their application, stating that: *“Local planning authorities have the option to set additional technical requirements exceeding the minimum standards required by Building Regulations in respect of access and water, and an optional nationally described space standard. Local planning authorities will need to gather evidence to determine whether there is a need for additional standards in their area, and justify setting appropriate policies in their Local Plans.”* And: *“Local planning authorities should consider the impact of using these standards as part of their Local Plan viability assessment.”* In other words, any additional costs of implementing these optional standards along with other Local Plan requirements must not be so great that it would make future development financially unviable.

Local Policy Context

The North Tyneside Unitary Development Plan (UDP) is the statutory development plan for the borough and was adopted in March 2002. There is currently no policy within the UDP requiring standards relating to water efficiency or internal space standards for dwellings. In respect of accessible housing, para 6.44 of the UDP states: *“Accessible housing refers to housing designed and built or adapted to standards which facilitate easy movement, usually at a ground floor level for those residents with mobility impairment, including wheelchair users. The Council, in recognising the needs of residents with disabilities, consider it important that accessible housing is provided that would allow a wide range of residents including the elderly, and those with sensory or other mobility impairment the opportunity to enter the housing market and enjoy a standard of access, opportunity and amenity equal to that enjoyed by other residents.”*

Para 6.45 states: *“3.5% of the borough's population is registered disabled and the borough has the highest proportion of persons of pensionable age in Tyne and Wear. These are significant groups with special needs which this policy addresses with an overall objective of ensuring where practicable equality of access to housing.”*

Policy H7 of the UDP states: “Housing provision to meet the requirements of people with special needs including elderly and disabled people, single persons and ethnic minorities will be sought through new build, conversions and changes of use where:

- (I) A need has been identified and where:
- (II) The site is suitable in terms of its location and its proximity to local amenities including public transport, shops and community facilities.”

In September 2010 and November 2007, North Tyneside Council adopted a [Design Quality Supplementary Planning Document](#) and a [Sustainable Development and Construction Guide](#) respectively, which provides practical advice on sustainable construction and development through the planning process. Whilst the documents promote good design principles and provide guidance on how developments can ensure they are sustainable and achieve a high quality of design they do not set out specific technical guidelines relating to access, water efficiency and internal space.

As stated earlier, significant work has been undertaken to prepare a new Local Plan for the Borough. In November 2013 the Council consulted on a draft Local Plan and undertook further consultation in February 2015. This draft contained a compendium of policies, some of which are indirectly related to the new optional housing technical standards, for example extra care and specialist housing.

Following the Government’s Written Ministerial Statement in March 2015 work has been undertaken to establish whether the new standards should be introduced in North Tyneside. A Pre-Submission Draft of the Local Plan was approved by Council on 20th October 2015 and this will be subject to a further period of public consultation. The preparation of the Pre-Submission Draft provides the first formal opportunity to consider the evidence relating to the implementation of these standards.

3. Methodology

The starting point for this evidence base document is Planning Practice Guidance. This requires that Local Planning Authorities will need to gather evidence to determine whether there is a need for additional standards in their area, justify setting appropriate policies in their Local Plans and consider the impact of using these standards as part of their Local Plan viability assessment. Sections 4, 5 and 6 of this document consider each of the optional standards in turn and set out the evidence that has been used to inform the conclusions for each standard.

The Localism Act 2012 imposed an obligation for local planning authorities to work with public bodies and other local planning authorities on planning matters that cross administrative boundaries when preparing their respective local plans. The “duty to cooperate”, as it is commonly termed, requires local planning authorities to work collaboratively to ensure that strategic priorities across local boundaries are properly coordinated and clearly reflected in individual Local Plans.

During the preparation of this document we have maintained a dialogue with Northumberland, Newcastle and South Tyneside Councils. The methodology and approach to gathering the baseline evidence has been discussed and dialogue remains ongoing. Data from Newcastle and Northumberland local authority areas (which form part of North Tyneside’s Housing Market Area) has also been considered as part of this evidence base. This indicates there would be no strategic cross boundary issues arising from implementing the proposed optional standards.

4. Water Efficiency

Why is water efficiency important?

It's easy to take water for granted but being efficient in water use can bring benefits:

- It saves money – cutting water use automatically reduces water charges if you have a meter;
- There will be less waste water going down the drains, reducing the risk of flooding and reducing the cost of treating the water;
- It reduces a household's carbon footprint – contributing to carbon reduction targets;
- It preserves natural resources helps tackle climate change;
- Around half of all water used is hot water and therefore using less water will also deliver lower energy bills.

What is the optional standard for water efficiency?

Part G of the Building Regulations includes requirements for water efficiency in residential properties. The baseline requirement is a maximum water consumption rate of 125 litres per person per day. The new optional housing technical standard for water efficiency is 110 litres per person per day, set out in the Building Regulations. This figure includes 5 litres per person per day allowance for external water use. The higher standard would be met through either a fittings-based approach, which imposes maximum consumption rates for various fittings such as WCs, basin taps, and showers, or calculating the whole house water consumption using a 'water efficiency calculator' for new dwellings.

It is worth noting that the Code for Sustainable Homes introduced a lower standard of 105 litres per person per day for Levels 3 and 4 of the Code. However, as part of the Housing Standards Review the Government has withdrawn the Code for Sustainable Homes, stating that necessary standards will, as far as possible, be consolidated into Building Regulations. In addition, in July 2015 the Government stated in its productivity plan: 'Fixing the foundations: Creating a more prosperous nation' that it does not intend to proceed with the zero carbon Allowable Solutions carbon offsetting scheme, or the proposed 2016 increase in on-site energy efficiency standards.

What does North Tyneside Council currently have in place locally regarding water efficiency standards?

Apart from what is required by Building Regulations there is currently no local requirement for tighter water efficiency standards in North Tyneside. However, the emerging Local Plan does contain a comprehensive suite of policies relating to water management control, to ensure that North Tyneside's future water resource needs, wastewater treatment and drainage infrastructure are managed effectively in a coordinated manner.

What evidence should be considered when assessing whether to implement this technical standard?

According to National Planning Practice Guidance, primary sources of evidence which might support a tighter water efficiency standard for new dwellings are:

- The Environment Agency Water Stressed Areas Classification (2013) which identifies areas of serious water stress where household demand for water is (or is likely to be) a high proportion of the current effective rainfall available to meet that demand;
- Water resource management plans produced by water companies;
- River Basin Management Plans – which describe the river basin district and the pressure that the water environment faces; these include information on where water resources are contributing to a water body being classified as 'at risk' or 'probably at risk' of failing to achieve good ecological status, due to low flows or reduced water availability.

In addition to these primary data sources, locally specific evidence may also be available, for example collaborative 'water cycle studies' may have been carried out in areas of high growth.

What evidence has been used to assess whether to implement this optional standard in North Tyneside?

The Environment Agency report: [Water stressed areas - final classification July 2013](#) provides formal advice to the Secretary of State on which areas in England are areas of serious water stress. There are 3 categories of water stress – serious, moderate and low.

Even in those areas designated as "not in serious water stress" the document states there should be some activity to ensure that water is used more efficiently and effectively.

North Tyneside sits within the area covered by the Northumbrian Water Company. Table 1 on page 7 of the report identifies that the area covered by Northumbrian Water has been classified as an area of moderate water stress. Further information is provided on page 8, Figure 2 which shows that North Tyneside is an area of low water stress. Newcastle and Northumberland areas both show 'pockets' of moderate water stress classification within these local authority areas. There is also a pocket of serious water stress within Northumberland, which is to the most northerly part of the area, bordering Scotland.

Water companies have a statutory duty to prepare and maintain a Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP). [Northumbrian Water's Final WRMP 2014](#) sets out how they intend to maintain the balance between supply and demand over the period 2015 to 2040. DEFRA has set out the Government's expectation that water companies will deliver overall demand reductions via demand management measures, including water efficiency. To facilitate this, DEFRA further stated that companies must show in their WRMP how they will reduce household per capita consumption (pcc). Water companies are required to present proposals setting out how they will achieve demand reductions in their WRMP based on real, measurable and quantified water savings. The Environment Agency and Defra has accepted Northumbrian Water's WRMP water efficiency proposals to annually reduce pcc by 0.12 litres per person per day in their Asset Management Plan 6 (AMP6). This is achieved through a combination of projects, including domestic retrofit audits and offering of water saving kits upon request.

Consultation has been undertaken with Northumbrian Water Limited (NWL), which provides water and sewerage services to 2.7 million people in the north east of England, including North Tyneside. It has stated that whilst Northumbrian Water has lots of water available, water conservation is still important. It not only helps to protect the environment, saves customers money by saving water and energy (reducing the amount of energy used to heat hot water), but it also reduces the energy costs associated with producing, treating and distributing water.

Northumbrian Water further states that anecdotal evidence suggests some developers are not installing water efficiency taps, showers and other appliances to encourage customers to use water more wisely. Further work needs to be done to help educate new developers of the benefit of water efficiency and the need to install fittings that will help customers achieve 125 l/p/d standard (which is set out in Building Regulations). Whilst this is an important issue, it is not considered that this matter can be better dealt with as part of this work and has no significant bearing on the final conclusions of this section.

The [River Basin Management Plan - Northumbria River Basin District](#) was published by DEFRA and the Environment Agency in December 2009 and covers a period of 6 years. It focuses on the protection, improvement and sustainable use of the water environment. It states that the Environment Agency and others will work with Local Authorities to promote water efficiency in new development through local development frameworks (now referred to as the Local Plan).

The [North Tyneside Outline Water Cycle Study April 2013](#) identifies any constraints to housing and employment growth that may be imposed by the water cycle and provides a strategic approach to the management and use of water. As part of the study, the water resources assessment identified that within North Tyneside, water resource availability is not a major concern. Page 24 confirms that NWL plan for new properties to be built to Part G of the Building Regulations and do not require greater water efficiency to be achieved.

Does the evidence support a need for the optional water efficiency standard?

A review of relevant evidence shows that promoting water efficiency provides significant benefits to individuals and society. It is a key priority for Northumbrian Water Limited and initiatives that promote greater water efficiency should be encouraged. However, North Tyneside is not classified as an area of serious or moderate water stress. In view of the evidence presented it is recommended that the housing optional technical standard for water efficiency should not be implemented as planning policy in North Tyneside.

If this standard is to be considered, what is the impact on viability?

As it is recommended that this optional standard should not be implemented no further work has been undertaken regarding assessing viability.

5. Accessibility

Why is accessibility important?

More than one in ten British adults have mobility problems, such as being unable to move, walk or stand independently² yet only around 5% of homes in the UK are designed to be accessible³. Most people with mobility problems need some adaptations to their home to allow them to live independently, safely and with dignity. These could range from minor adaptations such as fitting a grab rail on the staircase to major adaptations such as providing a downstairs shower and toilet or a stair lift.

If these adaptations can't be made, people's health and dignity suffers. For some people this could mean tripping and falling on the stairs – needing an ambulance to come and help them, or a trip to the local hospital. For others it could mean having to sleep in the lounge because they can't get to their bedroom, or having to wash at the kitchen sink because they can't get their wheelchair into the bathroom. Others may have to move into residential care.

Not only is accessible housing beneficial from a health and wellbeing perspective but it saves on public spending. The Lifetime Homes Standard (which has been replaced by the new M4 (2) access standard) sets out sixteen design criteria intended to make homes more easily adaptable for lifetime use at minimal cost. On average, it costs £1,100 or less to build to the Lifetime Homes standard⁴. However, one trip to hospital for someone who slips on the stairs because they can't install a stair-lift costs an average of almost £1,800⁵ - 60% more than installing Lifetime Homes features in a new home and treating a hip fracture costs over £28,000⁶.

² Leonard Cheshire Homes – The Hidden Housing Crisis

³ English Housing Survey 2012 to 2013: housing report, annex table 2.9

⁴ The CLG Housing Standards Review Consultation Impact Assessment

⁵ Cabinet Office unit cost database (2011/12)

⁶ Better outcomes, lower costs: Implications for health and social care budgets of investment in housing adaptations, improvements and equipment: a review of the evidence

What are the optional standards for accessibility?

Part M Volume 1 of the Building Regulations deals with access to and use of dwellings. It has three parts:

- M4(1) Visitable dwellings (mandatory);
- M4(2) Accessible and adaptable dwellings (optional);
- M4(3) Wheelchair user dwellings (optional), which includes:
 - Wheelchair adaptable;
 - Wheelchair accessible.

Given that M4(1) is mandatory, it is dealt with via Building Regulations. Only M4(2) and M4(3) are relevant for consideration within this Report.

The optional standard M4(2) is similar to the Lifetime Homes Standard and M4(3) consolidates current practice (including Wheelchair Housing Design Guide principles) to accommodate wheelchair users⁷. Further information on the requirements and limits on application of the accessibility standards is contained at Appendix 1.

In relation to M4(3) the Building Regulations set a distinction between wheelchair accessible and wheelchair adaptable dwellings. M4(3)(2) states that the provision made must be sufficient to:

- (a) allow simple adaptation of the dwelling to meet the needs of occupants who use wheelchairs; or
- (b) meet the needs of occupants who use wheelchairs.

These two different housing standards provide for distinct household types; homes that are built to M4(3)(2)(b) enable a greater degree of independence for people with more complex or distinct needs, e.g. people who use wheelchairs.

National Planning Practice Guidance states that Local Plan policies for wheelchair accessible homes (i.e. those that are ready for use by people in a wheelchair) should only be applied to

⁷ DCLG - explanatory memorandum to the Building Regulations &c (Amendment) Regulations 2015 - 2015 No. 767

those dwellings where the local authority is responsible for allocating or nominating a person to live in that dwelling, namely social housing. The requirements by tenure are set out in Table 1.

Table 1: M4(2) and M4(3) requirements by tenure

	Market Housing	Social Housing
M4 (2) – accessible and adaptable dwellings	✓	✓
M4(3) - wheelchair user dwellings:		
M4(3)(2)(a) - to allow simple adaptation of the dwelling to meet the needs of occupants who use wheelchairs	✓	✓
M4(3)(2)(b) -to meet the needs of occupants who use wheelchairs	x	✓

The Building Regulations set out performance objectives to identify where a new dwelling has reasonable provision to meet the requirements of the optional accessibility standards.

For M4(2) these comprise:

- a) Within the curtilage of the dwelling, or the building containing the dwelling, it is possible to approach and gain step-free access to the dwelling and to any associated parking space and communal facilities that are intended for the occupants to use;
- b) There is step-free access to the WC and other accommodation within the entrance storey, and to any associated private outdoor space directly connected to the entrance storey;
- c) A wide range of people, including older and disabled people and some wheelchair users, are able to use the accommodation, including its sanitary facilities;
- d) Features are provided to enable common adaptations to be carried out at a future date to increase the accessibility and functionality of the dwelling;
- e) Wall-mounted switches, socket outlets and other controls are reasonably accessible to people who have reduced reach.

For M4(3) these comprise:

- a) Within the curtilage of the dwelling or the building containing the dwelling, a wheelchair user can approach and gain step-free access to every private entrance to the dwelling and to every associated private outdoor space, parking space and communal facility for occupants' use;
- b) Access to the WC and other accommodation within the entrance storey is step-free and the dwelling is designed to have and the potential to achieve step-free access to all other parts;
- c) There is sufficient internal space to make accommodation within the dwelling suitable for a wheelchair user;
- d) The dwelling is wheelchair adaptable such that key parts of the accommodation, including its sanitary facilities and kitchens, could be easily altered to meet the needs of a wheelchair user or, where required by a local planning authority, the dwelling is wheelchair accessible;
- e) Wall-mounted switches, controls and socket outlets are accessible to people who have reduced reach.

Local Plans should clearly state what proportion of new dwellings should comply with the requirements. Policies should also take into account site specific factors such as vulnerability to flooding, site topography, and other circumstances which may make a specific site less suitable for M4(2) and M4(3) compliant dwellings, particularly where step free access cannot be achieved or is not viable. Where step-free access is not viable, neither of the optional requirements in Part M should be applied.

This means that if M4(2) and M4(3) are applied to a development all dwellings above the ground floor will require step-free access. Local planning authorities will need to assess whether this has an impact on non-lift serviced multi-storey development; where step-free access in this type of development is not viable, neither of the optional requirements in Part M should be applied.

Finally, where there is a very specific and clearly evidenced accessibility need, which is outside of what is provided for by the wheelchair accessible standard, a local planning

authority can have different requirements in order to meet that need. This should only be required to meet the needs of a specific individual and therefore should only be required of a home where a local authority allocation policy applies, i.e. social housing. Such a requirement would also be subject to viability considerations.

What do we currently have in place locally regarding accessibility standards?

Whilst the Council does not impose standards relating to accessibility it does require, through Policy H7 in the UDP (referred to on page 5 of this document) where a need has been identified and a site is suitable then housing provision should meet the requirements of people with special needs, including elderly and disabled people.

In respect of social housing, prior to the Housing Standards Review the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) published its Design and Quality Standards (April 2007), which stated that developments should 'incorporate all of the 16 Lifetime Homes features into houses and apartments wherever practicable'. The Council and Registered Providers (RPs) of social housing have provided new affordable homes built to Lifetime Homes standard and some specifically for wheelchair users, working closely with relevant social care departments within the Council.

What evidence should be considered when assessing whether to implement this technical standard?

The National Planning Practice Guidance states that information from housing needs assessments (undertaken as part of Strategic Housing Market Assessments) and other available datasets should be taken into account, including:

- The likely future need for housing for older and disabled people (including wheelchair user dwellings);
- Size, location, type and quality of dwellings needed to meet specifically evidenced needs (for example retirement homes, sheltered homes or care homes);
- The accessibility and adaptability of existing housing stock;
- How needs vary across different housing tenures.

What evidence has been used to assess whether to implement this optional standard in North Tyneside?

The ageing population

As part of North Tyneside's Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2014, Edge Analytics prepared population forecasts for North Tyneside based on the 2012 Sub National Population Projections⁸. These show that, based on the borough's proposed growth scenario, the population is projected to increase from 201,206 in 2011 to 224,124 in 2032. An increase of 22,918 people (11.4%).

Of particular interest is the projected increase in the older age groups. In 2011, there were around 35,587 residents aged 65 or older. This number is projected to increase by 20,155 (56.6%) by 2032. For the 80 and over age group this is projected to increase over the same period by 7,605 (74.7%).

Table 2: Projected population change in North Tyneside

Age Group	2011	2032	Change 2011 to 2032	% Change
0 to 15	35,717	37,644	1,927	5%
16 to 29	32,454	32,548	94	0%
30 to 44	41,566	43,062	1,496	4%
45 to 64	55,882	55,127	-755	-1%
65 to 79	25,411	37,961	12,550	49%
80 +	10,176	17,781	7,605	75%
Total	201,206	224,124	22,918	11%
Of the total population				
Aged 65+	17.7%	24.9%		
Aged 80+	5.1%	7.9%		

Source: ONS 2012 based population projections and Edge Analytics North Tyneside Population and Household Forecasts 2015

According to the Gateshead and Newcastle SHMA Update Final Report 2013, Newcastle's population is projected to grow 13.1% over the period 2010 to 2030. The population aged 65 and over is projected to increase by 39.5% and the population aged 80 and over is projected to increase by 51%.

⁸ Population and Household Demographic Forecasts 2014 and Update 2015

For Northumberland, the 2012 based Sub-national Population Projections (SNPP) indicate that its population will increase from 316,116 in 2012 to 324,375 by 2031, an increase of only 8,259 (2.6%). However, over the same period, a significant increase in the size of the older age groups is projected. The number of people aged over 65 is projected to increase from 66,691 in 2012 to 101,769 in 2031, representing a 52.6% increase. The number of those aged 80-89 is projected to increase by 90.5%, while the number of those aged over 90 is projected to increase by 161.4%.

Whilst the emerging Northumberland Core Strategy proposes to rebalance the population, principally reducing the decline in the size of the working age population, given the demographics of the County, it may be expected that the number of people in older age groups will continue to increase over the plan period, albeit at a reduced rate to that indicated by the SNPP. The number of households with a member aged over 65 is also therefore likely to increase.

The data shows that for North Tyneside's Housing Market Area, the older population is increasing significantly. This will bring challenges in meeting the future housing needs of this group of people and ensuring they can live independently.

Whilst the population profile sets the basic framework for housing demand, it is the number, type and size of households in an area that directly relates to the requirements for housing. The latest household forecasts for North Tyneside have also been prepared by Edge Analytics based upon the DCLG prepared 2012 based household forecasts. The borough's household forecast shows that the number of households is projected to increase from 91,488 in 2011 to 108,283 by 2032, an increase of 16,795 households (18%). It should be noted that household growth does not directly match the borough's total dwelling requirement of 17,383 from 2011 to 2032. This is because there needs to be a small amount of homes empty (usually around 3%) to allow the housing market to work effectively.

Of note is the scale of growth in households for older age groups. In 2011 there were 25,139 households with a resident aged 65 or older. This number is projected to increase by 13,878

(55.2%) by 2032. For the 80 and over age group this is projected to increase over the same period by 5,462 (68.8%)

Table 3: Projected household change in North Tyneside

Age Group	2011	2032	Change 2011 to 2032	% Change
0 to 15	0	0	0	0%
16 to 29	8,556	9,134	578	7%
30 to 44	23,709	25,574	1,865	8%
45 to 64	34,083	34,558	475	1%
65 to 79	17,207	25,623	8,416	49%
80 +	7,932	13,394	5,462	68.8%
Total	91,488	108,283	16,795	18.3%
Of the total population				
Aged 65+	27.5%	36%		
Aged 80+	8.7%	12.4%		

Source: DCLG 2012 based household projections and Edge Analytics NT Population and Household Forecasts 2015

The 2011 Census provided a snapshot of older households by tenure. This showed there were 24,356 households where the Household Reference Person is aged 65 or over in North Tyneside. Over two-thirds of older households are owner occupiers. This is similar to Northumberland but greater than Newcastle, where 59% are owned. Rates of social renting vary and are higher in Newcastle (34%) than in Northumberland (21%), with North Tyneside placed mid way between the two at 27%. The information does show that, whilst the majority of older people own their home there is a significant number who rent social housing and policies for accessible housing should reflect both tenures.

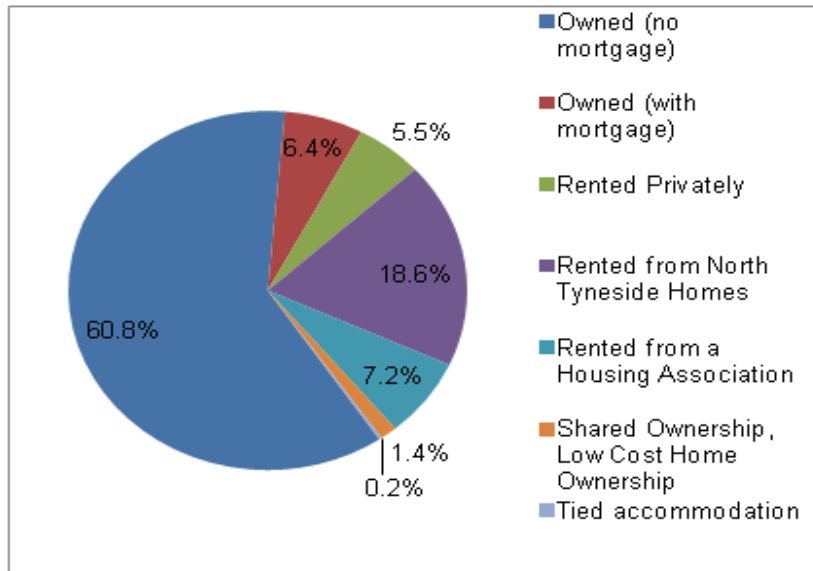
Table 4: All households where the Household Reference person is aged 65 or over

All households 65 or over	Owned	Rented from council	Other social rented	Private rented	Living rent free	Shared ownership
24,356	16,371	4,598	1,874	1,064	318	131
As % of total households	67 %	19%	8%	4%	1%	1%
Newcastle	59%	25%	9%	4%	1%	1%
Northumberland	69%	11%	10%	6%	3%	1%

Source: 2011 census

The information for North Tyneside is reflected in findings from the North Tyneside Household Survey 2013, undertaken as part of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2014), which found a similar tenure breakdown for older households.

Figure 1: Tenure of households where one person is aged 65 or over



Source: North Tyneside Household Survey 2013

As part of the Household Survey, older residents were asked about their housing preference, both now and in the next 5 years. The information shows that the majority of older people want to continue to live in their current home with support when needed.

Table 5: Older persons' housing options

Housing option	% would consider
Continue to live in current home with support when needed	70.5
Buying a property on the open market	15.5
Rent a property from a private landlord	6.2
Rent from HA / Registered Social Landlord / Registered Provider	12.7
Sheltered accommodation - To Rent	22.7
Sheltered accommodation - To Buy	11.9
Sheltered accommodation - Part Rent / Buy (shared ownership)	6.3
Extra care housing - To Rent	14.2
Extra care housing - To Buy	8.0
Extra care housing - Part Rent / Buy (shared ownership)	3.9
Residential care home	4.3
Co-housing	7.9

Note – figures do not add up to 100% as respondents were able to pick more than one choice

As people age, so does the prevalence of disability. More than half of older person's households aged 85 and over have someone in their home with a serious illness or disability⁹. The provision of homes built to accessible and adaptable standards would enable households to make necessary adjustments and adaptations to continue to live at home.

People living with illness and disability

According to the 2011 Census, 21% of North Tyneside's residents consider themselves to have a long term health problem or disability, higher than the England average of 17%. The picture is similar in Newcastle and Northumberland.

Table 6: Long-term health problem or disability

	North Tyneside	%	Newcastle	%	Northumberland	%	North East	%	England	%
All Usual Residents	200,801		280,177		316,028		2,596,886		53,012,456	
Day-to-Day Activities Limited a Lot	20,246	10	26,661	10	30,940	10	285,087	11	4,405,394	8
Day-to-Day Activities Limited a Little	21,159	11	25,916	9	34,558	11	277,105	11	4,947,192	9
Day-to-Day Activities Not Limited	159,396	79	227,600	81	250,530	79	2,034,694	78	43,659,870	82

Source: 2011 Census

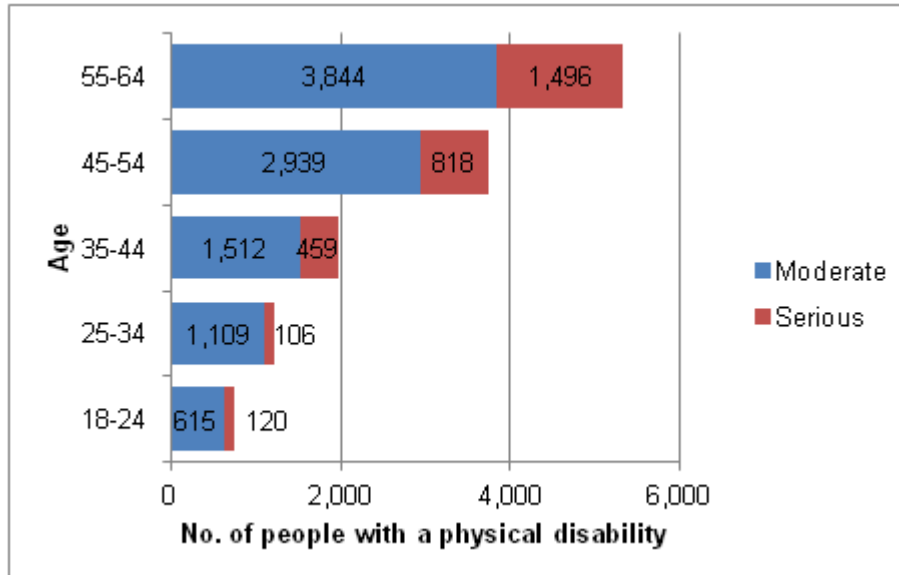
Research undertaken by the English Housing Survey¹⁰ found that, nationally almost 30% of households have a reference person with a long term illness or disability. Almost half of these (49%) live in social rented housing, around 27% are owner occupiers and around 22% live in private rented housing. Households that have one or more wheelchair users account for 3.3% of all households, although the tenure of these households is not recorded.

⁹ A better fit? Creating housing choices for an ageing population, Shelter 2012

¹⁰ English Housing Survey 2011 to 2012, household report

There are currently 13,018¹¹ people aged 18-64 with a physical disability living in North Tyneside. This represents 10% of the borough's population for this age range. Of these, 10,000 (8%) have a moderate physical disability and 3,000 (2%) have a serious disability.

Figure 2: People aged 18-64 in North Tyneside with a physical disability



Source: PANSI, 2014

Using the same data source, the figures are similar for Newcastle and Northumberland. In Newcastle there are 16,956 people aged 18-64 with a physical disability. This represents 9% of Newcastle's population for this age range. Of these, 13,248 (7%) have a moderate physical disability and 3,708 (2%) have a serious disability. In Northumberland there are 20,703 people aged 18-64 with a physical disability. This represents 11% of Northumberland's population for this age range. Of these, 15,821 (8%) have a moderate physical disability and 4,882 (3%) have a serious disability.

Wheelchair user housing

As stated earlier, policies for homes that can be used by people in a wheelchair at the point of completion should only be applied to social housing. Research¹² has found that people living with a disability are more likely to live in social housing.

North Tyneside has 14,696 Council housing tenants (July 2015); 4,677 (33%) have a long term illness or disability and of these, 13% have difficulty getting around. At December

¹¹ PANSI (Projecting Adult Needs and Service Information System) 2014

¹² Ends and Means: The Future Roles of Social Housing in England 2007

2014, there were 27 Council tenant applications requiring fully adapted housing; 23 of these required 1 or 2 bedroom homes, 3 required 3 bedroom homes and 1 required a 4 bedroom home¹³.

According to the Local Authority Housing Statistics 2013-14, there were 3,516 households on North Tyneside's housing register. Of these, 459 households needed to move on medical or welfare grounds, including grounds relating to a disability. This represented 13% of total households on the register. An analysis of CORE statistics¹⁴ 2013-14 for North Tyneside found that 114 applicants for social housing needed to move because their property was unsuitable due to ill health/disability; 11 required fully wheelchair accessible housing and 66 required level access housing.

Falls

Falls are one of the most common reasons disabled and older people are admitted to hospital, but they could be dramatically reduced by ensuring homes are suitable for features such as stair lifts, grab rails and level access to buildings¹⁵. The majority of falls take place in the home (52%) and preventing people from falling is a key challenge for the NHS and Local Authority in North Tyneside¹⁶. There were 1,360 emergency admissions in North Tyneside in 2014-15 due to falls for patients aged 65 and over. In addition to the personal cost to an individual who suffers a fall, falls have a significant cost to health and care services. This includes ambulance call-outs to pick up people who have fallen, A&E attendances, in-patient treatments for fractures and other trauma, rehabilitation and long term follow-up care and support.

The accessibility of the current housing stock (M4(2))

There is no available local data on the accessibility of the current housing stock in North Tyneside. However, there is national research that can be drawn upon. The English Housing Survey¹⁷ analysed England's housing stock according to the number of 'visitability' features,

¹³ North Tyneside Council Housing Services

¹⁴ DCLG funded national information source that records information on social housing lettings

¹⁵ No Place Like Home – Leonard Cheshire Disability 2014

¹⁶ North Tyneside Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2013

¹⁷ English Housing Survey 2012 to 2013: housing report, annex table 2.9

which include some, but not all of the requirements of M4 (2) and (3). Visitability features are defined as a dwelling having the following:

- Level access: there are no steps between the gate/pavement and the front door into the dwelling to negotiate;
- Flush threshold: a wheelchair can be wheeled directly into the dwelling, with no obstruction higher than 15mm;
- Sufficiently wide doors and circulation space;
- WC at entrance level.

The research found that only 5.3% of the housing stock in England had all 4 visitability features and 25.4% had no visitability features.

Table 7: Housing stock by visitability features - England

	All tenures	Owner occupied	Private rented	Local Authority	Housing Association
Levels of Housing Stock thousands (percentages)	22,718 (100.0)	14,783 (100.0)	4,119 (100.0)	1,775 (100.0)	2,042 (100.0)
No visitability Features	5,768 (25.4)	3,877 (26.2)	1,113 (27.0)	404 (22.7)	372 (18.3)
One visitability feature	8,943 (39.4)	6,337 (42.9)	1,476 (35.8)	562 (31.7)	567 (27.8)
Two visitability features	4,710 (20.7)	3,098 (21.0)	811 (19.7)	400 (22.5)	401 (19.7)
Three visitability features	2,091 (9.2)	946 (6.4)	443 (10.8)	310 (17.5)	392 (19.2)
All four visitability features	1,206 (5.3)	525 (3.6)	276 (6.7)	99 (5.6)	307 (15.0)

Further National Research¹⁸ found that the existing housing stock presents significant obstacles for those with mobility problems in terms of physically getting into the dwelling. Only 16% of homes have level access and 20 per cent have a flush threshold. It is interesting that bungalows, many of which were designed specifically with older people in mind, do not score significantly better on these aspects than other types of dwellings. Altogether, only about 3.4% of homes currently possess the four key visitability features of level access, flush threshold, WC at entry level and circulation that meets Part M. Around half of these are newer homes built after 1990 and about a third are owned by RPs.

¹⁸ Modelling the current and potential accessibility of the housing stock; Building Research Establishment July 2012

The same research found that one in six dwellings in England (17%) is a flat and many of these present significant barriers to those with mobility problems. Although they tend to score quite well in terms of having level access up to the main entrance of the building and flush thresholds into the building and the individual flat, where they fall down is in the provision of lifts. Of the 2.2 million flats above ground floor level, only 21% of these have a lift of any description and just 1.5% of all upper floor flats have a wheelchair accessible lift.

The cost of adapting homes

When people become disabled or people age and become frailer their housing needs change. Whilst some people will have no option but to move to more suitable accommodation, most will need adaptations to their current home to allow them to continue to live independently. If you are a home owner or live in a privately rented home, one way of paying for these adaptations is to apply for a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) from the local council. In North Tyneside, the amount spent on Disabled Facilities Grants over the past 2 years is:

2013 – 2014 - £888,521

2014 – 2015 - £942,413

In addition, to DFG spend, the Council spent similar amounts meeting the demand for adaptations needed to Council homes to meet the needs of its tenants:

2013 – 2014 - £945,224

2014 – 2015 - £927,421

Over the two years 2013-2015 over £3.7m was spent on adapting homes in North Tyneside.

Disabled-friendly homes are, by design, cheaper and easier to adapt than any other homes. For example, installing a stair lift in a Lifetime Home can cost £2,400 but if the wall adjacent to the stairs is not strong enough to support a stair lift's weight, the cost of replacing or reinforcing it could be five or ten times the cost¹⁹. Similarly, if a bathroom is big enough for a wheelchair to fit into by design, as they are in M4 (2) and (3), the only cost to adapt the home may be around £300 to install grab bars. However, if a bathroom needs major adaptation work to enable it to be used by someone in a wheelchair (e.g. doors widened

¹⁹ Leonard Cheshire Homes - no place like home - 5 million reasons to make housing disabled-friendly

and fittings removed and replaced to enable walls to be strengthened) costs could be 30 times higher. So ensuring there are more accessible homes built in North Tyneside will help reduce annual spend on adapting homes.

Does the evidence support a need for the optional accessibility standard?

There is evidence to support a policy requiring more accessible homes in the borough. North Tyneside's older population is increasing and as people age so does the prevalence of disability. This presents challenges for housing provision – ensuring that homes meet the needs of occupiers across the life cycle. This is especially so in the private sector, where over two-thirds of older households are owner occupiers and around 5% rent privately. The majority of older people want to remain in their home but for many this presents problems because of the design of their home.

In addition, over 13,000 people in North Tyneside aged 18-64 are living with a disability (10% of the borough's population for this age range) and of these 3,000 have a serious disability (2% of the population).

The amount being spent on adapting properties to meet housing need in the borough is significant. The proposed optional access requirements M4(2) and M4(3) would help facilitate the provision of easily adaptable homes for disabled and older people both now and in the future.

Whilst we have information on the needs of people in the social housing sector requiring adapted or more specific housing to meet their needs we do not have enough information on people living with a disability in the private sector in respect of where they may want to live. In view of this, policies for both adaptable and accessible wheelchair housing (M4 (3)) should be applied to social housing only, and policies for accessible and adaptable housing should be applied across both social and market housing.

What is the impact on viability?

As stated earlier, National Planning Practice Guidance states that: *“Local planning authorities should consider the impact of using these [optional] standards as part of their Local Plan viability assessment.”* In other words, any additional costs of implementing these optional standards along with other Local Plan requirements must not be so great that it would make future development financially unviable.

The Council’s Area Wide Viability Assessment Update June 2016 seeks to establish an informed understanding of the economic viability of development in North Tyneside. The Assessment contains a set of assumptions which reflect latest evidence of economic viability and delivery. These assumptions are applied to test the potential Local Plan policy costs arising from:

- a. Section 106 contributions informed by monitoring of current contributions for a range of infrastructure including Education needs, highways and transport, green space and biodiversity, play and recreation, allotments, and employment and training.
- b. Application of National Space Standards and Accessible Homes

In addition to this a series of benchmarking assessments have been undertaken against a range of housing sites across the borough to further understand the residual value per square metre and the uplift that arises against identified existing use values.

The Effect of Applying Accessibility Standards

The cost uplift of applying accessibility standards to the development appraisals is informed by the findings of the Housing Standards Review – Cost Impacts report prepared by EC Harris LLP²⁰. The cost uplift provided in that report indicates that the basic accessible and adaptable standard M4(2) would result in an increase in overall build costs of approximately £1,100 to £1,400 in total for houses.

²⁰https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/353387/021c_Cost_Report_11th_Sept_2014_FIN_AL.pdf

The requirements of an M4(3)2b wheelchair accessible home resulted in a cost uplift of between £28,300 and £30,000 per unit depending upon the number of bedrooms. This highest standard requires a specifically identified household and can only be applied to affordable housing. The proposed Local Plan policy requires 10% of affordable homes to be wheelchair accessible, but if there is no local need for this higher specification home then a fall back position of requiring 10% of M4(3)2a wheelchair adaptable homes is required.

The rent charged on a home is based on a range of factors, including the number of bedrooms, location, size and the amenities it has. Discussions with social housing providers have indicated that due to the additional amenities of an accessible home, such as more space, the rent is likely to be higher than one with fewer amenities.

Our analysis of the benchmarking assessment of sites indicates that for medium value Greenfield and Brownfield sites introducing the accessibility standard will affect the overall return from development but this is marginal and unlikely to prevent a site from being deliverable. For lower value sites, where deliverability is already marginal, the effect upon deliverability may be more significant. For example for appraisals considering both Parkside and Stephenson schools the accessibility standard has the effect of reducing the residual value of the scheme from 0.81 to 0.55 and 0.97 to 0.66.

The Council takes a flexible approach to the application of planning obligations where developers can demonstrate viability issues and this will be the case in respect of the application of accessibility standards. Where developers can show a development is not viable with the level of obligations then negotiations would be undertaken to reduce the level of obligations to a point where the development would be viable provided it continued to accord with the principles of sustainable development. This may include reducing the proportion of affordable homes or the mix of adaptable and accessible homes on the development.

6. Internal Space Standards

Why is internal space in a home important?

The amount of space in a home influences how residents live²¹. At its most basic level, the space in a home impacts on:

- How and where people prepare and eat food;
- How people deal with household waste and recycling;
- How possessions are stored and how the living space looks and feels to inhabit;
- What furniture can be used and the activities it enables;
- Whether people can socialise with guests or other members of the household;
- How much privacy people have for studying, working from home, relaxing or leisure;
- Whether there is room for additional changes to the environment, for example to make life easier if the circumstances or health of members of the household change.

Space standards are intended to ensure that new dwellings provide a reasonable level of internal space to undertake day to day activities, at a given level of occupancy. Lack of adequate space and overcrowding has been shown to have significant impacts on health, educational attainment and family relationships.²²

Government Guidance²³ identifies that lack of space and over crowding has been linked to psychological distress and various mental disorders. It is also linked to increased heart rate, increased perspiration, intolerance, inability to concentrate, hygiene risks, accidents and spread of contagious disease.

What is the optional standard for internal space?

The Government's Nationally Described Space Standard deals with internal space within new dwellings and is suitable for application across all tenures. It sets out requirements for the Gross Internal (floor) Area of new dwellings at a defined level of occupancy as well as

²¹ The Case for Space, RIBA, September 2011

²² Chances of a lifetime: the impact of bad housing on children's lives (Shelter 2006)

²³ Housing Health and Safety Rating System - Guidance for Landlords and Property Related Professionals May 2006

floor areas and dimensions for key parts of the home, notably bedrooms, storage and floor to ceiling height. The technical requirements are:

- a) The dwelling provides at least the gross internal floor area and built-in storage area (set out in Table 8);
- b) A dwelling with two or more bedspaces has at least one double (or twin) bedroom;
- c) In order to provide one bedspace, a single bedroom has a floor area of at least 7.5m^2 and is at least 2.15m wide;
- d) In order to provide two bedspaces, a double (or twin bedroom) has a floor area of at least 11.5m^2 ;
- e) One double (or twin bedroom) is at least 2.75m wide and every other double (or twin) bedroom is at least 2.55m wide;
- f) Any area with a headroom of less than 1.5m is not counted within the Gross Internal Area unless used solely for storage (if the area under the stairs is to be used for storage, assume a general floor area of 1m^2 within the Gross Internal Area);
- g) Any other area that is used solely for storage and has a headroom of 900-1500mm (such as under eaves) is counted at 50% of its floor area, and any area lower than 900mm is not counted at all;
- h) A built-in wardrobe counts towards the Gross Internal Area and bedroom floor area requirements, but should not reduce the effective width of the room below the minimum widths set out above. The built-in area in excess of 0.72m^2 in a double bedroom and 0.36m^2 in a single bedroom counts towards the built-in storage requirement;
- i) The minimum floor to ceiling height is 2.3m for at least 75% of the Gross Internal Area.

Table 8: Minimum gross internal floor areas and storage (m²)

Number of bedrooms(b)	Number of bed spaces (persons)	1 storey dwellings	2 storey dwellings	3 storey dwellings	Built-in storage
1b	1p	39 (37)			1.0
	2p	50	58		1.5
2b	3p	61	70		2.0
	4p	70	79		
3b	4p	74	84	90	2.5
	5p	86	93	99	
	6p	95	102	108	
4b	5p	90	97	103	3.0
	6p	99	106	112	
	7p	108	115	121	
	8p	117	124	130	
5b	6p	103	110	116	3.5
	7p	112	119	125	
	8p	121	128	134	
6b	7p	116	123	129	4.0
	8p	124	132	138	

Source: DCLG Nationally Described Space Standard

What do we currently have in place locally regarding internal space standards?

North Tyneside Council does not currently impose internal space standards through a policy in the UDP. However, affordable homes built by the Council and Registered Providers of social housing have usually been built to space standards just slightly below the NDSS. This is because, to secure grant funding from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) social housing providers were required to build to the HCA's design standards (known as Housing Quality Indicators), which included minimum sizes for internal space. Consultation has been undertaken with the HCA's North East Yorkshire and The Humber Operating Area regarding the HCA's approach to standards. A briefing session was held in September 2015 to bring stakeholders up to date with HCA's requirements.

When assessing affordable housing schemes, the HCA retains a statutory obligation to improve the supply and quality of housing in England and to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and good design. Homes have to be fit for purpose for the intended users. For example, if the home is for a family could they sensibly accommodate the home? The HCA has stated that they are using NDSS as a benchmark for schemes

coming forward under continuous market engagement for the Affordable Homes Programme 2015-18. When appraising schemes to establish value for money, they will gather data on bedroom sizes and storage to check that internal environments are comfortable, convenient and capable of sensibly accommodating the necessary furniture and equipment associated with specific room activities and are suitable for the needs of intended users.

For affordable homes delivered through planning obligations, the Council has encouraged, but not imposed, developers to build to HCA design standards so that they can be acquired by RPs once completed.

What evidence should be considered when assessing whether to implement this technical standard?

According to National Planning Practice Guidance, local planning authorities should take account of the following areas:

- Need – evidence should be provided on the size and type of dwellings currently being built in the area, to ensure the impacts of adopting space standards can be properly assessed;
- Viability – the impact of adopting the space standard should be considered as part of a plan’s viability assessment with account taken of the impact of potentially larger dwellings on land supply. Local planning authorities will also need to consider impacts on affordability where a space standard is to be adopted;
- Timing – there may need to be a reasonable transitional period following adoption of a new policy on space standards to enable developers to factor the cost of space standards into future land acquisitions.

What evidence has been used to assess whether to implement this optional standard in North Tyneside?

North Tyneside Council collects and records data on the number of bedrooms new homes provide but does not collect and record data on the internal floor space. To establish the internal space of new homes a survey was undertaken by the planning team.

Survey Methodology

Gross completions over the 3 years 2012-13 and 2014-15 were used as a starting point for the survey. There were 1,323 new homes completed during this period and of these:

- 5% were 1 bedroom flats;
- 17% were 2 bedroom flats;
- 13% were 2 bedroom houses;
- 33% were 3 bedroom houses;
- 32% were 4+ bedroom houses.

A 30% sample size was used from the gross completions – i.e. 397 homes. To ensure a mix of homes that reflected the different house types that were built over the 3-year period the percentages shown above were applied to the sample size. The numbers were as follows:

Table 9: Sample of house types for internal space survey

	Flats			Houses				All homes
House type	1-bed	2-bed	Total	2-bed	3-bed	4+bed	Total	
30% sample survey	20	67	87	52	131	127	310	397

A range of sites were then chosen to extract the data needed. These were mainly delivered over the past 3 years but sites older than this needed to be used to enable data to be extracted on the range of house types needed for the sample. The sites chosen reflected the following criteria:

- They covered a range of developers from large scale national house builders to small local builders (17 developers were included in the sample);
- They covered all four geographical areas of the borough, although not equally as this was not possible due to the geographical distribution of new developments;
- Housing development sites varied in size from small sites below ten units to major sites covering hundreds of units;
- Affordable housing schemes delivered by social housing providers (both the Council and Registered Providers) were not included as these are generally built to higher

space standards required by the Homes and Communities Agency to secure grant funding.

Data from each site was taken from planning application documents. Where sites contained a number of different types of flat or house, plans showing the street numbering and naming were cross referenced with the original planning application documents showing the proposed site layouts. From this, each individual house type could be identified and the number of bedrooms and intended number of occupants could be identified from the relevant plans and the number of storeys recorded. The gross internal floor area was recorded from Energy Performance Certificates.

This data was inputted into a spreadsheet, which was set up to compare the actual internal floor area of the home with the Nationally Described Space Standard (NDSS) size for the type of home, number of bedrooms and number of intended occupants. The data was analysed to establish a range of information, including the percentage that each home was either above or below the NDSS.

Key Findings:

Of the 397 homes surveyed:

- 186 (47%) were above the NDSS;
- 200 (50%) were below the NDSS;
- 11 (3%) were exactly to the NDSS.

Analysis was undertaken to establish the number of homes delivered that were 10% above or below the NDSS

- 103 homes (26%) were 10% or more above the NDSS (55% of all homes that were above the standard);
- 115 homes (29%) were 10% or more below the NDSS (58% of all homes that were below the standard);

The mean amount above the standards was 16%; some homes were as much as 73% above the NDSS. The mean amount below the NDSS was 12%; some homes were as much as 48% below the NDSS.

- There were more flats above the NDSS than below it (59 above, 5 exact, 23 below);
- There were more houses below the NDSS than above it (127 above, 6 exact, 177 below);
- The average internal space of all homes surveyed was 94.2m²;
- The average internal space of all flats surveyed was 62m²;
- The average internal space of all houses surveyed was 103m²;
- It was generally found that houses with 4 or more bedrooms were above the NDSS;
- Two and three bedroom houses generally appeared to be built below the NDSS.

Further information on the survey results is available at Appendix 2. It is worth noting that, according to the North Tyneside Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2014, of all homes in North Tyneside just over 81% has 2 or 3 bedrooms.²⁴ Also, taking account of gross completions over the 3 years 2012-13 to 2014-15, almost half (46%) were 2 and 3 bedroom homes.

The findings for 2 and 3 bedroom homes is reflected in national research produced by RIBA²⁵ (Royal Institute of British Architects), which covered a range of developers across the country. This found that the average three bedroom home is 88m², 5m² short of the recommended NDSS minimum for a 3-bed, 5-person, 2-storey home. However, the same research found that generally, one bedroom homes were also smaller than the NDSS, which is not the case in North Tyneside.

In December 2010 RIBA commissioned a YouGov poll to test perceptions and preferences about newly built homes. This found that:

²⁴ 2011 Valuation Office Agency data

²⁵ The Case for Space – The Size of England’s New Homes Sept 2011

- The top three things people look for when moving home are outside space (49%), the size of the rooms (42%), and proximity to local services (42%);
- 31% of people would not consider buying a home built in the last ten years, or would only consider it as a last resort. Of these, 60% said it was because the rooms are too small, 46% said they lack style, and 45% were concerned about the lack of outside space;
- 60% of people who would not buy a new home said that the small size of the rooms was the most important reason for them.

Further research²⁶ found that the UK has the smallest homes by floor area in Europe. The reasons for this are complex, but are related to the removal of space standards in the 1980s, the high value of land, and the low number of homes built by public authorities and housing associations.

In the UK domestic property market, it is common to price and compare houses on the basis of the number of bedrooms rather than the floor space, which results in a lack of understanding of space requirements. Whilst the majority of homes in the UK are not fully occupied, between one-quarter and one-third of people are dissatisfied with the amount of space in their homes. Lack of storage space, insufficient space for furniture and lack of space in which to socialise are often cited as particular problems. The Housing Standards Review²⁷ found that 88% of respondents were in favour of space labelling and 80% were in favour of space standards.

Does the evidence support a need for the optional space standard?

Research has shown that the amount of internal space in a home influences how people live and can impact on their health and wellbeing. The local survey undertaken on internal space shows that whilst flats and 4-bedroom houses are being built above the NDSS, 2 and 3 bedroom houses are generally being built below the NDSS. Almost half of all completions

²⁶ Malcolm Morgan & Heather Cruickshank (2014) Quantifying the extent of space shortages: English dwellings, Building Research & Information, 42:6, 710-724

²⁷ DCLG Housing Standards Review summary of responses March 2014

during the 3 years 2012 -2015 were two and three bedroom homes. The evidence presented supports the case to implement a policy requiring homes to be built to the NDSS.

What is the impact on viability?

As referred to on page 28 of this document, the Council's Area Wide Viability Assessment Update June 2016 seeks to establish an informed understanding of the economic viability of development in North Tyneside.

The effect of applying the Nationally Described Space Standard (NDSS)

For the appraisal for Norgas House (Lakeside View) an additional analysis was undertaken to consider the effect of applying the NDSS. Homes on the site in Killingworth included some of the lowest overall floor area for 3 bed homes in the borough, at an average of 79 m² for each home compared to the national standard of approximately 89 m².

Under the increased space standard model, and to test the effect of the increased standard without increasing the total cost of a three bed home to the purchaser the revenue per square metre was reduced from £2,350/m² to £2,086/m², retaining the average 3 bed house price at approximately £185,600.

Build costs within this scenario were additionally kept at the increased rate to allow for accessible standard M4(2), at £1,013/m². The resultant impact of this adjustment upon the existing land value multiplier for Norgas House was a reduction from 5.72 x EUV to 4.10 x EUV. The remaining residual land value as a result of this fell from £1.4m per hectare to £1.02m per hectare.

As stated on page 28, the Council takes a flexible approach to the application of planning obligations where developers can demonstrate viability issues and this will be the case in respect of the application of space standards. Where developers can show a development is not viable with the level of obligations then negotiations would be undertaken to reduce the level of obligations to a point where the development would be viable provided it continued to accord with the principles of sustainable development. This may include reducing the

proportion of affordable homes or the mix of adaptable and accessible homes on the development.

Appendix 1

Requirement	Limits on application
<p>M4(1) - visitable dwelling Access and use</p> <p>M4(1) Reasonable provision should be made for people to -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) gain access to; and (b) use, the dwelling and its facilities 	<p>Requirement M4(1) does not apply to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) an extension to a dwelling; or (b) any part of a building that is used solely to enable the building or any service or fitting in the building to be inspected, repaired or maintained
Requirement	Limits on application
<p>M4(2) optional requirement Part M access to and use of buildings Category 2 - accessible and adaptable dwellings</p> <p>(1) Reasonable provision must be made for people to –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) gain access to, and (b) use the dwelling and its facilities. <p>(2) The provision made must be sufficient to –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) meet the needs of occupants with differing needs, including some older or disabled people; and (b) to allow adaptation of the dwelling to meet the changing needs of occupants over time 	<p>Optional requirement M4(2) –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) may apply only in relation to a dwelling that is erected; (b) will apply in substitution for requirement M4(1); (c) does not apply where optional requirement M4(3) applies; (d) Does not apply to any part of a building that is used solely to enable the building or any service or fitting in the building to be inspected, repaired or maintained.
Requirement	Limits on application
<p>M4(3) optional requirement Part M access to and use of buildings Category 3 – Wheelchair user dwellings M4(3) Optional requirement</p> <p>(1) Reasonable provision must be made for people to –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) gain access to, and (b) use the dwelling and its facilities <p>(2) The provision made must be sufficient to–</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) allow simple adaptation of the dwelling to meet the needs of occupants who use wheelchairs; or (b) meet the needs of occupants who use wheelchairs. 	<p>Optional requirement M4(3) –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) may apply only in relation to a dwelling that is erected; (b) will apply in substitution for requirement M4(1); (c) does not apply where optional requirement M4(2) applies; (d) does not apply to any part of a building that is used solely to enable the building or any service or fitting in the building to be inspected, repaired or maintained <p>Optional requirement M4(3) (2)(b) applies only where the planning permission under which the building work is carried out specifies that it shall be complied with.</p>

Appendix 2 Results of North Tyneside Council's survey on the internal space of new homes

Number of Bedrooms/People	Flats			Houses															
	1b 2p	2b 3p	Total Flats	2b 3p	2b 4p	Total 2 bed	3b 5p	3b 6p	Total 3 bed	4b 5p	4b 6p	4b 7p	4b 8p	5b 7p	5b 8p	5b 9p	5b 10p	Total 4+ bed	Total
Number Surveyed	20	67	87	6	46	52	119	12	131	2	22	36	50	2	10	4	1	127	310
Average internal floor space (m ²)	61	63	62	71	72	72	88	94	88	107	122	119	133	149	169	163	151	131	103
Average % above/below the NDSS	21%	3%	7%	1%	-9%	-8%	-6%	-12%	-7%	10%	13%	1%	7%	23%	30%	27%	22%	9%	0%