



District of Easington
local plan

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Adopted December 2001
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Local Plan 2001 - 2006

Adopted December 2001

District of **easington.**



Lapsed Policy Schedule October 2007

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Lapsed Settlement Policies

Blackhall

B1	Proposals for Hesleden Road site
B2	Other landscaping works
B4	Land north of B1281
B5	Land north of Hesleden Road
B6	Land north of Glenholme Terrace
B7	Proposals for off street parking
B9	Formal recreation facilities
B10	Open space/play areas

Castle Eden

C3	Landscaping works
C4	Site of Castle Eden Golf Club
C5	Sub-division of large grounds of existing houses
C6	Land adjacent to Ivy Cottage
C7	Conversion of the Castle for residential use
C8	Provision of a post office

Dalton-le-dale

D1	Land south of Dene Road
D2	Land opposite Dalton Bridge
D3	Control of development
D4	Land east of South Farm

Easington

E1	Village Green
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- E2 Other landscaping proposals in the village
- E3 Easington Colliery reclamation scheme
- E5 Upgrading of the shopping centre
- E6 Small scale improvements on Council owned land
- E7 Small scale improvements on non-Council owned land
- E9 Housing Renewal Initiative
- E10 Land south of Seaside Lane
- E12 Land east of Wordsworth Road
- E14 Formal recreation facilities
- E15 Children's play space/informal play space

Haswell

- Ha1 Land adjacent to Front Street
- Ha2 Land north of the Abattoir
- Ha4 South side of Church Street
- Ha5 Other environmental improvements
- Ha6 South side of Chapel Lane
- Ha7 Former Railway Cottages
- Ha8 Infill plots on Front Street
- Ha9 West of Blossomfield Estate
- Ha10 East of George Street
- Ha11 West of Plough Farm, Haswell Plough
- Ha12 North of Chapel Lane
- Ha13 Children's play space/amenity open space

Hawthorn

- Hw1 Protection of undeveloped areas
- Hw2 Landscaping works
- Hw3 Conversion of buildings at West Farm
- Hw4 Land adjacent to West farm
- Hw5 Former RAF camp
- Hw6 Infill site
- Hw7 Informal recreation areas

Hesledon

- He1 Landscaping Works
- He2 Land east of Station Road
- He3 Safeguarding land west of Station Road for informal recreation
- He4 Land east of Gray Avenue

High Hesleden

- Hi1 East of South View
- Hi2 Safeguarding land south of Dene View
- Hi3 Landscaping land south of Dene View

Horden

Ho1	Priority areas for environmental improvement
Ho2	Former Blackhills Road school site
Ho3	Landscaping works on Council owned land
Ho4	Landscaping works on non-Council owned land
Ho8	Off-street parking
Ho9	Sites for sport and recreation
Ho10	Site for children's play space/amenity open space

Hutton Henry

Hu1	South side of Hutton Crescent
Hu2	Land between Hill View and Church Hall
Hu3	Protection of land east of Bow Cottage from development

Murton

M1	Landscaping works on Council owned land
M2	Landscaping works on non-Council owned land
M3	Safeguarding land around war memorial
M4	Allocation of Dalton Flatts site for industrial use
M5	Former Rex Cinema site
M6	Former Bus Depot site
M8	Thomas Brothers site
M9	Off-street parking schemes
M10	Safeguarding recreational fields
M11	Safeguarding children's play space/amenity open space

Peterlee

P1	Safeguarding of open areas from development
P2	Environmental improvements in housing areas
P3	Landscaping works on Council owned land
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P5	Sites for Council housing
P8	Former ITEC site
P10	Cleared housing sites
P11	Off-street parking schemes
P12	North side of Lowhills Road
P13	Open space/play areas
P16	Land south of St. Cuthbert's Road

Seaham

S1	Relocation of land based activities of the Port
S2	Reinstatement of George Street - Dawdon Colliery Railway Line
S3	Coastal defences
S4	Dawdon housing improvements
S5	Deneside Estate Action Initiative

S6	Parkside Estate Improvement Initiative
S8	Vane Tempest colliery site
S10	West of Foundry Road
S11	Former St Mary Magdalenes School site
S12	South of Robert Square
S13	Ropery Walk
S14	Dawdon-Seaham Town Centre Link Road
S15	Off-street parking schemes
S18	Traffic management and bus services
S19	Seaham Conservation Area
S20	Small landscaping schemes
S21	Safeguarding the denes
S22	Seaham Hall and Grounds
S23	Land east of Seaham Hall
S24	Safeguarding formal recreation facilities
S25	Safeguarding open space/play areas
S26	Recreational footpaths
S27	Promenade scheme
S29	Land north west of New Strangford Road roundabout
S30	Uses for former Londonderry Offices

Seaton

St1	Safeguarding of open areas
St2	North of Seaton Lane
St3	East of Hillrise Crescent
St4	Play area east of Hillrise Crescent

Shotton

Sh1	Landscaping on Council owned land
Sh2	Landscaping on non-Council owned land
Sh9	Safeguarding formal recreation facilities
Sh10	Safeguarding children's play space/amenity open space
Sh11	Extension for Comrades Club

South Hetton

So1	Safeguarding of land east of Windsor Drive
So2	Environmental improvements on Council owned land
So3	Environmental improvements on non-Council owned land
So4	South of Fallowfield Terrace
So6	Primary School site
So8	Safeguarding of the Welfare Ground
So9	Safeguarding of children's play space/amenity open space

Thornley

Th1	Landscaping of Council owned sites
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Th2	Landscaping of non-Council owned sites
Th3	Showman's Compound site
Th6	Thornley House
Th7	Off-street parking scheme
Th8	Safeguarding of children's play space/amenity open space
Th9	Proposed children's play area
Th10	Proposed community/resource centre

Trimdon

Tr1	Improvement scheme at Luke Street, Rodwell Street, Windsor Street
Tr2	Landscaping on Council owned land
Tr3	Landscaping on non-Council owned land
Tr4	Small housing sites Transport
Tr5	Off-street parking schemes
Tr6	Safeguarding of the recreation ground

Wheatley Hill

Wh1	Landscaping on Council owned land
Wh2	Landscaping on non-Council owned land
Wh3	Housing/environmental improvement scheme
Wh5	Cleared site, Thornley Road
Wh6	Quilstyle Road
Wh7	Former Scrapyard
Wh8	Off-street parking schemes
Wh9	Safeguarding recreation ground
Wh10	Safeguarding open space

Wingate

Wi1	Alternative uses for former Methodist Chapel
Wi2	Landscaping on Council owned land
Wi3	Landscaping on non-Council owned land
Wi4	South of Moor Lane
Wi6	Land opposite Ridgeway House
Wi7	Land at Watson's Windows premises
Wi8	Land east of Front Street
Wi9	Small housing sites
Wi10	Safeguarding of AJ Dawson playing fields
Wi12	Safeguarding of Welfare Park
Wi13	Safeguarding of other recreation/play areas



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Preface

On the 25 August 1983 Easington District Council adopted the Easington District Local Plan with the purpose of guiding the development and other use of land within the whole administrative area of Easington District until 1986.

The Council has now prepared a new District Local Plan to provide an up-to-date planning policy framework relevant to the needs of its residents. The new Plan, to be known as the Easington District Local Plan, will cover the period to the year 2006.

In July 1993 the Council published a Consultation Draft Plan to obtain the views and input of a wide range of public and private sector organisations, neighbouring local authorities and the general public. The District Council carefully considered all the comments made at this stage together with changes in Government planning guidance and local circumstances, and published the Local Plan Review Deposit Draft Plan in February, 1998.

Further consultations were carried out in respect of this document, resulting in some 135 changes to the proposed plan being published in December 1998, themselves the subject of a consultation exercise in the early part of 1999, eliciting 2479 representations, 478 opposing a Proposed Change, with 2001 in favour.

An Inquiry into the objections to the Local plan Review was held at Shotton Hall, Peterlee, between mid-April and mid-November 1999.

The Inspector's Report of that Inquiry was received by the Council in July, 2000. As a result, modifications, and then further modifications to the proposed plan, were made in 2001, all of which were subject to public consultation. This document is the outcome of that process. The Council agreed the content of the Plan at an extraordinary meeting held on 20th November 2001, and the Plan was formally adopted on 29th December 2001, following a 28 day notice period.

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Introduction

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- 1.1** Easington District, on the north-east coast of England, is the second smallest district in County Durham, occupying an area of 56 square miles (145 square kilometres) (see Plan 1). On 1 April 1985, the District Council boundary was revised to include an area, north of Wheatley Hill, previously in Durham City. Despite its size, relative to other districts in the County, Easington District has the largest population; 97,800 in 1991. The A19 trunk road forms the main route through the District linking it to Tyneside and Wearside in the north and the Teesside conurbation in the south. The District comprises a mixture of urban and rural areas with two main towns, Seaham and Peterlee, and a number of former colliery and rural villages.



Purpose of the plan

- 1.2** The Easington District Local Plan is a statutory local plan covering the whole administrative area of Easington District Council. It is prepared under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Planning and Compensation Act 1991 and all the policies that it contains must be capable of implementation under these Acts.
- 1.3** The Local Plan has four main functions:
- (i) to apply the broad policies and proposals of the Structure Plan to the particular local requirements of the District relating them to precise areas of land;
 - (ii) to provide a detailed basis for the determination of planning applications;
 - (iii) to provide a detailed basis for co-ordinating the development and other use of land by public bodies, private organisations and individuals;
 - (iv) to bring local and detailed planning issues before the public.
- 1.4** The Local Plan is intended to cover the period up to the end of 2006 but it will be continually monitored and a review will be published. Further details on how the Plan will be monitored are contained in Part Four of the Plan.

Development plan

- 1.5** The Local Plan is just one part of the statutory development plan for the Easington District. For most people who come into contact with the planning process, and for most issues involving planning in Easington District, the Local Plan will be the most relevant part of the statutory development plan.

- 1.6 The other parts of the development plan take a view of the whole county and are consequently prepared by Durham County Council. They include;

Durham County Structure Plan

Structure plans provide the broad strategic framework for planning. The County Durham Structure Plan was adopted in March, 1999, and sets out the strategic planning policies that will guide the future development and use of land within County Durham up to the year 2006. The policies and proposals replace those set out in the first Durham County Structure Plan approved by the Secretary of State for the Environment in 1981 and subsequent alterations approved in 1989 which provided the strategic planning framework for the period up to 1996. The Local Plan is required to be in general conformity with the Structure Plan. Following the initial issuing of a 'Certificate of Non-Conformity' by the County Council, modifications have been made in response and the Plan is now accepted as being in conformity with the Structure Plan.

Durham County Minerals Local Plan

The County Durham Minerals Local Plan sets out the detailed local planning policies and proposals that will guide future mineral development within County Durham. Adopted in November, 2000, it provides the framework for minerals planning throughout the County in the period to 2006.

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County Durham Waste Disposal Local Plan

The County Council adopted the County Durham Waste Disposal Plan in 1984. It relates to the disposal of household, commercial and industrial waste and specifies areas to be used for tipping. A review of the plan is currently underway. When adopted, it will provide the framework for waste planning to 2016.

- 1.7 Should there be any subsequent conflict between the provisions of the Durham County Structure Plan and the Easington District Local Plan, those of the Local Plan would take precedence. In the event of any conflict between the provisions of the District Local Plan and the Minerals and Waste Local Plans, the most recently adopted plan will prevail.

Relationship with other plans and District Council policies

- 1.8 The Local Plan is primarily a land use plan. Its scope is limited to actions and proposals that are capable of implementation according to town planning legislation. The Plan cannot, therefore, address other economic and social issues that may be the subject of other plans and/or Council policies. Only where these other issues relate directly to the development of and use of land have they been included in the Local Plan.

Consultation

- 1.9 The Easington District Local Plan was approved by Easington District Council as a Draft for Consultation in April, 1993. An extensive consultation exercise was undertaken over the summer months involving statutory consultees, interest and community groups and members of the general public. Over 1,700 specific comments were received from 250 organisations and individuals. All comments received have been considered by the Council. In accordance with Government Regulations the Council has published a separate statement of public consultation which gives more detail on those consulted, the activities undertaken to publicise the Plan and the responses received.

Changes to the Plan

- 1.10 As a consequence of the comments received during the consultation exercise a range of amendments were made to the Plan. Following the first deposit of the Plan, between 16th March 1998 and 27th April 1998, substantial further changes were made. The Local Plan Inquiry was held between 20th April and 23rd November 1999, and the Inspector's Report, dated June, 2000, made a number of far reaching recommendations. These were considered and acted upon by the Council, which published Proposed Modifications to the Plan in June 2001. Proposed further modifications were also published in October, 2001. Cumulative amendments which have been made since the production of the original consultation draft include:

- deletion of the proposal for a new prestige industrial estate at Dalton Hill;

- deletion of the list of farm buildings which were identified for facelifts/environmental improvements;
- the policy to allocate the land east of George Street, Haswell for industrial purposes has been deleted and replaced with a housing allocation;
- the proposed housing sites north of Lowhills Road, Peterlee; at the former Thorpe Hospital site, near Easington; at North Farm, Murton; North of Burnhope Way, Peterlee; east of Seaham Hall and south of Ravensworth Court, South Hetton; and various sites in Castle Eden have been deleted;
- the proposed industrial estate at Hartlepool Street, Thornley has been deleted and allocated instead for housing;
- the revision of the shopping policy to reflect fully Government policy;
- the allocation of a Strategic Reserve Industrial Site south of the A19(T) - Dawdon Link Road.

1.11 The changes have also included the restructuring of the Plan and a reshaping of the environment chapter to clarify the Council's approach to environmental issues. Furthermore, a number of Planning Policy Guidance Notes have been published and the County Durham Structure Plan has been adopted. Changes have been made to reflect the content of these documents. New policies have been introduced on green belts, wildlife corridors and renewable energy, whilst retail policies have been revised, as mentioned. A significant number of new housing sites have also been allocated in the plan and changes have been made to the industrial estate policy regime to reflect Enterprise Zone status for a number of the estates in the District. A number of new regeneration initiatives have started/are programmed including the Seaham Regeneration Strategy and the programme of Settlement Renewal Initiatives.

1.12 The opportunity has also been taken to improve the wording of the Written Statement in the light of comments and experience.

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Stage of the Plan

1.13 The Local Plan was formally adopted by the Council on 28th December 2001.

Departures from the adopted Plan

1.14 If, subsequent to the Plan being adopted, the local planning authority proposes to approve proposals for development which would, in its opinion, materially conflict with or prejudice the implementation of the Plan, this intention will be advertised locally (unless it has previously been advertised) and any objection lodged as a result taken into account before the application is determined. In the case of significant departures from the Plan, the Secretary of State must be notified so that he can decide whether to call in the application for his own decision.

How to use the Plan

1.15 The Plan consists of a Written Statement (the text) and Proposals Map (a series of maps for each of the settlements and one for the whole district). The Written Statement sets out all the policies and the proposals of the Plan and the reasons behind them, and the Proposals Map illustrates all of them on an Ordnance Survey map base.

1.16 The Written Statement is divided into four parts:

Part 1 This is the introduction to the Plan which sets out the issues and problems to be considered, the relationship of the Plan to other plans and policies and the aims, objectives and strategies which it seeks to implement.

Part 2 This part consists of seven 'topic' chapters e.g. general principles of development, environment, employment, housing, etc., which consider and expand the aims, objectives and strategies, relative to each particular topic, and provide general policies for the District as a whole.

Part 3 This part of the Plan consists of separate chapters for each town and village in the District. Here, the specific local problems of each settlement are considered and detailed site specific policies are put forward. The settlements are defined by the delineation of a

settlement boundary which has been drawn to take account of future development needs whilst respecting environmental features and infrastructure constraints.

- Part 4** Implementation considers the financial implications of the Plan and the ways in which the proposals may be achieved.
- 1.17** The most important parts of the Local Plan, the policies and proposals, are distinguished in **shaded areas** throughout the Plan. Each policy and proposal is identified by a specific reference; those in the topic chapters are given a number and those in the settlement chapters are given a number which is prefixed with a letter(s) relating to the particular settlement e.g. Policy P10 is a Peterlee policy whereas Policy Hw2 relates to Hawthorn.
- 1.18** Each policy and proposal is preceded by explanatory text which provides the reasoned justification for whatever is being put forward.
- 1.19** A list of policies and proposals appears at the beginning of the topic chapters and each settlement chapter.
- 1.20** Where applicable, there is also a separate explanation as to how development proposals and policies will be put into practice under the heading of 'Implementation'. Development control policies, which will guide and control the development and use of land and will assist the Council in making decisions on planning applications, do not have any implementation explanation as they will all be put into practice through the determination of planning applications.
- 1.21** The Proposals Map identifies the precise areas of land affected by the policies and proposals. Due to the geography of the District the Proposals Map actually comprises a series of maps: a district-wide map, in the wallet at the back of the document, defines the areas to which policies and proposals apply outside the defined settlement boundaries of all the towns and villages in the District. Each town or village has its own inset plan, contained in the main body of the Plan at the back of the relevant settlement chapter, which defines the areas to which policies and proposals apply within the particular defined settlement boundary for that town or village.
- 1.22** To use the District Local Plan effectively, it is suggested that if general information regarding the Council's attitude towards particular types of development is sought, it is useful to refer initially to the appropriate section in the Written Statement. If information about any planning proposals or policies relating to a particular site is sought, reference should be made to the appropriate part of the Proposals Map, either at the back of the document (for sites outside the District's settlements), or at the end of the appropriate settlement chapter (for sites within a particular settlement). It is advisable, however, to consult the Plan as a whole.

Plan Issues

Planning policy context

- 1.23** The Easington District Local Plan has not been prepared in isolation but within the context of a broad framework that embraces global, national, regional and county levels of policy and decision making. These are highlighted below:

Global perspective

- 1.24** With the increasing realisation and awareness that many global environmental problems have their roots in the habits and lifestyles of people in local communities, local authorities must now have regard to issues that have a global perspective. The Agenda 21 action plan, agreed by Member States at the 1992 UNCED Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro identified local authorities as key players in promoting sustainable development, and following on from this, sustainability has been made an objective of the planning system. This is further supported, at an international level of policy making, by the European Union's Fifth Action Programme on the Environment 'Towards Sustainability'. A Local Agenda 21 Action Plan has been prepared for County Durham, by the County Council, seven District Councils and other bodies, to promote sustainable development at a local level.

- 1.25** Environmental sustainability is the central principle of these global initiatives. In practical terms key themes emerge from this where local land use planning can have a role such as the planning of settlements for sustainability, the reduction of the need to travel, the promotion of alternative, sustainable modes of transport and the reduction in energy consumption, and the Council has taken due regard to this in the preparation of the Local Plan.

National planning policy guidance

- 1.26** The Government has issued national planning guidance in the form of a series of Planning Policy Guidance notes (PPG's). These give general advice on the location and form of new development and specific issues including green belts, housing, industrial and commercial development, simplified planning zones, town centres and retail development, the countryside, environmental quality and economic and social development, telecommunications, development plans and regional planning guidance, transport, unstable land, historic buildings and conservation areas, archaeology, sport and recreation, enforcing planning control, outdoor advertisement control, coastal planning, tourism, renewable energy, planning and noise, nature conservation and planning and pollution control. The relevant PPG's have been considered in the preparation of each of the topic and settlement chapters.
Regional Planning Guidance
- 1.27** In accordance with the Planning and Compensation Act 1991, the Government has issued regional planning guidance (RPG) for the whole of the country. The primary function of this is to provide the framework for the preparation of structure plans. In September 1993, the Secretary of State for the Environment issued Regional Planning Guidance for the Northern Region excluding Tyne and Wear (RPG7). Where appropriate the RPG has been considered in the preparation of each of the chapters. New RPG for the whole of the Region is currently being prepared, and is expected to be issued subsequent to the adoption of the Local Plan.

Structure Plan

- 1.28** The Structure Plan provides the broad guidance for development in the County within which local plans, such as the Easington District Local Plan, are being prepared to interpret and expand its policies at a local level.
- 1.29** An approved Structure Plan is in place, although the review process has commenced in respect of urban housing capacity and car parking standards. A summary of the Structure Plan strategies, contained within the approved and deposit structure plans, so far as they affect Easington District, is given below.

Approved Structure Plan Strategy

- 1.30** The main aim of the Structure Plan, is to generate and provide for development to meet the social and economic needs of the County's residents in ways which do not compromise the quality of the environment and the quality of life of future generations, in accordance with the principles of sustainability. The Plan is intended to ensure that at least sufficient land is available in the right places for the new houses that will be needed for a stable population.
- 1.31** The second major aim of the Structure Plan is to create for the people of County Durham the best possible opportunities for work, housing, shopping, education and leisure and for meeting social and community needs, including assisting those within the community with particular disadvantages to improve their quality of life. It is expected that most new housing development should be provided in locations well related to the existing form of towns and villages with the infrastructure and physical capability to accommodate it in an environmentally acceptable way, whilst minimising the need for long journeys to jobs, shops, social and recreational facilities.

- 1.32** The third major aim is to improve and protect the built and natural environment of the County. Environmental issues are therefore fundamental to all the policy areas addressed in the Plan.
- 1.33** The strategic approach adopted by the Structure Plan is further refined by breaking the County up into a number of sub-areas, based on groupings of main towns and their transport links, defined on the

basis of shared social, economic and physical characteristics and needs. The sub-areas approximate as far as possible to district administrative boundaries to provide guidance to district local plans. The scale and type of proposed development in each sub-area varies depending on the capacity of the main towns to accommodate new growth. Beyond the towns and larger villages the emphasis on urban regeneration is reinforced by strong policies to protect the countryside, particularly in those areas designated for their intrinsic environmental value.

- 1.34** The Structure Plan emphasises that the main towns in the sub-areas provide the focus for new development and economic growth. East Durham, largely comprising Easington District, suffers from problems of severe economic decline as a result of the cessation of deep mining. Substantial parts of the area are in need of improvement and major investment. The strategy for East Durham is therefore based on comprehensive economic and environmental regeneration, assisted by developing the advantages of the A19 corridor, by Enterprise Zone status and by realising the potential of the coast as a major recreational and environmental asset. The key element is to strengthen and improve the role of the two main towns in providing for employment, housing, shopping and social facilities. The Structure Plan also notes that, if Peterlee is to maintain its existing population level during the period of the Plan, it will be necessary to expand the town. Hence the Easington District Local Plan will need to examine and make detailed proposals for the future physical framework of Peterlee. Improvements to the town centres of both Peterlee and Seaham, and the redevelopment of former colliery sites in the latter are a priority, as well as the servicing of the new employment sites associated with the Dawdon-A19 link road. An area of Green Belt is designated to the north and north west of Seaham to maintain separation from the Tyne and Wear conurbation.
- 1.35** The strategy also seeks to ensure that sufficient land for housing is available to maintain a stable county population of about 496,600 by 2006. If this population stability is to be achieved, then out-migration will need to be stemmed. In Easington District, the Structure Plan calculates that provision for about 2,700 dwellings will be needed between 1991 and 2006 to meet the population estimate of 98,000. It considers that most of these dwellings should be within or well related to the main towns. Elsewhere, provision for housing development should be made consistent with the scale and function of villages served by public transport and with a reasonable range of services and facilities.
- 1.36** Other elements of the Structure Plan which are relevant to Easington include protection of the countryside from development; the regeneration of Seaham; improving road and rail links; encouraging recreation, leisure and tourism developments; and the identification of part of the District as a strategic wind resource area for the purposes of considering wind energy proposals.
- 1.37** The County Council is undertaking a review of its Structure Plan in relation to estimating urban housing capacity, and preparing new car parking standards.
- 1.38** This review is primarily a result of new government requirements following the introduction of the 'plan, monitor and manage' approach to determining housing land allocations, and the increased emphasis on sustainability in transport.



Regenerating Seaham - promoting tourism and leisure

- 1.39** The revised car parking standards will be based upon the advice given in PPG 3 and 13, and are expected to be adopted towards the end of 2001/early 2002. Once adopted, the revised parking standards will be incorporated into the Local Plan as supplementary planning guidance.

Major Local Issues

Population change

- 1.40** The population of the District has been falling since the 1960's: from a resident population of around 110,000 in 1971 the number of people living in the District has fallen to about 98,000 in 1991. In the light of the regeneration initiatives being undertaken in the district the Structure Plan estimates that the population will stabilise at around 98,000 by the year 2006.



Providing jobs, shops and other facilities

- 1.41** Seaham and Peterlee have an important role to play in providing the widest range of jobs, shops, community and other facilities within the District, yet the population of Seaham fell by 10% between 1971 and 1991 and even Peterlee grew by only 3% over the same period. Outside Seaham and Peterlee, no settlement in the District has a population of over 10,000. Consequently maintaining the viability of the smaller communities has become increasingly difficult as these have suffered the most severe population losses. Strong community relationships exist and many residents retain a close affinity with their villages. Whilst Peterlee and Seaham should continue to be the foci for housing development, the regeneration of the villages should also be assisted by the provision of new homes in appropriate locations.

Level of unemployment

- 1.42** Unemployment levels in the District have risen since the early 1970's to a peak of 7,024 in late 1986 when approximately 22% of the workforce were unemployed compared with a national rate of 11.9%. Although official unemployment levels have since declined unemployment is still an acute problem owing to the complete demise of the coal mining industry in the area. Due to changes in the method of calculating the number of people officially out of work there is a high level of hidden unemployment, as revealed in the 1991 Census. Consequently, the real level of unemployment is much greater than official statistics show. The situation is compounded by the fact that adjacent areas suffer similarly high levels of unemployment. The scale of the unemployment problem in the District cannot, therefore, be over-emphasised.

Housing need and the housing environment

- 1.43** With a trend of fewer people living together to form a household, the number of households requiring accommodation has actually increased in recent years, despite the general decline in the overall level of population. This trend is likely to continue during the Plan period with the result that a significant number of new dwellings will need to be built. It also means that housing suited to the accommodation of smaller households will be required over the Plan period. There is also a need to provide special purpose accommodation for disabled people.
- 1.44** With regard to the quality of the housing environment there are a number of areas where comprehensive housing renewal is required. As of 1 April 1998, there were some 8500 Council owned dwellings requiring renovation (ranging from minor works to substantial improvement). In addition, 6300 dwellings in the District are classified as unfit under the Housing Act 1985. Roughly, 2500 of those unfit dwellings are owned by the Council while the remaining 3800 are in private ownership. It is expected that 1200 unfit dwellings will be demolished over the Plan. In addition, current programmes allow for the improvement of 3515 unfit dwellings. In total, almost 70% of the unfit housing stock will be subject to remedial action during the Plan period.

Local environmental quality

- 1.45** Eight out of eleven miles of the Durham Coast has been severely disfigured by the tipping of colliery waste and the disposal of raw sewage. These are now largely historical problems and efforts are required to restore and enhance the coast which, together with the associated dunes and cliffs, is a significant national environmental resource. The District Council, together with the County Council, the National Trust, the Countryside Commission and other partners, are currently undertaking an initiative entitled "Turning

The Tide" comprising a comprehensive programme of environmental and recreation schemes including the coastal part of the district, funded by money from a range of sources including the Millennium Commission. The District also possesses other areas of high quality natural and built environment, which warrant safeguarding, enhancing and managing.

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- 1.46** Although much has been done in recent years to improve the appearance and the image of the District's former colliery settlements they still retain an outworn industrial character. Regeneration initiatives are required to tackle the run-down appearance and nature of these urban areas. In addition, the urban fringes and the principal traffic routes of many of the towns and villages in the District are in need of environmental improvement.

Shortage of finance

- 1.47** To address these issues requires substantial expenditure but District Council finance has been severely cut-back by central government over the past decade and this situation may not improve over the Plan period. This means that not all proposals capable of implementation by the Council will proceed and priorities will, therefore, have to be established. Since the amount of public expenditure is likely to be limited, the Council will continue to seek to develop partnerships with other agencies, including the private sector.

Other Local Issues

Transport infrastructure and accessibility

- 1.48** To assist with the economic regeneration of the District there is a need to improve communications to other parts of the County and the national transport network. There is also a need to tackle the environmental disturbance experienced in the central areas of a number of settlements, particularly Seaham and Murton, caused by the passage of heavy industrial traffic.
- 1.49** The car ownership rate in the District is the lowest in the County (1991 Census) with approximately 47% of households without the use of a car. To ensure that developments are accessible to all sectors of the local community it is important that they are located where they can be easily reached. Public transport provision and public transport facilities need to be enhanced to improve the bus and rail service in the District. Provision also needs to be made for alternative, more sustainable modes of transport such walking and cycling.

Vitality and viability of shopping centres

- 1.50** The majority of shops in the District cater for local needs with residents travelling out of the District, particularly to Sunderland, Hartlepool and the MetroCentre for a large proportion of non-food goods. There is a need to ensure that the viability of existing shopping centres in the District is maintained and enhanced in view of their wider social and community function and their role in the economic regeneration of the area. New retail proposals in the District should seek to complement existing shopping centres.

Art and recreation facilities

- 1.51** Informal outdoor recreational facilities are mainly concentrated in the countryside and along the coast. The recreational potential of the coast has, however, not been fully realised due to the despoliation of much of the foreshore by mining activities. Within many settlements more play areas and open spaces are required although the tight form of housing development limits the scope for additional provision in many cases.
- 1.52** For formal sports, an indoor swimming pool is also needed to serve the north of the District.
- 1.53** There is a need for the development of facilities to cater for the growing artistic and

cultural requirements throughout the District.
Shortfall in social/community facilities

- 1.54** Despite having a population of nearly 100,000 the District has no general hospital facilities. A new health facility has recently been built in Peterlee but this only provides an outpatient service and residents must travel to Hartlepool, Sunderland or Durham for general hospital services. The District also has the lowest provision of general practitioners and dentists of any district in the County.
- 1.55** Community centres need to be provided in several villages while a number of existing facilities require improvement. Local shops also play an important role within some of the District's villages. Given the relatively low levels of car ownership and the need to reduce car journeys in general, the Plan seeks to support the retention of shops and community facilities.

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Waste water treatment

- 1.56** In the past most of the sewage from the District was discharged directly into the sea, with little or no treatment. The sewerage system is currently being upgraded to meet the European Commission's Municipal Waste Water and Bathing Directives and capacity increased to facilitate new development within the northern part of the District. Northumbrian Water has constructed a sewage treatment plant at Dawdon, south of Seaham and is building another facility to the north of Horden to satisfy the requirements of the new directives.

Urban Fringe Farming

- 1.57** The landscape of many parts of the District derives from the superimposition of a coal mining economy and associated development forms on an established agricultural field and settlement pattern. In some places, no particular problems have resulted; in others, farmers face difficulties of trespass and damage to crops and animals. It is important to ensure that these difficulties are recognised as relevant factors in considering the appropriateness of planning proposals in such areas.

Plan Aims

- 1.58** From these issues the District Council has drawn up a number of aims which summarise what the Plan is seeking to achieve and form the basis for the formulation of the Plan's policies and proposals.
1. To address the historical decline in the District's population and to achieve a stable population base.
 2. To maintain Seaham and Peterlee as major centres, so as to provide employment, shopping, community and other facilities for the residents of these centres and the surrounding villages.
 3. To ensure that new development takes place in appropriate locations which minimises the need to travel, makes best use of existing infrastructure and resources, provides support for existing services and facilities, protects the character and appearance of the countryside and contributes to the achievement of more sustainable patterns of development.
 4. To support and improve the vitality of the rural economy.
 5. To further the economic regeneration of the district by ensuring that sufficient development land is available in environmentally acceptable locations that is attractive to investors and able to meet the requirements of industry, shopping, tourism and community developments.
 6. To provide an adequate supply of suitable housing land in environmentally acceptable locations, which is capable of offering a range of house types, to meet all needs.
 7. To seek the improvement of the existing housing stock and the housing environment.
 8. To improve the appearance of the District and the quality of the local environment through a programme of settlement renewal projects, environmental improvement

initiatives and the reclamation of unused/derelict land.

9. To improve the appearance and amenity of the coast by reclaiming the beaches in an environmentally acceptable manner and by seeking to secure a more satisfactory means of sewage disposal.
10. To seek the upgrading of the District's sewerage system and other public utility services.
11. To protect and, where appropriate, enhance the unspoiled and attractive features of the District in relation to areas and buildings of historic interest, landscape, landform, wildlife and geological features.
12. To ensure that all new development is in appropriate locations and is of a high standard, particularly in terms of layout and landscaping.
13. To seek the further development of the road network in the District to improve communications and to reduce the environmental impact of heavy traffic within settlements.
14. To seek the provision of facilities for and to encourage the use of public transport and other environmentally sustainable forms of transport.
15. To safeguard, maintain and enhance sport, recreational, arts and cultural facilities.
16. To promote the growth of environmentally sustainable forms of tourism.
17. To protect the existing rights of way network and promote improved access to the countryside.
18. To support, maintain and improve existing shopping centres.
19. To enhance the economic, environmental, community, health and social conditions of the District.

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Plan Strategy

1.59 The regeneration of the District is the main aim that has been adopted by the Council in the preparation of the Local Plan. Regeneration, however, can only be achieved within the environmental framework of the District. The environment is a finite and non-renewable resource, and regeneration through development which is sustainable must be sought to ensure that the ability of future generations to meet their own needs and aspirations is not prejudiced. The maintenance and enhancement of the environment is essential to the achievement of economic regeneration and the attraction of inward investment. This premise is fundamental to the Plan and provides a framework for the development of a number of strategies in order to achieve its purpose.

Environmental Strategy

- 1.60** To protect, maintain and, where appropriate, enhance the natural and built environment of the District whilst reducing the consumption of energy and non-renewable resources. In order to achieve this, provision is made for:
- E1.** The protection and enhancement of designated listed buildings, conservation areas, areas of high landscape value, national, regional and locally important areas of archaeological interest, candidate or designated Special Areas of Conservation, potential or classified Special Protection Areas for Birds, Ramsar sites, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Regionally Important Geological/ Geomorphological Sites, Sites of Nature Conservation Importance including Ancient Woodlands, local and national nature reserves and the open countryside.
 - E2.** The improvement of the appearance of the District's towns and villages, the Durham coastline, the reclamation of derelict and vacant land to a more beneficial use and the improvement of the urban fringe and the countryside, including habitat creation and appropriate management to enhance and increase the nature conservation resource and to enhance the quality of life of all members of the community.
 - E3.** Ensuring that the design and appearance of new development is of a high standard and

is energy efficient and does not adversely affect the amenity of residents in the vicinity of the surrounding environment, by using existing natural features and through landscape provision.

- E4.** Reducing transport movements and energy requirements by the conservation of energy and non-renewable resources including land, and the development of new sources of renewable energy.



Seaton Holme, Easington Village - listed building

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Spatial Strategy

- 1.61** To direct new investment in the District to areas where the greatest benefit will be achieved through:
- S1.** The location of development where the need to travel is minimised and a contribution towards a more sustainable form of settlement pattern is secured.



Asda, Peterlee - promoting the district's major centres

- S2.** The promotion of the District's major centres of Seaham and Peterlee by guiding major new development to these centres, or to settlements in close proximity.
- S3.** Ensuring that outside of these major centres, development proposals are normally located in villages and are appropriate in scale and character to these settlements and are well related to existing facilities and their landscape setting in order to protect and enhance the character and appearance of the settlements and the countryside.
- S4.** Giving priority to environmental measures in the villages identified for settlement renewal projects, the reclamation of derelict land and improving the appearance, nature conservation value and amenity of the Durham Coast.

Development Strategy

- 1.62** To promote and facilitate development opportunities for employment and industry, housing, shopping /commerce, recreation and tourism in the District by:

- D1.** The retention and growth of existing employment opportunities and economic activity and the provision of an attractive range of industrial sites and premises to assist economic regeneration, the attraction of inward investment, the development of small businesses, the diversification of agriculture and the rural economy and initiatives to enable the creation of a diverse and sustainable economic base.
- D2.** Providing an adequate supply of land for housing consisting of a range of attractive sites for private and public sector development which encourage transport choice and are compatible with environmental strategies.
- D3.** Maintaining and enhancing the attractiveness, diversity, vitality and viability of the District's shopping centres.
- D4.** Enhancing the provision of formal and informal leisure facilities by safeguarding existing facilities and developing new ones.
- D5.** Identifying new opportunities for sustainable tourist development in existing settlements, in the countryside and adjacent to the coast with accessibility by public transport, or by travel by foot and cycle.
- D6.** Promoting the upgrading of the District's sewerage system and other public utility services, in consultation with the relevant statutory undertakers.
- D7.** Promoting the provision, maintenance and enhancement of health, community and social facilities.
- D8.** Promoting mixed use developments in accordance with the principles of sustainability.
- D9.** Encouraging the re-use of rural buildings for new economic uses in support of the rural economy.

Transport Strategy

- 1.63** To improve the level of accessibility for people in the District by:
 - T1.** Facilitating the operation of and encouraging the use of public transport and travel by foot and cycle, and protecting existing public rights of way.
 - T2.** The encouragement of transport investment which assists regeneration, facilitates economic investment, supports existing shopping centres, enhances the environment, assists in encouraging a sustainable development pattern, improves access to public transport and thus reduces reliance on the private car.

- T3.** Seeking improvements to the road network within the District, particularly to the A19(T) and the A181, and the development of new links to the national road network, specifically through links to the west and the A1(M).
- T4.** The encouragement of local schemes to resolve traffic problems in Seaham and Peterlee town centres and to relieve localised problems of heavy traffic.

Environmental considerations and appraisal

- 1.64** The Environment White Paper 'This Common Inheritance' (Cm 1200) published in 1990 makes clear the Government's intention to work towards ensuring that development and growth are sustainable such that the needs of the present generation are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The United Kingdom was one of the first countries in the world to prepare a national Sustainable Development Strategy in 1994. These documents, together with the international action plan 'Agenda 21' and the European Union's Fifth Environmental Action Programme 'Towards Sustainability', state that local authorities will have a key role to play in achieving this purpose and it is considered that the planning system, and the preparation of development plans in particular, can contribute toward this.
- 1.65** The Planning and Compensation Act 1991 requires that development plans should include policies for the conservation of the natural beauty and amenity of the land, and for the improvement of the physical environment. The Town and Country Planning (Development Plan) Regulations 1991 expressly require local authorities to take account of environmental considerations when preparing their development plans and Government guidance, embodied in PPG12, suggests that environmental concerns need to be integrated into policy appraisal in the process of preparing a development plan.

- 1.66** Development plans must make adequate provision for development and at the same time take account of the need to protect the natural and built environment. Development and the environment are inextricably linked as development involves the depletion of natural resources. If needs are to be met on a sustainable basis resources must be conserved or enhanced.
- 1.67** The objective of environmentally sustainable development is reflected in the Local Plan's policies and proposals, based on its aims and strategies, and is not confined to the environment chapter. The application of the Plan's aims and strategies to the plan preparation process has shaped the overall purposes of various policies and proposals and has ensured that regard has been given to environmental considerations throughout. The environmental sustainability of development has also been considered in the widest sense possible: the Council considers that seeking to ensure that development is sustainable at a local level can help to tackle broader environmental issues. The key issues of energy conservation and global warming, highlighted in the White Paper, have both been addressed in the Plan.
- 1.68** In practical terms regard to the principle of environmentally sustainable development involves a number of key policy objectives, which include; seeking to ensure that the need to travel to work, shops, social and leisure facilities is minimised through the location of new development which is well related to existing centres; and facilitating the accessibility of new development to all sectors of the community by seeking to ensure the availability of public transport links and the promotion of alternative modes of environmentally sustainable transport such as cycling and walking. The Plan also seeks to reduce the demands on finite natural resources through policies which encourage the utilisation of renewable sources of energy, the redevelopment or development of sites of derelict or redundant land and the recycling of waste materials. The principles of sustainability and the conservation of biodiversity are also embodied in the established policy framework which seeks to conserve, maintain and, where appropriate, enhance the natural, historic and built environment of the District.
- 1.69** An environmental appraisal statement is published as a separate document to the Deposit Local Plan. Sustainable development can only be achieved by promoting economic and social need within the contexts of environmental considerations. The appraisal assesses how the environment has been taken into account in the formulation of the policies and proposals and defines what might be the impact of the Plan's implementation. The statement is in two parts: a strategy appraisal assesses the compatibility of the Plan's strategies with each other and their cumulative effect on the environment; the scope of the plan is then assessed for consistency with central government policy and other guidance relevant to the environment.



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Summary of policies and proposals

The Topic Chapters

General Principles of Development

1. General Principles of Development

Environment

Protection of the Environment

- ~~2.~~ ~~Renewable Energy~~ - This policy has lapsed
3. Protection of the Countryside
4. Green Belt extension in County Durham
- ~~5.~~ ~~Control over development in the Green Belt~~ - This policy has lapsed
6. Green Wedge between Easington Village and Peterlee
7. Protection of Areas of High Landscape Value
- ~~8.~~ ~~Magnesian limestone grassland~~ - This policy has lapsed
9. Protection of the coastal zone environment
- ~~10.~~ ~~Protection of trees and hedgerows~~ - This policy has lapsed
- ~~11.~~ ~~Tree Preservation Orders~~ - This policy has lapsed
- ~~12.~~ ~~Protection of agricultural land~~ - This policy has lapsed
- ~~13.~~ ~~Protection of watercourses~~ - This policy has lapsed
14. Protection of Special Areas of Conservation.
15. Protection of Sites of Special Scientific Interest, National Nature Reserves and Ancient Woodlands
16. Protection of Sites of Nature Conservation Importance and Local Nature Reserves
17. Identification and protection of wildlife corridors
18. Species and habitat protection
19. Management of areas of Nature Conservation Interest
- ~~20.~~ ~~Protection of archaeological sites~~ - This policy has lapsed
- ~~21.~~ ~~Assessment and protection of areas of archaeological interest~~ - This policy has lapsed
22. Preservation and enhancement of Conservation Areas
- ~~23.~~ ~~Control of Advertisement in Conservation Areas~~ - This policy has lapsed
24. Protection of Listed Buildings
- ~~25.~~ ~~Protection of groundwater supplies~~ - This policy has lapsed
- ~~26.~~ ~~Waste water management~~ - This policy has lapsed

~~27. Control of potentially polluting development~~ - This policy has lapsed

~~28. Development for Public Utilities~~ - This policy has lapsed

Enhancement of the Environment

29. Sites for recycling

~~30. Reclamation of derelict land~~ - This policy has lapsed

~~31. Urban fringe improvements~~ - This policy has lapsed

~~32. Community woodlands~~ - This policy has lapsed

~~33. Designation of local nature reserves~~ - This policy has lapsed

~~34. Allotments and garage sites~~ - This policy has lapsed

Environmental Design

35. Design and layout of development

36. Design for access and the means of travel

37. Design for parking

38. Designing out crime

39. Design for art

40. Control of advertisements

~~41. Control of non-agricultural buildings in the countryside~~ - This policy has lapsed

~~42. Location of noise sensitive development~~ - This policy has lapsed

~~43. Development affected by hazardous substances installations~~ - This policy has lapsed

44. Development on or near landfill sites

45. Development on or near colliery sites

~~46. Development on unstable land~~ - This policy has lapsed

47. Control of unauthorised development

48. Proper maintenance of land and buildings

Industry and Business

Locations for Industry and Business

49. Strategic Reserve Industrial Site

~~50. Former Hawthorn Cokeworks Site~~ - This policy has lapsed

51. Development of small industrial estates

52. Prestige industrial estates

53. Existing general industrial estates

54. Existing small industrial estates

~~55. Office development~~ - This policy has lapsed

Industry and Business in the Countryside

~~56. Agricultural and other economic development in the countryside~~ - This policy has lapsed

~~57. Diversification of the use of agricultural land~~ - This policy has lapsed

~~58. New industrial development in the countryside~~ - This policy has lapsed

~~59. Re-use and adaptation of buildings in the countryside for industry and business~~

~~60. Re-use of dwellings in the countryside~~ - This policy has lapsed

Other Industry and Business Policies

- ~~61. Industrial estate enhancements - This policy has lapsed~~
- 62. Working from home
- 63. Control of taxi businesses

Industry and the Environment

- ~~64. Hazardous substances and associated development - This policy has lapsed~~
- ~~65. Bad neighbour uses - This policy has lapsed~~

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Housing

Housing Land Distribution

- 66. Provision of outdoor playspace
- 67. Windfall housing sites

Housing Development in the Countryside

- ~~68. Housing development in the countryside - This policy has lapsed~~
- ~~69. Rural workers dwellings - This policy has lapsed~~
- ~~70. Re-use and adaptation of buildings in the countryside for residential use - This policy has lapsed~~

Other Housing Development

- 71. Rest homes, nursing homes, and sheltered accommodation
- 72. Control of sites for travellers

Housing Improvement

- 73. Extensions and/or alterations to dwellinghouses

Transport and Communications

Sustainable Transport

- 74. Footpaths and other public rights of way
- 75. Provision for cyclists and pedestrians
- ~~76. New cycleways and walkways - This policy has lapsed~~

Public Transport

- 77. Public transport services
- ~~78. Safeguarding of land for Link Road - This policy has lapsed~~

Roads and Traffic

- 79. Access onto the A19(T)
- 80. A19 Service Station
- 81. Movement of freight

Other Communications

- ~~82. Control of large telecommunication developments - This policy has lapsed~~
- ~~83. Control of satellite dishes - This policy has lapsed~~

Recreation, Community Facilities and Tourism

Coastal and Countryside Recreation

- 84. Undeveloped coast
- 85. Crimdon
- ~~86. Countryside recreation - This policy has lapsed~~
- ~~87. Coastal footpath - This policy has lapsed~~

Urban Recreation and Community Facilities

- 88. Swimming pool in the northern part of the District
- 89. Development of new or improved leisure and community buildings
- 90. Protection and provision of outdoor sports facilities
- 91. Protection of children's play space
- 92. Protection of amenity open space
- 93. Facilities for the arts
- 94. Provision of new or improved education facilities on existing sites
- 95. Provision of health facilities
- 96. Protection of community facilities

Tourism

- ~~97. Accommodation for visitors - This policy has lapsed~~
- ~~98. Caravan, camping and chalet sites - This policy has lapsed~~
- ~~99. Redevelopment of caravan sites - This policy has lapsed~~
- ~~100. Static caravans, chalet and other self-catering accommodation occupancy - This policy has lapsed~~

Shopping

Town and Local Shopping Centres

- 101. Protection and promotion of town centres
- 102. Local and neighbourhood shopping centres
- ~~103. Local shops - This policy has lapsed~~

Out-of-Centre Retail Development

- 104. Major out-of-centre retail development
- 105. Retailing on industrial estates
- 106. Garden centres
- ~~107. Farm shops - This policy has lapsed~~
- 108. Petrol filling stations

Other Retail Development

- 109. Shop front design
- 110. Security shutters and roller grilles
- 111. Hot food takeaways
- ~~112. Non-retail uses - This policy has lapsed~~
- 113. Markets
- ~~114. Office and local services - This policy has lapsed~~

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General principles of development

Summary of policies

1. [Footpaths and other public rights of way](#)
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- 2.1** Development plans, comprising structure plans and local plans, now lie at the heart of the planning system and planning decisions must be taken in accordance with these documents unless material considerations dictate otherwise. The Council will, therefore, have due regard to the policies contained within the Easington District Local Plan and the Durham County Structure Plan in the consideration and determination of planning applications. There may, however, be occasions where the Council will permit development which departs from adopted planning policy when the benefit of that proposal is so significant that it outweighs development plan considerations.
- 2.2** To satisfy the aims of the Local Plan the Council will consistently apply those general planning principles embodied within the requirements of policy 1. These policy requirements provide a basic framework of guidance over the complete range of planning issues and, therefore, embrace all types of development. The Council will consider whether proposed development would accord with the principles of sustainable development by virtue of its effects on the need to travel by car, its accessibility to alternative forms of transport to the car, and its contribution to conserving the district's natural and built environment. It will also consider the benefits of the proposal to the community and the local economy. Developments should be designed in accord with these requirements to ensure that they contribute to the maintenance and enhancement of a good local environment and ultimately a sustainable pattern of development.
- 2.3** New development provides an opportunity to improve the local environment and subsequently enhance the quality of life for residents of the District. A good local environment is an important element in creating the right circumstances for economic restructuring and growth. It is important, however, that development and growth should be sustainable such that it is capable of meeting the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs and aspirations. The Council's overall objective is that the quality of the environment, in its widest sense, should not suffer as a result of development. Where development has some adverse effect on the environment, it is expected that its net effect will be a positive one.
- 2.4** Generally, most developments should be located within the defined settlement boundaries. These boundaries have been drawn around all the settlements of the District to take account of future development needs whilst respecting environmental features and infrastructure constraints. Guiding new development to within existing settlements can help to support the vitality of shops and services, provide employment opportunities close to residential areas, reduce the need to travel and thereby reducing harmful emissions. Where villages have been subject to decline and clearance it can also contribute to the regeneration of the urban fabric as well as serving to encourage the use of derelict or unused urban land and to protect the character and appearance of the countryside, geology, wildlife and natural habitats and agricultural land. There are, however, circumstances where development outside the defined settlement boundaries is both necessary and desirable, to support the maintenance and enhancement of the rural economy. These circumstances are specifically addressed by other policies in the plan.
- 2.5** To assist with the conservation of resources development should be designed with the aim of conserving energy by seeking maximum heat and light gain from solar radiation and by minimising the cooling effects of the wind. Energy efficiency in new development is vital if the demand for non-renewable fossil fuel resources is to be reduced and if individual lifestyles are to become more environmentally sustainable.
- 2.6** To reduce the need for additional car journeys and subsequently reduce the level of carbon

dioxide emissions which contribute towards global warming, new housing, employment, shopping, community and leisure developments should be capable of being served by public transport routes thus ensuring that they are accessible to all sections of the community. Provision should also be made, where appropriate, for safe and direct access for pedestrians and cyclists to facilitate sustainable modes of transport. Travelling by private car is likely to remain significant in modern life and safe and adequate vehicular access will be required in association with most development. Where necessary, adequate parking provision for bicycles and cars will be sought.

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- 2.7** New development that relates well to the local environment and that is in keeping with the character and appearance of the area is to be encouraged. Existing natural and built features of a site such as hedgerows, trees and walls can help to create a sense of place and identity and, where at all possible, their retention and incorporation into the design of all new development will be sought. Where appropriate, the provision of landscaping should be an integral part of any development and development should be sensitive to and respect any wildlife and geological interest in the locality. The creation of new habitats which would enhance wildlife interest will be encouraged. It is also important that wherever possible the best and most versatile agricultural land is protected from development and existing public rights of way are retained. Architectural and historic buildings and structures are part of our cultural heritage and new development should respect any such features of the built environment.
- 2.8** To fulfil the potential of new development, people need to feel secure using it. Attention to the detail of design and layout can help to create a safer environment and thereby assist in the prevention of crime and the promotion of personal safety.
- 2.9** Development should not have a significant detrimental effect on the occupiers of adjoining or nearby properties such that it effects the level of amenity that they can reasonably expect to enjoy. Pollution generating developments can have significant adverse environmental effects to the detriment of the quality of life, public health and the aims of environmental and economic regeneration. Development is only likely to be appropriate where adequate control and treatment of pollutants is possible.

Policy 1

The council will have due regard to the provisions of the development plan in the determination of planning applications and development proposals. Account will be taken of whether the proposal would accord with the principles of sustainable development together with any benefits to the community and the local economy. It will also require the following principles to be applied to the location, design and layout of all new development: -

- (i) A location within the defined settlement boundaries, as shown on the proposals map except where a proposed development in the countryside would be allowed by other policies in the plan (policy 3);
- (ii) To assist with the objective of energy conservation (policy 35);
- (iii) Satisfactory and safe provision for pedestrians, cyclists, public transport, cars and other vehicles (policy 36 and 37);
- (iv) A high standard of design and landscaping which relates well to the natural and built features of the site, the surrounding area and adjacent land uses (policy 35);
- (v) The protection of the best and most versatile agricultural land, existing public rights of way, landscape character, trees, hedgerows, geology, geomorphology, wildlife and natural habitats (policies 7, 10, 11; 14-18);
- (vi) The protection of the built environment of historic and/or architectural value (policies 20-24);
- (vii) To assist with the objective of reducing crime and increasing personal safety through appropriate design and layout (policy 38);

- (viii) To safeguard the visual and general amenity of people living and working within the vicinity of the site (policy 35);
- (ix) The protection of the environment from development that generates Pollutants of water, air or soil (policies 25-27).

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Environment

Summary of policies

Protection of the Environment

- 2 ~~Renewable energy~~ - This policy has lapsed
- 3 [Protection of the countryside](#)
- 4 [GreenBelt extension in County Durham](#)
- 5 ~~Control over Development in the green belt~~ - This policy has lapsed
- 6 [Strategic Gap between Easington Village and Peterlee](#)
- 7 [Protection of Areas of High Landscape Value \(AHLV\)](#)
- 8 ~~Protection of the coastal zone environment~~ - This policy has lapsed
- 9 [Protection of the coastal zone environment](#)
- 10 ~~Protection of trees and hedgerows~~ - This policy has lapsed
- 11 ~~Tree Preservation Orders~~ - This policy has lapsed
- 12 ~~Protection of Agricultural land~~ - This policy has lapsed
- 13 ~~Protection of Watercourses~~ - This policy has lapsed
- 14 [Protection of Special Areas of Conservation](#)
- 15 [Protection of sites of Special Scientific Interest and National Nature Reserves](#)
- 16 [Protection of sites of Nature Conservation Importance, Local Nature Reserves and Ancient Woodlands](#)
- 17 [Identification and protection of Wildlife corridors](#)
- 18 [Species and habitat protection](#)
- 19 [Management of areas of Nature Conservation Interest](#)
- 20 ~~Nationally important sites of Archaeological interest~~ - This policy has lapsed
- 21 ~~Regionally and locally important areas of Archaeological interest~~ - This policy has lapsed

Conservation areas

- 22 [Preservation or enhancement of Conservation areas](#)
- 23 ~~Control of advertisements in Conservation areas~~ - This policy has lapsed
- 24 [Development affecting Listed buildings and their settings](#)
- 25 ~~Protection of Groundwater resources~~ - This policy has lapsed
- 26 ~~Waste water management~~ - This policy has lapsed
- 27 ~~Control of potentially polluting developments~~ - This policy has lapsed
- 28 ~~Development for Public Utilities~~ - This policy has lapsed
- 29 [Enhancement of the Environment Sites for recycling](#)
- 30 ~~Cleaning the beaches~~ - This policy has lapsed
- 31 ~~Urban fringe improvements~~ - This policy has lapsed
- 32 ~~Community woodlands~~ - This policy has lapsed

33 ~~Designation of Local Nature Reserves~~ - This policy has lapsed

34 ~~Allotments and garage sites~~ - This policy has lapsed

Environmental Design

35 [Impact of development](#)

36 [Design for Access and the means of travel](#)

37 [Design for parking](#)

38 [Designing out crime](#)

39 [Design for art](#)

40 [Control of advertisements](#)

41 ~~Control of Non-agricultural buildings in the countryside~~ - This policy has lapsed

42 ~~Location of Noise sensitive development~~ - This policy has lapsed

43 ~~Development affected by Hazardous substances installations~~ - This policy has lapsed

44 [Development on or near Landfill sites](#)

45 [Development on or near Colliery sites](#)

46 ~~Development on Unstable land~~ - This policy has lapsed

47 [Control of Unauthorised development](#)

48 [Proper maintenance of Land and buildings](#)

Introduction

3.1 Protecting the environment in the public interest has always been a central feature of the town and country planning system. The Government's White Paper 'This Common Inheritance' (1990) emphasises the need to take environmental considerations comprehensively and consistently into account in development plans and this is embodied in planning policy guidance.

3.2 The concept of environmentally sustainable development has emerged as a guiding principle in the preparation of development plan policies in order that the best of today's environment is not denied future generations. This is applied throughout the Plan. In practical terms, the policies in the environment chapter seek to ensure that non-renewable resources at both a global and a local level are protected, that the best features of the local environment are safeguarded, that areas of dereliction and poor appearance are improved, and that new development makes a positive net contribution to the quality of the environment of the District.
Protection of the Environment

Renewable energy

3.3 Renewable energy is the term used for those continuous energy flows that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment, from the sun, the wind, the sea, the fall of water and from plants. It also covers the energy that can be derived from different forms of waste material and from within the earth itself. Renewable energy sources present an opportunity to diversify the basis of energy supply and also offer environmental benefits in terms of reduced gaseous emissions, when compared with the burning of fossil fuels as a means of generating power. In particular, renewable energy can play a part in reducing emissions of greenhouse gases (the gases which cause global warming) and, therefore, can contribute towards the protection of the global environment.

3.4 Government guidance, in the form of PPG22, aims to stimulate the development of renewable energy sources wherever they have prospects of being economically attractive and environmentally acceptable and development plans should include policies which support this objective. On the basis of current technology, the potential sources of renewable energy in County Durham include wind power, small scale hydroelectricity schemes, methane gas from landfill sites, biogas (the production of gases from the anaerobic digestion of sewage sludge and farm slurry) and energy from waste combustion.

Wind power has emerged as one of the more promising renewable energy sources in the UK and it is possible that potential may exist for the exploitation of this resource within the District. There are also projects underway in the District looking at the production of transport fuel from crops.

- 3.5** Whilst the concept of exploiting renewable energy resources may be beneficial in terms of the global environment, it is unfortunate that no form of energy generation is without local environmental implications. Developments associated with energy generation may have an adverse impact on the local environment in terms of visual intrusion and/or the pollution of the air, water or soil. Any such environmental impact is also likely to adversely affect the amenities of local people. Both the direct impacts of development as well as the impact of any associated elements, such as new overhead power lines, on the local environment and local communities will need to be fully considered. Where required by existing regulations, energy generating development proposals will need to be accompanied by an environmental assessment.
- 3.6** The generation of power from the wind is a clean, renewable source of energy. The erection of the wind turbines necessary to generate electricity, however, can have detrimental local environmental effects by virtue of factors such as visual intrusion, shadow flicker, reflected light and noise to the detriment of the local landscape and the amenity of local residents and businesses. Proposals for wind turbines should be sited so as to minimise any such affects.
- 3.7** It is particularly important that energy generating development proposals avoid any damage to areas designated by virtue of their landscape, nature conservation, architectural, archaeological and/or historic value. Proposals should be appropriately located to prevent any adverse impacts upon particularly sensitive areas.
- 3.8** Some sources of renewable energy can only be exploited where they occur and this will be taken into account in balancing the benefits of renewable energy developments against any adverse impacts.

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In assessing proposals for the development of renewable energy resources, there is a need to consider carefully both the immediate impact of renewable energy projects on the local environment, including those of any new transmission facilities, and their wider contribution to reducing greenhouse gases.

- 3.9** Applications for renewable energy installations should include details of associated developments so that their likely impact on the environment can be assessed. Any energy generating development proposals that involve the use of land or the carrying out of operations in or on land for the deposit of refuse or waste materials will fall to be determined by Durham County Council.
- 3.10** Many renewable energy proposals are at an early stage of development. It is important that if such projects fail or cease operation, the infrastructure is removed and the site is restored. It will be expected that this will occur once a facility has ceased producing energy for six months.

Policy 2 - This policy has lapsed

~~Wherever possible the council will give favourable consideration to renewable energy proposals and will give due consideration to their wider environmental benefits, and national government policy to encourage their development in environmentally acceptable locations. Proposals for the generation of power from renewable energy sources, as well as any associated development (which may include access roads, transmission lines, pylons and other ancillary buildings), will be permitted provided the economic and environmental benefits (including the reduction in emissions of greenhouse gases) outweigh their environmental and visual impact (including any impact on local amenity); those impacts will be assessed in accordance with other policies in this plan; commensurate measures to restore or treat the site when operations cease must be indicated.~~

- 3.11** The countryside of the District is a natural, non-renewable local resource and it is the Council's intention to safeguard the character and the appearance of this valuable asset. In order to achieve this the Plan seeks to guide new development to within the existing urban areas of the District.
- 3.12** Boundaries have been drawn around all settlements in the District to delineate the limits to development of the existing urban areas. This serves to reduce development pressure on greenfield sites in the countryside, to assist with the physical and economic regeneration of the built areas of the District, to reduce the need to travel to work, shops and services and to promote a more sustainable development pattern.
- 3.13** These settlement boundaries have been defined on the basis of the future development needs of each town and village whilst respecting local environmental features and infrastructure constraints. They are shown on the Proposals Map of the Plan.
- 3.14** The area beyond the settlement boundaries will be construed to be open countryside and development here will generally be resisted. It is recognised, however, that some forms of development in the countryside are necessary, such as the development of buildings for agricultural and forestry, in order that the rural economy can be supported and the needs of rural communities met. It may also be appropriate to locate some forms of tourism and recreation development in the countryside. Policies dealing with these exceptional reasons for allowing certain types of development in the countryside are included in the appropriate chapters of the Plan and include renewable energy (Policy 2), control over development in the green belt (Policy 5), utility services (Policy 28), control over non-agricultural buildings in the countryside (Policy 41, policy 50), agricultural and other economic development in the countryside (Policy 56), diversification of the use of agricultural land (Policy 57), new industrial development in the countryside (Policy 58), re-use and adaptation of buildings in the countryside for industry and business (Policy 59), re-use of dwellings in the countryside (Policy 60), working from home (Policy 62), rural workers dwellings (Policy 69), re-use and adaptation of buildings in the countryside for residential use (policy 70), gypsy sites (Policy 72), extensions and/or alterations to dwellinghouses (Policy 73), recreation routes (Policy 76), control of large telecommunications development (Policy 82), control of satellite dishes (Policy 83), undeveloped coast (Policy 84), Crimdon (Policy 85), countryside recreation (Policy 86), caravan, camping and chalet sites (Policy 98) garden centres (Policy 106) and farm shops (Policy 107).

Policy 3

Development limits are defined for the settlements of the District and are shown on the proposals map and the settlement inset maps. Development outside the 'settlement limits' will be regarded as development within the countryside. Other than specifically allowed for by other policies, development in the countryside will not be approved.

GreenBelt extension in County Durham

- 3.15** The government attaches great importance to green belt policy, the fundamental aim of which is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. The most important attribute of green belts is their openness and their essential characteristic is permanence.
- 3.16** The Tyne and Wear Green Belt Local Plan (approved in 1985) did not designate the area around the southern periphery of Sunderland as a formal green belt. As a result, however, of increasing development pressures Sunderland City Council considered that this area, within the city boundary, warranted formal designation as a green belt to preserve its open character and to ensure that adequate separation continued to be maintained between the city and surrounding settlements. This designation was therefore included in the City of Sunderland Unitary Development Plan (to be known hereafter as the Sunderland UDP,) which was adopted in 1998. The approved Regional Planning Guidance for the Northern Region suggests that Durham County Council should examine the case for the extension of the Tyne and Wear Green Belt in the County of Durham to the south of

Sunderland so as to cover a sufficiently wide area of land to secure effective protection from development pressures.

- 3.17** The extension to the Tyne and Wear Green Belt within the local authority boundaries of Sunderland should check the unrestricted sprawl of the city. The designation of a green belt on the County Durham side of the boundary complements the proposal in Sunderland and will prevent Seaham merging with Ryhope in the south of Sunderland. In the past, physical separation between these settlements has been eroded by the development of the Seaham Grange Industrial Estate and additional development on the Sunderland side, at the site of the South Ryhope Industrial Estate, will further erode the undeveloped area of land here. The designation of a green belt on both sides of the local authority boundary would define the limits to development and assist in safeguarding the countryside from further urban encroachment.
- 3.18** The agricultural land to the north of Seaham has been subject to development pressure which has threatened to divert development interest away from the centre of Seaham. A comprehensive strategy aimed at regenerating the town of Seaham, including the redevelopment of the three derelict former colliery sites, would be undermined by any new greenfield development to the north of the town and the designation of a green belt here can only serve to assist this strategy.
- 3.19** The need for an extension to the approved Tyne and Wear Green Belt in County Durham has been accepted in the County Durham Structure Plan Review, which indicates that the area in Easington District between Seaham and Ryhope should be designated as such. It is the responsibility of the Local Plan to define and designate the precise boundaries of this area.
- 3.20** To meet the objectives outlined in paras 3.16-3.18 and to complement the proposed extension to the Tyne and Wear Green Belt, it is considered that a green belt should be designated in the District comprising three principal areas as shown on plan 2, defined on the Proposals Map and described as follows: the area between Lord Byron's Walk and Ryhope Dene comprises an area of high grade agricultural land between the northern edge of the built up area of Seaham and the administrative boundary of the City of Sunderland. It is intersected by the Durham Coast railway line to the east of which, up to the coastline, is an area designated as an Area of High Landscape Value (AHLV). The north and north western edge of Seaham is defined by the Seaham Grange Industrial Estate and the route of the A1086 road. It is considered that the limited area of open land between these features, down to the junction with the B1404 road, and the administrative boundary with Sunderland should form part of the green belt. In order that the green belt on the Durham side of the boundary complements that on the Sunderland side, it is considered that the green belt should also include that open agricultural land to the west of the former Tuthill Quarry to Ryhope railway adjacent Seaton Village and to the north of the B1404 road up to the administrative boundary.

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- 3.21** PPG2 stipulates that green belts should only be designated where there is adequate land available elsewhere to meet the long term development needs of the District. It also suggests, taking into account the permanence of green belts, that consideration should be given to whether land which may be required to meet longer term development needs (beyond the period of the Local Plan) should be identified and safeguarded between the urban area and the green belt.
- 3.22** Careful consideration has been extended to these issues. The Plan identifies sufficient land for industrial, housing and other forms of development to meet the needs of Seaham and to ensure its maintenance as a major centre. Much of this land comprises derelict or underused sites. Furthermore, the need specifically to identify safeguarded land between the urban area and the green belt is not considered relevant or necessary for a number of reasons :
- (i) the open gap between the northern edge of Seaham and Ryhope is so limited that any development here would undermine robustness and effectiveness of the green belt;
 - (ii) significant built development north of Lord Byrons Walk would potentially detract both from the existing Northern AHLV and the attractive character and setting of the northern part of the town;

- (iii) the proposed green belt comprises a relatively small area (280 hectares) and only constrains opportunities for development/expansion on the north and north western side of the town;
- (iv) additional land and opportunities for development exist to the south of Seaham and elsewhere in the District to accommodate development needs beyond the Plan period.

3.23 The area of the Green Belt reflects that covered by the Great North Forest in the District.

Policy 4

The following areas of land, as defined on the proposals map, are designated as green belt and represent an extension of the Tyne and Wear green belt in the county of Durham:

- (i) North of Lord Byron's walk;
- (ii) North of Seaham Grange Industrial Estate and north west of the A1086 to the junction with the B1404 road;
- (iii) West of the former Tuthill quarry to Ryhope railway and north of the B1404 road

Control over Development in the green belt

3.24 Since statutory green belts were created in the mid 1950's, government guidelines have been very specific on the types of development which should and should not be permitted in them. PPG2 indicates that general policies controlling development in the countryside apply with equal force in green belts, but there is a further presumption against inappropriate development within them.

3.25 There are a limited number of uses considered appropriate in the green belt and these are listed below. The relevant policy in the Plan relating to each use is shown in the brackets:

- (i) agricultural and forestry buildings (agricultural and other economic development in the countryside: Policy 56);
- (ii) essential facilities for outdoor sport and recreation, cemeteries and other uses of land which preserve the openness of the green belt (countryside recreation: Policy 86 and recreation routes: policy 76). Essential facilities should be genuinely required for uses of land which preserve the openness of the green belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land in it. Examples of such facilities include small changing rooms or unobtrusive spectator accommodation for outdoor sport, or small stables for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation. Proposals related to the Great North Forest are likely to be considered appropriate under the terms of these policies;
- (iii) limited extension, alteration or replacement of existing dwellings (extensions and/or alterations to dwellinghouses: Policy 73), provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.
- (iv) re-use of dwellings and other buildings (re-use and adaptation of buildings in the countryside for industry and business: Policy 59, residential use: Policy 70, and re-use of dwellings in the countryside: Policy 60).

3.26 In each instance proposals will need to satisfy the criteria associated with the relevant policies. In some cases, very exceptional circumstances may warrant certain forms of development in Green Belt locations, such as that required in relation to the operations of utility service providers. Such proposals will need to be assessed against relevant policies in the Plan and all other material considerations. In the event of the Council wishing to approve a proposal which does not accord with these policies it would be treated as a departure from the Plan and referred to the Secretary of State.

Policy 5 - This policy has lapsed

~~Within the green belt planning permission will not be granted, other than in very exceptional circumstances, unless it is for:~~

- ~~(i) The erection of new buildings required for agriculture or forestry enterprises~~
- ~~(ii) Essential facilities for outdoor sport and recreation, for cemeteries and for other uses of land which would preserve the openness of the green belt.~~
- ~~(iii) and, providing there is no material reduction in the openness or erosion of the purposes of the green belt and that the building is in keeping with its surroundings:-~~
 - ~~(a) the re-use of existing buildings in accordance with policies 59, 60 and 70, and~~
 - ~~(b) limited extensions to existing dwellings in accordance with policy 73.~~

Strategic Gap between Easington Village and Peterlee

3.27 At the present time the settlements of Easington Village and Peterlee are separated by an area of countryside, predominantly in agricultural use approximately 1000 metres wide. The need to maintain a physical and visual separation between the settlements has been recognised in the Durham County Structure Plan Review and planning appeal decisions relating to the Thorpe Hospital and Thorpe Nursery sites. A formal Green Wedge policy is proposed to prevent further development of this area.

3.28 Green wedges comprise the open areas around towns and villages and between parts of settlements which maintain the distinction between the countryside and built up areas, prevent the coalescence of adjacent places and provide a rural setting to development. They can also provide a link between the countryside and built up areas and can be a valuable recreation and wildlife resource. The wildlife value of open space can be enhanced by modifying their management and through additional planting.

3.29 To fulfil these functions, green wedges must be preserved and built development within them resisted. The type of land uses that the Council will encourage in green wedges include: agriculture, horticulture, forestry, outdoor leisure uses, wildlife reserves and other appropriate open space uses.

Policy 6

The open area separating Easington Village and Peterlee, shown on the proposals map, is allocated as a 'green wedge'. In this area, development will be limited to agriculture, horticulture, forestry, wildlife reserves and informal recreation uses involving the quiet enjoyment of the countryside. All proposals should maintain the open nature of this area.

Implementation

The Green Wedge will be maintained through the application of development control decision.

Protection of Areas of High Landscape Value (AHLV)

3.30 Whilst it is the intention of the Council to protect all of the countryside for its own sake there are landscape areas in the District which are particularly attractive and extra care needs to be taken to ensure that these areas are not spoilt by inappropriate new development. These areas are considered worthy of special recognition and they have been given a County-wide designation of Areas of High Landscape Value (AHLV) in the County Durham Structure Plan. Four AHLVs, as defined on the Proposals Map, have been designated in Easington District. The character of the English countryside has been mapped at a regional level by the Countryside Agency as part of the Countryside Character initiative. Countryside Character: The Character of England's Natural and Man-Made: Landscape. Volume 1: The North East (Countryside Commission 1998 CCP535) shows Easington District as falling within the Durham Magnesian Limestone Plateau (Character Area 15). More detailed information on local landscape character will be provided by the County Durham Landscape Assessment currently being prepared by Durham County Council in partnership with the Countryside Agency.

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- 3.31** At Elemore, west of Haswell, there exists an area of parkland landscape linked with areas of commercial woodland which is partly under the control of the County Council and the Woodland Trust. This formal type of parkland is not registered by English Heritage as an Historic Parkland but the relationship between tree groups, buildings and farmland has resulted in an area of particularly attractive landscape which has been designated as an AHLV.
- 3.32** In addition to the more formal landscape of the Elemore AHLV, there are three informal areas of attractive landscape in the District which have been designated for their high landscape quality. These areas incorporate coastal denes which, because of their dramatic topography, have in the main, escaped unsuitable development.
- 3.33** The Northern Area of Landscape Value (AHLV) includes both Ryhope and Seaham Denes and the areas of farmland in between, from the coastal railway to the cliff tops. The Central AHLV includes Hawthorn and Horden Denes, Warren House Gill and Blackhills Gill, together with areas of farmland and the coastal strip. The Southern AHLV contains Castle Eden, Crimdon and Hesleden Denes, agricultural land around them, the parkland landscape of Castle Eden, forestry plantations to the east of Wingate and the coastal strip at Crimdon. The Central and Southern AHLVs meet at Blackhills Gill.
- 3.34** Most of the area covered by AHLV designation is deemed to be in the countryside as it is outside the defined settlement boundaries contained within the Plan. Policy 3 indicates the type of uses that may be acceptable in the countryside. Whether in the countryside or within settlement boundaries, the protection of the character and landscape quality of an Area of High Landscape Value will be the overriding consideration in an assessment of any development proposals within these areas. Proposals should, therefore, be sympathetic to these designated areas and should seek to retain existing landscape features and to incorporate elements to enhance the landscape quality of the area.
- 3.34A** Although the policy designates AHLV's, it is intended to control any proposal which may affect them, not just those which arise actually within the designated areas.

Policy 7

The special character, quality and appearance of the landscape within those areas designated as areas of high landscape value on the proposals map will be maintained and enhanced. Any development likely to adversely affect the character, quality or appearance of those AHLV's will only be permitted if it meets a need that outweighs the value of the landscape and there is no alternative location within the county. The council will require developers to demonstrate that adverse effects are minimised (as far as is reasonable) and that commensurate efforts to compensate for unavoidable damage are made.

Protection of the coastal zone environment

- 3.35** The Durham coast is approximately 11 miles long stretching from Ryhope Dene in the north to Crimdon Dene in the south. The natural limits of the coastal zone extend both seaward and landward of the coastline and are determined by the geographical extent of natural coastal processes and human activities related to the marine environment. Planning policy guidance for the coast, PPG20, states, however, that for the purposes of planning the coastal zone is defined by the mean low water mark to the seaward side. On this basis, the policies for the coastal zone in the District relate to the area of land between the mean low water mark and the coastal railway line from the District boundary with Hartlepool to Hawthorn Junction which is south of Dawdon. To the north of this point through Seaham, the coastal zone is defined by the former mineral railway line, the cliff line as far as the Seaham Hall Car Park and the B1287, as shown on the District-wide and Seaham Proposals Map. There may also be a need to consider the impact of both on-shore and off-shore proposals that have an affect on the coastal zone.
- 3.36** The East Durham Task Force has prepared a management plan for the Durham Coast,

which provides a management strategy for the coastal zone. A comprehensive programme of measures based on the proposals contained in the plan commenced in 1996/97 and will be completed during the subsequent five financial years at a cost of approximately £10 million.

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£4.5 million of this sum has been secured from the Millennium Commission under the Turning The Tide Initiative with the balance being funded by English Partnerships, Durham County Council, Easington District Council, the European Commission, Countryside Commission plus a range of other bodies. The proposals are to be implemented under the four headings listed below. Those proposals capable of implementation under the town planning legislation are the subject of policies contained in the Local Plan and shown in parentheses.

- (a) the removal of dangerous structures and debris from the cliffs and beaches and the management /monitoring of the beaches including the re-introduction of sand;
- (b) the reclamation of spoil heaps from the beaches at Easington and Horden (see Policy 30);
- (c) the recreation of the coastline of high nature conservation and landscape value (see Policies 7, 8, 9, 15, 16,18, and 19);
- (d) the provision of an integrated programme to provide for access to the coast (Policy 87).

3.37 The Durham coast is largely undeveloped consisting predominantly of a cliffline with distinct headlands and bays. To the north of Seaham and at Crimdon there are sandy amenity beaches, however, the beaches between Seaham and Blackhall Rocks have been despoiled by the tipping of colliery waste. Tipping on the beaches has now ceased. The coast is an important local recreational resource and has further recreational and tourism potential.

3.38 The coastal hinterland comprises clifftop grasslands, open areas of farmland and wooded denes. The national nature conservation importance of this area is reflected in sites of Special Scientific Interest and Site of Nature Conservation Importance designations along its length, in addition to National Nature Reserve designation at Castle Eden Dene. Of particular importance is the magnesian limestone grassland, found on the cliffs and headlands, which is an internationally rare habitat. The denes contain some of the most natural woodlands in north-east England. The Durham coast is also unique in that it supports the only coastal colonies of the Durham Argus butterfly.

3.39 The semi-natural habitat of the District's coastline is under particular threat from both intensive agricultural use and coastal erosion. A principal aim of the Turning The Tide Initiative is the restoration of the magnesian limestone grassland habitat within the coastal strip which lies to the east of the Durham Coast rail line. The rarity of this habitat and the diversity of plant and insect species it supports is recognised in the Nature Strategy for Easington District (see paragraph 3.72). The coastal strip contains land with a range of agricultural land quality, including some of the best and most versatile. Its restoration to a grassland habitat will be in accordance with Policy 12. The existing areas designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest are located in a narrow strip along the cliff edges which are being eroded under the natural force of the sea. The following policy is needed in order to protect and enhance these areas, to extend them inland as the coast erodes, and to restore the areas in intensive agricultural use to a semi-natural habitat.

Policy 8 - This policy has lapsed

~~The coastal zone as defined in the proposals map will be restored to a semi-natural habitat for nature conservation purposes, including magnesian limestone grassland on areas currently in intensive agricultural use, where it does not conflict with policy 12.~~

Implementation

1. *The semi-natural habitat will be restored on the Durham coast in co-operation with the partners in the Turning The Tide Initiative, and through management agreements with the occupiers.*
2. *A few small parcels of land remain in private ownership in the coastal strip. Those which are not in the control of the partners may be acquired by them by agreement or by compulsory purchase*

3.40 The only developed part of the coastal zone is the town and port of Seaham in the north, and the 29 ha. (72 acre) caravan park site at Crimdon Park in the south.

3.41 The undeveloped coast represents a significant environmental and ecological resource and as a consequence, it is also an important recreation and tourist area. Any enhancement of the social and economic value of this area should only be undertaken on the basis of maintaining and enhancing its environmental capital in accord with the principles of sustainable development. On this basis a coastal location will seldom be the most appropriate for development and the Plan will generally seek to guide development away from the undeveloped coastal zone.

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3.42 It is recognised that some forms of development including land uses such as tourism, recreation, energy generation, waste water and sewage treatment and disposal, and development dependent on access to the sea (e.g. ports and marinas), may require a coastal location. The developed coast will usually provide the best option for the location of any such development, except where the development relates to the sympathetic and sensitive use of the undeveloped coast for informal recreation in accord with Policies 84 (the undeveloped coast), 76 (recreation routes), or for agriculture (Policy 56), agricultural diversification (Policy 57), or for the re-use of buildings and dwellings in the countryside (Policies 59 and 60).

3.43 Where there is potential policy conflict between the need for a coastal location and the protection of the coast, it shall be for the developer to demonstrate that there are no reasonable alternative sites in less sensitive areas. Although this list is not exhaustive, the Council draws the attention of potential developers to the following policies to which it will have particular regard in considering development proposals which require planning permission.

S3 (Coastal defences)

84 (The undeveloped coast)

85 (Crimdon)

S26 & S27 (Tourist facilities in Seaham)

14 (Special areas of conservation)

15 (Protection of Sites of Special Scientific Interest and National Nature Reserves)

16 (Protection of Sites of Nature Conservation Importance and Local Nature Reserves)

18 (Species and habitat protection)

Policy 9

Except as specifically allowed under other policies of this plan, development in the coastal zone, as identified on the proposals map, will only be permitted if the requirement for the project cannot be met outside the coastal zone and the need for, or benefit from, the scheme outweighs any adverse impact. Other relevant policies in this plan will be used to assess the 'need,' or 'adverse impact' associated with any proposal.'

Coastal defences

3.44 The Durham Coast Management Plan does not propose any action in relation to the issue

of coastal erosion. It is apparent, however, that as tipped colliery waste from the seabed and beaches is removed the potential threat of coastal erosion along the cliffline will increase. It is difficult to predict the timescale of potential erosion without further investigation. PPG20 recommends that planning policies should seek to safeguard those areas where significant development is threatened. On the Durham Coast the only major built up development is the existing built up area of Seaham. Two other major developments are proposed adjacent to the coast in Seaham. The Dawdon colliery site is being reclaimed and redeveloped as an industrial estate with Enterprise Zone status. The dock is to be relocated onto land between the existing harbour and Bankside. A new road is to be built along the eastern boundary of the proposed dock linking Dawdon with the Town Centre. (Further details of the proposal are contained in the Seaham Chapter). The River Tyne-Saltburn Shoreline Management Plan has confirmed that new coastal defences are both required and justified, between South Pier and Seaham Fleet Rock. Policy S3 of the Seaham Chapter therefore identifies this area for coastal defences.

Protection of trees and hedgerows

- 3.45** Trees and hedgerows are important elements in the environment. At a local level they contribute to the attractiveness and identity of the local landscape and represent an important wildlife habitat. On a global scale they play a significant part in stabilising the atmosphere. The environmental consequences of losing trees and hedgerows are, therefore, serious and they take many years to replace. Most countryside hedgerows are protected under the Hedgerows Regulations 1997, and it is against the law to remove them without permission.
- 3.46** Development can directly affect trees and hedgerows most notably through their removal, but also through a lowering of the water table, severing or constricting root spread, ground disturbance and damage during site works. Indirect affects, such as development being positioned too close to trees, can often result in them being felled later for safety or daylight reasons.
- 3.47** Trees and hedgerows on or adjacent to development sites should be treated as site constraints and should be given adequate protection, through the erection of temporary fencing, to protect the root spread of these features. Where significant trees are threatened by development, the Council will seek to protect them through the designation of Tree Preservation Orders. The replacement, preferably with native species, of any trees and hedgerows lost to development will be sought where such loss is unavoidable.

Policy 10 - This policy has lapsed

~~The council will seek to protect trees and hedgerows by requiring that:~~

- ~~(i) The layout and design of development proposals where possible provides for the retention and integration of trees and hedgerows and that adequate protection measures are provided during site works;~~
- ~~(ii) Significant trees threatened by development should be protected through the designation of tree preservation orders, as necessary; Trees and hedgerows and other landscape features lost to development should be replaced, preferably with local native species;~~

Tree Preservation Orders

- 3.48** At April 1997, 45 Tree Preservation Orders had been made within Easington District, covering individual trees, groups of trees and larger areas of woodland, in order to protect these from wilful damage and destruction, without the consent of the Council. Such Orders would not preclude the felling of trees which are dead, dying, diseased or dangerous.

- 3.49** The designation of a Tree Preservation Order should not preclude good woodland management, including topping, lopping and felling, unless there are compelling nature conservation reasons for not doing so. In such circumstance the Order should ensure that any management operations are undertaken in a manner that preserves the amenity of the woodland as far as possible. Older trees often have a particular nature conservation value in supporting flora and fauna and many trees can be made safe without felling.
- 3.50** New areas of trees to be covered by further Tree Preservation Orders are continually being assessed by the District Council, particularly in those areas which are likely to be developed. In Conservation Areas notice needs to be given to the Council for works to any trees and the District Council then has the opportunity to impose a Tree Preservation Order if considered necessary.

Policy 11 - This policy has lapsed

~~The topping, lopping and felling of trees which are the subject of a tree preservation order or are located within conservation areas will only be approved where necessary for the purposes of woodland management and where that management does not seriously damage amenity and nature conservation interests, or where the trees are considered to be dangerous. Where permission is given to fell trees replacement planting will be required if deemed appropriate.~~

Protection of Agricultural land

- 3.51** Agricultural production has increased markedly since 1945 due to rapid technical advances and financial support from the Government and the European Commission. This has led to over-production and agricultural support is now redirected to cutting surpluses, reducing pollution and improving the environment. The District has a predominance of arable cropping and most farms will be affected by the 'set-aside' programme, where compensation is paid to farmers for fallowing 15-18% of their arable land each year.
- 3.52** As there are only about 300 people currently employed in agriculture in the District, the effect of these changes on overall employment will not be great. Financial pressures may, however, encourage greater numbers of farmers to establish farm diversification enterprises in order to supplement their income.
- 3.53** Although there may be a trend of agricultural land temporarily going out of production it is important that the best and most versatile land is protected from development. At the present time no Grade I agricultural land has been identified in the District and only a limited amount of Grade II land in the areas of Sheraton/Hulam and to the north of both Horden and Seaham. The majority of agricultural land is either Grade IIIa or IIIb. Land of Grade I, II or IIIa quality is defined as best and most versatile in PPG7 and its loss to development will not normally be approved.

In exceptional circumstances the development of these grades of land may be allowed where it would be capable of returning to its existing agricultural quality at an economic cost or where there is an overriding need for the development and a lack of suitable development opportunities in already developed areas or on lower grade agricultural land. In the absence of detailed and up-to-date information on land classification the District Council will be guided by advice given by the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA.)

Policy 12 - This policy has lapsed

~~The development of the best and most versatile agricultural land will only be approved in the following exceptional circumstances:~~

- (i) ~~Where it would be capable of returning to its existing agricultural quality in the~~

~~future at an economic cost, or~~

- (ii) ~~Where there is an overriding need for development and a lack of suitable development opportunities in already developed areas, and either sufficient land in grades below H1a or sufficient lower grade land which does not have an environmental value recognised by statutory designation, is unavailable~~

Protection of Watercourses

- 3.54** Uncontrolled works in the vicinity of watercourses may lead to problems such as an increased risk of flooding, erosion of the beds and banks of watercourses, waterbodies (viz. static areas of water, e.g. lake or pond) and the coast; increased danger to the public; restricted access for maintenance; and damage to the water environment. With regard to the assessment and remediation of the impact of any development on a watercourse, the Council will seek the advice of the appropriate agencies, including the Environment Agency, in the determination of planning applications.
- 3.55** The culverting of watercourses may also have serious implications for safety, maintenance and flooding in addition to the physical impact upon the continuity of the river corridor and any inherent wildlife interest and is therefore only likely to be appropriate in exceptional circumstances. In line with statutory regulations, the local planning authority may require proposals for culverting to be accompanied by an Environmental Statement.

Policy 13 - This policy has lapsed

~~Where development has the potential to impact upon a watercourse or water body, the council will require works to be undertaken to mitigate any such impact. The culverting of watercourses will only be approved where it would not cause safety, flooding or maintenance problems or adversely affect nature conservation interests.~~

Protection of Special Areas of Conservation

- 3.56** The most important natural feature in Easington District is Castle Eden Dene National Nature Reserve which is a deep wooded coastal valley covering 500 acres. This site was upgraded from a local to a national nature reserve in 1985. The reserve, which is owned and managed by English Nature, has been identified as a candidate Special Area of Conservation (SAC) because it contains habitat types and/or species which are rare or threatened within a European context. Castle Eden Dene is considered to represent a priority habitat because it is probably one of the best areas of yew dominated woodland in the UK. If so designated it would become part of a network of protected areas across the European Union to be known as 'Natura 2000'.
- 3.57** For the purpose of considering development proposals affecting them, the government wish to see all candidate SACs treated as if they had already been designated. This means that development other than that related to the management of the site which may affect the integrity of designated or candidate SACs is unlikely to be appropriate except where it can be specifically justified. Such justification, in the case of priority habitat types such as that at Castle Eden Dene, or priority species, is only likely to be acceptable on the grounds of public health and safety or nature conservation benefit. Priority habitats and species are those identified within the EEC Directive and reproduced within PPG9, which are considered particularly at risk and therefore warrant additional protection.
- 3.57A** There are currently no potential or classified Special Protection Areas (SPA's) under the EC Birds Directive in Easington District nor are there any internationally important wetlands identified as Ramsar Sites. However, in line with national government policy, should any such sites be identified in the future, the same criteria contained within Policy 14 will be applied to development affecting them.

Policy 14

Development which (either individually or cumulatively) is likely to adversely affect (either directly or indirectly) a designated or candidate special area of conservation, and is not directly connected with, or necessary for, managing the scientific interest of the site, will only be approved where

- i) There is no alternative solution; and
- ii) There are imperative reasons of over-riding national interest for the development. In the case of sites which host a priority habitat or a priority species, such development will only be approved where:
- iii) It is necessary for reasons of human health or public safety; or
- iv) Beneficial consequences of primary nature conservation importance arise. Before any project is allowed, developers will be required to demonstrate that adverse effects are minimised and that commensurate efforts to compensate for unavoidable damage are made.'

Protection of sites of Special Scientific Interest and National Nature Reserves

3.58 Including the National Nature Reserves at Castle Eden Dene and along part of the Durham Coast, there are currently seventeen other Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) in the District. SSSIs are the best examples of our national heritage of wildlife habitats, geological features and landforms and they represent the basic minimum area of habitat which needs to be conserved if the current range and distribution of Britain's native fauna and flora and the communities which they comprise, are to be maintained. They are identified and designated by English Nature on the basis of their special national nature conservation interest. These sites are statutorily protected and the Council is required to consult English Nature about any development proposals which might affect, either directly or indirectly, a SSSI.

3.59 Nature conservation can be a significant material consideration in determining many planning applications but the government do not wish to see local planning authorities refusing planning permission if conditions can be used to prevent damaging impacts on wildlife habitats, or if other material factors are sufficient to override nature conservation considerations. This latter premise must be applied with caution, however, in view of other government objectives relating to the promotion of sustainable forms of development and no further net loss of biodiversity.

3.60 The nature conservation value of the environment is dynamic and new sites which merit the designation of SSSI may be discovered in the future. Any sites subsequently designated will be afforded protection under the terms of this policy.

3.61 Those SSSIs presently designated in Easington District are as follows:

Castle Eden Dene*	Pike Whin Bog
Durham Coast*	Seaham Harbour*
Hawthorn Dene	Yoden Village Quarry*
Hawthorn Quarry	Pig Hill
Hart Warren Dunes	Stoney Cut
Hesledon Moor West	Tuthill Quarry*
Hulam Fen	Wingate *
Blackhall Rocks*	Shippersea Bay and Warren House Gill*
Hesledon Moor East	The Bottoms

*Sites also identified in either the Nature Conservation or Geological Conservation Review

NCR and GCR sites have additional designations conferred on them for specific reasons and particular regard should be paid to their national importance in weighing the case for proposed development against nature conservation interests.

Policy 15

Development which (either individually or cumulatively) is likely to adversely affect (either directly or indirectly) a notified site of special scientific interest will only be approved where

- i) There is no alternative solution; and

ii) The development is in the national interest.

Before any project is allowed, developers will be required to demonstrate that adverse effects are minimised and that commensurate efforts to compensate for unavoidable damage are made.

Protection of sites of Nature Conservation Importance, Local Nature Reserves and Ancient Woodlands

3.62 Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCIs) are locally or regionally important areas of wildlife or geological interest. The designation embraces all County Wildlife Sites (CWS) and County Geological Sites (CGS) identified by the County Council, and all Regionally Important Geological/Geomorphological sites (RIGs) in the District.

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Unlike SSSIs, SNCIs have no statutory protection other than that afforded to them by policies in the Development Plan.

3.63 There are currently 41 CWSs in the District. New sites worthy of designation may be found during the Plan period and these will be protected under the terms of this policy. The current list of sites includes the following;

Byron's Dene	Hesleden Dene
Carstead Wood West	Hesleden Moor East
Castle Eden Pond	Hesledon Moor West
Cold Hesledon Meadow	Horden Dene
Cold Hesledon Pond	Hulam Reed Swamp
Coop House Wood	Hurworth Burn Res.
Cowtons Pond	Loch Kenny Pond
Dabble Bank	Murton Bridge Carr
Dalton Dene	Murton Grasslands
Dawdon Dene	New Winning Pumping Station Pond
Deaf Hill Marsh	Pesspool Wood
Duncombe Moor	Ryhope Dene
Edderacres	Seaham Dene
Elemore Horseshoe Pond	Slingley Pond
Field House Farm	South Hetton Pond
Haswell Wood	South Murton Marsh
Hart Railway	Thornley Dene
Hawthorn Bridge Pumping Station	Tuthill Quarry
Hawthorn Quarry	Warren House Gill Grassland
Hazel Dene	Wellfield Brick Ponds
Heads Hope Dene	

3.64 Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) are owned and/or managed by local authorities and are designated locally subject to criteria set down by English Nature. There is currently one Local Nature Reserve at Wingate Quarry which is owned by Durham County Council and was designated in 1980. It is also a SSSI.

3.65 Any new Local Nature Reserves that are designated during the Plan period which are not also SSSIs will be protected under the terms of this policy.

3.66 Ancient Woodlands, identified in the Durham Inventory by English Nature are also of both wildlife and historic value. All of the woodlands identified within the District bar one at

Edderacres, lie within areas already designated as SNCI's. The direct and indirect impacts of development on SNCIs, LNRs and Ancient Woodlands will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. Planning permission shall not be refused if development can be subject to conditions that will prevent damaging impacts on wildlife habitats or important physical features, or if other material factors are sufficient to override nature conservation considerations. In the District's case it could be where development is in the wider interests of the District or the region such as an exceptional industrial development or major improvements to infrastructure. Where there is a risk of damage to a designated site consideration will be given to the use of conditions or planning obligations under section 106. Planning obligations could also accompany permissions in order to secure long-term management, to provide management funds, or to provide nature conservation features to compensate for any such features lost when development takes place. In order to ensure that the nature conservation importance of these areas is safeguarded, the Council will seek the specialist advice of English Nature, Durham Wildlife Trust and Durham County Council in respect of planning applications and management agreements. Areas subject to designation are defined on the Proposals Maps.

Policy 16

Development which (either individually or cumulatively) is likely to adversely affect (either directly or indirectly) a notified site of nature conservation importance, a local nature reserve or an ancient woodland will only be approved where

- i) There is no alternative solution within the county or the district (as appropriate); and
- ii) The development is in the national interest.

Before any project is allowed, developers will be required to demonstrate that adverse effects are minimised and that commensurate efforts to compensate for unavoidable damage are made.

Identification and protection of Wildlife corridors

3.67 The ability of wildlife to move between urban and rural environments and sites of nature conservation importance is significant both in terms of migration and the colonisation of new areas. Being comparatively rural in nature, the District may have great significance in this respect given its regional location, between the conurbations of Wearside and Teesside.

3.68 Neighbouring authorities have identified 'wildlife corridors' in their administrative areas. Where appropriate, extensions of these corridors have been identified and continued through the District, on the following basis:

Strategic wildlife corridor: This corridor runs north-south through the central and western part of the District and contains and links important woodlands and wildlife sites. It also plays a sub-regional role in linking the major urban areas of Wearside and Teesside and therefore links with corridors identified in adjacent authorities. The coast is also an important area for wildlife movement and is protected under Policy 9 of the Plan.

Local wildlife corridors: These form a localised series of corridors, principally running east-west along wooded denes linking the urban areas of the District with the coast and surrounding open countryside and woodland. Most also feed into the central strategic wildlife corridor. They include Ryhope, Seaham, Dawdon, Hawthorn, Horden, Castle Eden, Hesleden, Crimdon and Nesbit denes, Lord Byron's Walk, Edderacres, Brackenhill, Elemore Valley, Cassop Moor and Kelloe Beck;

Wildlife links: these are generally narrower than wildlife corridors and follow the line of disused railway lines and recreational walkways. These have been identified along the Haswell to Hart and Castle Eden Walkways.

3.69 The precise extent of wildlife corridors and wildlife links is shown on the Proposals Map.

Policy 17

Development which would adversely affect a wildlife corridor or a wildlife link will only be approved where compensatory features are provided which would maintain the integrity of the corridor or link.

Species and habitat protection

3.70 Species extinction is irreversible and even local extinction is very difficult to reverse. The protection of our rarest species is, therefore, critical. Certain plant and animal species, including bats and all wild birds, are afforded special protection by Part 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Some animals, such as badgers, are protected by their own legislation in the case of badgers the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. The Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations 1994, which implement the requirements of the EC Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) also afford strict protection for certain listed species and habitats. This body of legislation seeks to protect individual birds, animals and plants of listed species and their habitats from damage and disturbance, in addition to any protection offered by the planning system.

3.71 The presence of a protected species is, however, a material consideration when a local planning authority is considering a development proposal which, if carried out, would be likely to result in harm to the species or its habitat. The advice of English Nature will need to be sought in considering such applications. Appropriate planning conditions or planning obligations may be required to enable development to proceed whilst ensuring protection of any protected species, in addition to conformity with statutory species protection provisions that may be imposed on developers outside of the planning system. For example the use of conditions relating to the design or programming of works can overcome problems where development such as demolitions, extensions or conversions would adversely affect seasonal bat roosts.

Policy 18

Development which would significantly adversely affect, either directly or indirectly, any protected species or its habitat will only be approved where the reasons for the development clearly outweigh the value of the species or its habitat. Before any project is allowed, developers will be required to demonstrate that adverse effects are minimised and that commensurate efforts to compensate for unavoidable damage are made.

Management of areas of Nature Conservation Interest

3.72 A number of wildlife habitats, Sites of Nature Conservation Importance and other features of natural interest have been lost or damaged due to new development, changes in agricultural practices or lack of proper management. This is a national as well as a local problem. It was concern over these losses which led to the preparation of the Nature Strategy for Easington District, whose four aims are:

- (a) to identify and protect existing wildlife habitats and encourage their sympathetic management;
- (b) to identify, protect and enhance existing wildlife corridors and develop new corridors;
- (c) to encourage the creation of new wildlife habitat;
- (d) to ensure easy access to suitable habitats for all residents and to publicise and

promote nature conservation.

3.73 In 1992, the UK Government signed the Convention on Biological Diversity at Rio de Janeiro and subscribed to 'develop national strategic plans or programmes for the conservation of bio diversity'. The importance of the effective conservation of wildlife and natural resources has been further amplified by Government guidance contained in PPG No. 9 (Nature Conservation). The County Durham Biodiversity Action plan is identifying threats to species and habitats caused by development, pollution and modern farming practices. Policy 19 is, therefore, allied to sympathetic management of areas of Nature Conservation Importance which will assist in their retention and enhancement. This will provide protection for individual conservation features in particular areas and will be of educational and environmental value generally.

3.74 Derelict Land Grant Advice Note stresses the conservation aspects of the land reclamation process, indicating a change in the Government approach towards nature conservation. The District Council will seek to encourage landowners to take advantage of the Rural Development Service (DEFRA) "Countryside Stewardship" initiative and English Nature's "Wildlife Enhancement Scheme" which provide incentives to landowners for management practices which enhance or restore valued habitats.

Policy 19

The promotion of the interests of nature conservation will be encouraged throughout the district. Areas of nature conservation interest, particularly those of national importance will be protected and enhanced. Measures will include:

- (i) The appropriate management of District Council owned land;
- (ii) Encouraging landowners and occupiers to adopt management regimes sympathetic to nature conservation;
- (iii) Seeking provision for nature conservation or creation of habitat in development proposals;
- (iv) Seeking opportunities for new habitat creation on both public and private land;
- (v) Improving access and providing interpretation to appropriate sites of wildlife interest;
- (vi) Controlling inappropriate development in accordance with policies 14-18.

Nationally important sites of Archaeological interest

3.74A Archaeological remains are a finite, non-renewable resource and in many cases are highly fragile and vulnerable to damage. They are also a critical part of the District's environment which the Local Plan seeks to protect. They make a major contribution to the character and quality of both rural and urban environments; their conservation is important for our quality of life, our links with the past, in helping to foster economic prosperity by providing an attractive environment to live in, work in or visit, and by encouraging inward investment.

3.75 It is particularly important that sites of national importance are protected. There are seven Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs), identified by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport in Easington District. These are as follows:

Chapel at High Haswell
Dalden Tower
Enclosure on Pig Hill
Haswell Engine House
Site of Yoden Village
Shrunken medieval village (Sheraton with Hulam) South of Castle, Castle Eden

3.76 Work to be carried out on or near to a SAM requires scheduled monument consent from the Heritage Secretary.

This consent is required in addition to planning permission and failure to obtain this consent before works commence could result in prosecution. It is advised that applicants should seek to obtain both permissions simultaneously.

- 3.77** In addition to the seven SAM's there are a number of non-scheduled sites of archaeological interest within the District which are of national interest. English Heritage have embarked on a survey programme which is expected to result in significant additional numbers of archaeological sites being designated as SAMs. Identification of sites of national importance which may become scheduled can be obtained by consultation with the County Sites and Monuments Record, which is held by the County Arts, Libraries and Museums Department, County Hall, Durham. Sites designated as SAMs during the Plan period will be protected under the terms of this policy.
- 3.78** The value of both scheduled and unscheduled sites of national importance is such that it is national policy that where sites would be affected by development there will be a presumption in favour of their physical preservation in situ. The Council's intention is to maintain and where possible, sensitively improve, the character and settings of Scheduled Ancient Monuments and those non-scheduled sites which are of national or regional importance.

Policy 20 - This policy has lapsed

~~Where nationally important archaeological sites (whether scheduled or not) and their settings would be affected by a development proposal, there will be a presumption in favour of their physical preservation in situ. Proposals likely to adversely affect such sites will only be approved where:~~

- ~~i) There is no alternative solution, and~~
- ~~ii) The development is in the national interest.~~

~~Before any project is allowed, developers will be required to demonstrate that adverse effects are minimised, that commensurate efforts to preserve remains in situ will be made and, where damage is unavoidable, that satisfactory arrangements for an appropriate programme of archaeological investigation, recording and publication will exist.~~

Regionally and locally important areas of Archaeological interest

- 3.79** Development within an area of regional or local archaeological importance may be acceptable provided the applicant can demonstrate that the archaeological interests of the site can be incorporated within the development. To this end developers are encouraged to undertake preliminary archaeological investigation at an early stage by consulting the County Sites and Monuments Record. This should enable developers to avoid delays and expense at a later date by allowing archaeological constraints to be accommodated within any development scheme.
- 3.80** Where research by the developer or the Council's own officers and advisors indicates that important archaeological remains may exist, the developer will be expected to undertake an agreed scheme of archaeological assessment and/or evaluation before a decision on the planning application is taken. Such an agreed scheme of investigation should seek to define the character and condition of any archaeological monuments or remains within the application site and the likely impact of the proposed development on such features. The granting of permission in such cases may be conditional upon the submission of details which mitigate the effect of the proposed development by redesign so as to achieve physical preservation of archaeological remains in situ. Where this is not practicable, provision should be made for archaeological recording prior to the destruction of the monument or remains. This will be achieved either through the use of planning conditions or, in agreement with the applicant, through planning obligations.

Policy 21 - This policy has lapsed

~~Within areas of regional or local archaeological interest the council will require a programme of archaeological assessment and/or evaluation to be carried out before the determination of a planning application. Where possible archaeological remains should be preserved in situ. Development proposals likely to adversely affect such sites will only be approved where:~~

- ~~i) There is no alternative solution within the region or locality (as appropriate), and~~

- ii) The benefits from the development outweigh the intrinsic importance of the remains:

~~Before any project is allowed, developers will be required to demonstrate that adverse effects are minimised (as far as is reasonable) and, where preservation of the remains in situ is not justified, that satisfactory arrangements for an appropriate programme of archaeological investigation, recording and publication will exist.~~

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Conservation areas

- 3.81** The architectural quality, historic character and appearance of the built environment in some areas of the District is of a high standard. These have been designated as conservation areas, the character, appearance or setting of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. The Council will review the designation and extent of Conservation Areas within the District as and when resources permit. Currently four Conservation Areas have been designated. Three focus on rural settlements and were designated between 1974 and 1976. They include the quiet collection of farmsteads and cottages at Hawthorn; the ancient church and older buildings arranged around the expanse of village green at Easington; and the scattering of development across the parkland landscape created by the Burdon family at Castle Eden. More recently, the Seaham Harbour Conservation Area has been designated in 1997. This focuses on the occasional fine building, the attractive Victorian Terraces and the 'seaside' green that testify to the planned beginnings of Lord Londonderry's coal-trading port; the aim is to enhance this historic and attractive part of Seaham. In addition, during the Plan period the Council intends to consider whether it would be appropriate to designate part of Dalton-le Dale as a conservation area.
- 3.82** It is the duty of local authorities to prepare schemes for the enhancement of conservation areas, details of which are set out in the appropriate settlement chapters. In order to manage such schemes effectively, and to ensure that Local Plan policies create a coherent and cogently based framework for their implementation, PPG15 advises that 'character statements' should be prepared for each conservation area. A 'character statement' will be prepared for the Seaham Harbour Conservation Area in the course of progressing the Conservation Area Partnership scheme. The three 'village' conservation areas were designated some 25 years ago and 'character statements' have not been prepared. The preparation of such statements will help to refine and focus appropriate future policies and assess the effect of Conservation area status on the settlements; those tasks will be undertaken when resources permit.

Preservation or enhancement of Conservation areas

- 3.83** In order to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Areas the Council will pay particular attention to the siting, design, layout and materials of all development proposals which would affect them, including extensions, alterations and conversions as well as new buildings. In line with advice in PPG15, this will include any development affecting both the conservation area or its setting which can be only too easily damaged by proposals not only within its boundaries but also those adjoining or near to it. Particular attention will therefore also be paid to developments affecting views into or out of conservation areas. The careful siting and design of development is a basic way of retaining and enhancing the character and appearance of an area. The detailed design, particularly with respect to roof pitches, the relationship between windows, doors and blank walls and the materials used, also has a significant impact upon the character or appearance of the built environment and particular attention will be given to these elements of development proposals in conservation areas. The design of new buildings, extensions and conversions should normally be traditional although sympathetic and sensitive modern designs may also be acceptable.
- 3.84** The landscape is often a significant integral element of the character and appearance of a conservation area. Trees, hedgerows and open spaces, such as greens and commons, can be as important as the buildings in a conservation area and such features should be

treated as integral elements of development proposals. Any landscape features lost to development should be replaced in accord with Policy 10 (protection of trees and hedgerows).

- 3.85** The demolition of buildings in conservation areas requires conservation area consent (if the building is not listed) or listed building consent (if the building is listed) and can affect the character of the area as much as new development. In line with PPG15 there will be a general presumption in favour of retaining buildings, whether listed or not listed, which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area. The government expects that proposals to demolish buildings which make such a contribution but are not listed, should be assessed against the same broad criteria as for those which are listed. Therefore in consistency with Policy 24 such buildings should only be demolished where it can be demonstrated that exhaustive attempts have been made to secure continued or alternative uses, including some form of charitable or community ownership or the benefits of the proposal to the community warrant it. To ensure that the character or appearance of the area is not detrimentally affected by sites that are to be the subject of demolition, consent for redevelopment or reclamation will need to be secured before demolition is considered.

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Industry & Business

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Introduction

- 4.1 A diverse, self-sustaining and robust economy is essential for the prosperity, vitality and well-being of the District and its people. A healthy economy also provides the foundation for creating and maintaining an attractive environment.
- 4.2 During the past fifteen years the employment situation in the District has deteriorated

following the closure of the remaining collieries. In recognition of the severe economic problems the East Durham Task Force was set up, in 1991, to co-ordinate the economic regeneration of the District, with the intention of reducing unemployment in the District to at least the national average by the year 2001. A wide range of new employment initiatives has subsequently been introduced by partners on the Task Force. These initiatives have been boosted by the designation of 92 hectares of industrial land as Enterprise Zones. Both the County Council and the District Council prepare economic development strategies which set out the context for and help co-ordinate the economic development initiatives undertaken by the two local authorities.

- 4.3** The Local Plan provides the land use planning context for the implementation of the Task Force's economic development proposals, the economic development strategies of the County and District Councils and the policies contained in the Durham County Structure Plan. This chapter reviews policies for the promotion of industry and business and identifies the measures to be undertaken to implement Objective D1 of the Development Strategy to assist economic regeneration and to create a diverse and sustainable economic base, and thus fulfil the Task Force's aims.

Job needs and forecasts

- 4.4** One of the main requirements for employment promotion is the provision of an adequate supply of industrial land situated in the most appropriate location. A review of employment change and an assessment of job needs has been undertaken in order that allocations of industrial land can be made to fulfil the previously stated aim. Employment generation is also promoted by other policies which serve to regenerate the District in the retail, service, agricultural diversification and tourism sectors.

Changes in the employment situation

- 4.5** Since the original Local Plan was prepared in 1982 the District has been seriously affected by economic decline. The overall number of jobs in the District is now well below the level of 1951 and has declined from 31,800 in 1981 to 21,600 in 1993. Since then, the County Council estimate that the number of jobs in the District has risen to 24,500. In overall terms, increases in employment in the manufacturing and service sectors have been insufficient to compensate for the demise of the coal mining industry. Since 1993 the number of people employed in the District has increased as new firms have located on major industrial estates at Peterlee and Seaham.

Mining

- 4.6** Since April 1982 all seven remaining collieries in the District (viz. Easington, Dawdon, Horden, Murton, Seaham, South Hetton and Vane Tempest) have closed with the loss of over 10,000 jobs.

Agriculture

- 4.7** The Census of Employment undertaken in 1993 revealed that 300 people were employed in agriculture in the District. On-going reforms of the European Community's Common Agricultural Policy are likely to result in a considerable reduction in agricultural employment throughout the country; however, they are unlikely to significantly affect the District since agriculture is not a major source of employment.

Manufacturing

- 4.8** Censuses of Employment carried out in between 1984 and 1993 revealed that manufacturing employment in the District had increased by 32% over the period to stand at 8,600 jobs. Most of these additional jobs were created on the major industrial estates at Peterlee and Seaham.

Services

- 4.9** Regional statistics indicate that jobs in services have increased quite rapidly since 1984. During the period 1984-93 service employment in Easington District increased by 8% to stand at 12,600.

Unemployment

- 4.10** The official unemployment figures are based on records of those claiming unemployment benefits. This consequently excludes certain people who are not in employment from appearing on the employment register such as those on Government sponsored training schemes, those who are economically active but out of work and not eligible for benefit and those who are deterred by the economic climate from seeking work at all. Because of these exclusions the Council consider that the official unemployment figures do not reveal the true level of unemployment in the District both in terms of absolute numbers and as a proportion of the economically active population.
- 4.11** An examination of the 1991 Census suggested that the official unemployment figures underestimated the 'real' level of unemployment throughout the District by a third.
- 4.12** Official unemployment percentages are no longer published for the District or for areas within it but ward-based unemployment figures suggest that the worst problems exist in the southern part of Seaham, the eastern part of Peterlee and in Murton.
- 4.13** Unemployment rates, previously published for Employment Exchange Areas, are now available only for Travel-to-Work Areas and further changes have been made to the way in which national and regional rates are calculated. Because of these various changes it is not possible to make meaningful comparisons with earlier figures, although some general indication of trend is possible. In the period 1984-1997 unemployment rates for the Travel-to-Work Areas covering Easington District have declined significantly as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Percentage (%) Registered Unemployment, April 1997
(September 1984 in brackets)

Area	Male	Female	Total
Sunderland TTWA	15.0 (26.8)	4.3 (15.9)	10.2 (22.4)
Hartlepool TTWA	19.6 (30.2)	5.0 (16.8)	12.8 (24.9)
Durham TTWA	10.8 (17.9)	3.1 (11.3)	7.0 (15.1)
County Durham	13.2 (22.5)	3.8 (14.3)	8.8 (19.3)
Northern Region	13.9 (22.6)	4.0 (14.0)	9.3 (19.1)
Great Britain	10.0 (15.8)	3.4 (10.2)	6.9 (13.4)

Source: *Monthly Registered Unemployment Statistics*

Travel out to work

- 4.14** Sunderland and Hartlepool are the main areas to which Easington District residents commute to work. The results of the 1991 Census indicate 7,300 residents from the District commuted to jobs outside the District. During the past fourteen years employment levels in both Sunderland and Hartlepool have stabilised at their 1982 levels. In overall terms, there are similar opportunities for travel out to work for residents of Easington District, as in 1982.

Activity rates

- 4.15** Census results show that the labour force has declined from 44,300 in 1981 to 44,100 in 1991. Recent projections indicate that the labour force will decline further to 40,100 in 2001 and 39,700 by 2006. These estimates assume a rising female activity rate within a general trend of stabilising population.

Future job requirement

- 4.16** The Task Force aims to reduce true unemployment in Easington District to at least the national average by the year 2001. Since the Local Plan is intended to be operational to the year 2006, job requirement figures have been prepared to this date. It is estimated

that 6,000 jobs will be needed between now and 2006 to reduce unemployment to the national average (see appendix 14).

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Locations for Industry and Business

Land requirements 1991 - 2006

4.17 Assuming a gross job density of 25 jobs per hectare (viz. the current density adopted in the Durham County Structure Plan) the 6000 jobs estimated to be required between 1991-2006 represent 240 hectares of industrial land to be developed. In reality, however, it is likely that less than 240 hectares will need to be allocated as it is expected that a number of new jobs will be created in other sectors, outside industrial estates, through the potential growth of the service sector, tourism, the regeneration of shopping centres and in agricultural diversification initiatives. It is also anticipated that new jobs will be created in the adjacent conurbations which will provide additional employment opportunities for residents living in the District.

Land available 1997

4.18 Table 2 details land available and allocated in the District at 1st April 1997. All figures are in hectares.

Industrial Estate	Gross area	Vacant floorspace	Land available (short Term)	Land available (long term)	Land under option	Expansion site	Under construction
Blackhall	2.15	17,750	0.108	0	0	0	0
Brackenhill	22.59	10,000	2.370	12.100	2.370	0	0
Cold Hesledon	9.049	11,250	0.252	0	0	0.095	0
Dalton Flatts	15.5	0	0	15.5	0	0	0
Dawdon	14.50	0	0	13.660	0	0	0
George Street, Seaham	0.78	0	0	0	0	0	0
Foxcover	23.0	0	0	18.050	0	0	0
Kingfisher, Seaham	0.65	2,400	0	0	0	0	0
North East, Peterlee	36.80	30,000	2.360	0	0	0	0
North West, Peterlee	140.30	200,361	25.950	0	8.180	0.230	1.200
Seaham Grange	27.44	56,746	7.594	0	0.460	1.100	0
Sea View, Horden	10.872	46,000	3.696	0	0.380	0.920	0

Shotton Colliery	2.028	1,601	0	0	0	0	0
South Hetton	3.7295	3,380	2.216	0	0	0	0
South West, Peterlee	95.52	74,913	1.490	16.400	0	4.090	0
Thornley Station	9.551	7,850	0.243	0	0	0	0
Wheatley Hill	1.10	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wheatley Hill Workshops	0.30	457	0	0	0	0	0
Wingate Grange	4.3284	8,450	0.520	0	0	0	0
Totals		471,158	46.7994	75.71	11.3902	6.4350	1.2000

Floorspace figures = sq ft
Land figures = hectares

Notes :

1. Figures for vacant buildings include buildings under construction.
2. Short term land is available for development within 12 months and includes expansion sites.
3. Long-term land is available for development after a period in excess of 12 months.

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New industrial land

4.19 Approximately 140 hectares of land and buildings is already available or has the benefit of planning permission for industrial purposes. To secure the objective of reducing unemployment to the national average by 2001, there is a requirement for more industrial land. The spatial strategy adopted to identify additional sites considered their location in proximity to the main centres, the accessibility of the sites to the A19 and other major routes, and the requirement for economic regeneration and the reuse of urban land.

4.20 An additional 33 hectares of land is proposed for allocation in the District Local Plan in the priority area of Seaham (including Murton) at the site of the former Hawthorn Coke Works (Policy 50). In addition, a further 23.3 hectares of land is proposed on small industrial estates, throughout the District (see Policy 51; development of small industrial estates).

Strategic Reserve Industrial Site

South of A19(T) - Dawdon Link Road

4.20A The County Durham Structure Plan identifies the need for a number of strategic reserve employment sites to be allocated in District Local Plans and held in reserve for single major employers. Within Easington District, a brownfield site had been identified at the former Hawthorn Coke Works which had become surplus to British Coal's requirements following the closure of Murton Colliery. (In this context, the term 'large scale' is used to refer to enterprises requiring a site of at least 40 hectares and providing substantial numbers of new jobs on site).

- 4.20B** However, English Partnerships have recently indicated that, given the levels of contamination, the identified Hawthorn Strategic Reserve Site can only accommodate 33 hectares of employment land in total, in two separate areas of approximately 23 hectares and 10 hectares. Hence, under the terms of Policy 20 of the County Durham Structure Plan, the Hawthorn Site is no longer appropriate as a strategic reserve site, given its limited size. In order for East Durham to remain as a location for strategic inward investment, there is a need to identify a replacement strategic reserve site.
- 4.20C** Studies have now been carried out assessing the potential of East Durham to accommodate sites (both greenfield and brownfield) that would be capable of development by large inward investors. Whilst the studies examined sites formerly associated with the mining industry, they concluded that these sites could not be considered suitable for strategic employment sites. Whilst central Government policy is to maximise the use of brownfield land this does not in itself rule out the development of greenfield sites where there are no alternatives. Furthermore the recent report of the Coalfields Taskforce 'Making the Difference' has taken the view that the economic problems of areas such as East Durham are so great that consideration should be given to relaxing or making more flexible normal planning policies. The lack of suitable brownfield sites for a strategic employment reserve site has therefore resulted in the need to carefully consider greenfield sites for the replacement strategic reserve site.
- 4.20D** A site has been identified immediately south of the new A19(T)-Dawdon link road, near to the main town of Seaham. The site comprises approximately 68 hectares of agricultural land (some of which is best and most versatile) and is broadly rectangular in shape. It will be possible to provide a single, level development area of 40 hectare within the site. The location of the site adjacent the Enterprise Zones of Dawdon and Fox Cover will provide an integrated approach to industrial development within East Durham.
- 4.20E** Vehicular access to the reserve site will be obtained from the A19(T)-Dawdon link road, thus providing excellent links to major routes that form part of the Strategic Transport Network, eg, Seaham Harbour and the A19(T). It is recognised that the development of this site would be a major trip generator but the concentration of economic development in this area, together with the housing development in Seaham, offers increased opportunities for improved and viable bus services, and in the longer term, the potential for Dawdon to be considered as an additional rail halt along the

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East Coast line (Policy 77). It will also offer increased opportunities for people to live close to their place of work thus reducing the length of journeys made. In accordance with the principles of sustainability, the development of this land by a single major inward investor, in close proximity to the Enterprise Zones should facilitate access by a choice of transport modes. This is a matter of particular importance in an area of high unemployment and low car ownership. Public transport, cycling and pedestrian accessibility measures will be incorporated as an integral part of the design and layout of the development. Facilities to enable this will need to be provided in accordance with Policy 36 (design for access).

- 4.20F** Whilst the number of people officially registered as unemployed in Easington District stood at 2255 in September 1998, it does not fully reflect unemployment levels. Hidden unemployment has a major impact on the local labour market as Easington District has high levels of the population on permanent sick and Government training schemes. Recent research by Sheffield Hallam University suggests that the real level of joblessness may be four times that indicated by the unemployment count. The availability of a strategic reserve employment site in East Durham will provide much need employment opportunities to reduce unemployment levels.
- 4.20G** In visual terms, the site is contained within a bowl formed by Kinley Hill to the east, high ground around East Farm, Cold Hesledon to the west and a low ridge to the south which separates the site from Hawthorn Dene. The site will be subject to an Environmental Assessment commissioned from independent consultants in order that full consideration can be given to the environmental impact of the development of the site and measures can be implemented to ameliorate any adverse impacts.
- 4.20H** The site does not contain any national or local landscape or nature conservation designations but it is located near to Hawthorn Dene and Hawthorn Quarry SSSI and Kinley Hill Tower (Grade II Listed Building). Nationally important archaeological remains have also

been found close to the site, at Cold Hesledon. Particular attention will therefore need to be given to the potential impact, both directly and indirectly, of the development and the opportunity to enhance the cultural and ecological interest of these sites should be taken, where possible. The location of the site within an aquifer protection zone will require adequate precautions to be put in place, subject to the prior agreement of the Environment Agency.

- 4.20I** In conclusion the Council recognises the need to minimise the use of greenfield land. However, given the strategic importance and need for the site, the lack of viable alternative brownfield sites of the right size in the right locations and the opportunities for improved and integrated public transport provision in the area, it is considered that the allocation of the site is justified.

Policy 49

68ha of land to the south of the A19(T) to Dawdon Link Road is reserved for a single major employer operating a large scale business or industrial enterprise. the piecemeal development of the site will not be allowed. Only suitable large scale proposals for class B1(business) or class B2 (general industry) will be approved, provided that:

- (i) the scheme would result in substantial employment or other economic benefits within East Durham;
- (ii) it can be demonstrated that the scheme could not be satisfactorily accommodated on any other existing or allocated site within the district;
- (iii) high standards of layout, building design and landscaping are achieved, in accordance with policy 34, and measures are taken to minimise the adverse effects on the AHLV, the listed building and important archaeological remains;
- (iv) there is no adverse effect on SSSIs or SNCIs, in accordance with policies 15 and 16;
- (v) safe, attractive and convenient access arrangements are made for pedestrians, cyclists, public transport and the private car, in accordance with Policy 36, and vehicular access is gained solely from A19(T) to Dawdon Link Road
- (vi) adequate measures are secured to enable a significant proportion of the District's residents to travel to and from the site for work by means other than the private car.

New Prestige Industrial Estate

- 4.21** Development of the former Hawthorn Coke Works would result in the loss of a limited amount of high grade agricultural land. However, it would bring a sizeable area of derelict land into productive use, and would generate much needed employment opportunities in a part of the District that has been badly affected by colliery closures with the loss of 2900 mining jobs between 1991 and 1993 as a result of the closure of Dawdon, Murton and Seaham/Vane Tempest collieries.
- 4.22** The former Hawthorn Coke Works, located in the countryside midway between South Hetton and Murton, covers an area of approximately 75 hectares and is broadly rectangular in shape. It has been transferred into the ownership of English Partnerships with a view to its reclamation and redevelopment as a site for industry. The proposal would involve preparing 33 hectares of the former Coke Works site for this purpose. The remainder of the former Coke Works site is considered unsuitable for industrial development due to the presence of high voltage overhead cables and concentrations of contaminated land and is, therefore, to be reclaimed to grassland, open space or landscaped as part of the reclamation proposals.
- 4.23** The former colliery site is currently heavily contaminated and pollutes the adjacent watercourse. As part of any reclamation scheme all the contaminants will need to be removed from the site or appropriately treated to enable the reuse of the land. Also as an integral part of any proposed redevelopment, drainage schemes will need to be prepared

in consultation with the Environment Agency and Northumbrian Water to ensure that the problem of water pollution is also rectified. The Murton Trunk Sewer, presently crossing the site, has insufficient capacity to accommodate the proposed industrial development. Northumbrian Water proposes to upgrade the sewer and provide additional capacity in the near future.

- 4.24** In visual terms the site is partly contained in the landscape being concealed from view to the south by Coop House Wood, to the west by Croup Hill, which rises to a height of 135 metres, and to the north by intervening land. The site would, however, be visible along parts of its eastern, western and northern aspects and an appropriate landscaping scheme, involving mounding, peripheral and internal tree planting will be necessary to minimise views from these aspects. This will need to be undertaken prior to any development taking place to enable planting to become established. In view of the countryside location of the site, it is imperative that any buildings are carefully sited and well designed.
- 4.25** The site is located near to the Hesleden Moor West SSSI and the Hesleden Moor East and South Murton Marsh SNCI. Other SSSIs are likely to be notified adjacent to the site in the future. Attention will therefore need to be given to the potential impact, both direct and indirect, of development here. The opportunity should be taken as part of any redevelopment proposal to enhance the wildlife interest of these sites.
- 4.26** Approximately 42 hectares of the former Hawthorn Colliery site is considered unsuitable for industrial development owing to the proximity of high voltage overhead electricity cables. Part of this land to the west of the site is in close proximity to the SSSI and provides an opportunity for the creating of additional wildlife habitat and integrating the land into the SSSI.
- 4.27** A key aim of the Plan is to foster the regeneration of the District. Effective regeneration requires that as many people as possible have a reasonable opportunity of working where the jobs are likely to be concentrated. Because car ownership is low and, particularly in the former colliery settlements, unemployment rates are relatively high, those opportunities can only be realised if adequate arrangements are secured to ensure that a significant proportion of the potential workforce can travel to employment sites by other means than the private car. That is especially important here not only because the site is large but also because, as a result of investment and new infrastructure, it will become one of the District's 'flagship' employment sites. In addition, the aim of achieving a sustainable form of regeneration and development requires that key employment sites (like this one) should be safely

and conveniently accessible by foot, bicycle and by public transport. The design and layout of the development should also have the capability of accommodating buses. Facilities to enable this will need to be provided in accord with Policy 36 (design for access). Measures will also be necessary to secure adequate public transport provision to and from the site. Developers will need to explore whether reasonable opportunities exist for re-routing or extending services, or for initiating new ones, so that public transport can offer a significant proportion of the District's residents a realistic means of travel to and from the site for work.

- 4.28** Vehicular access to the site is expected to be gained from the second phase of the Dawdon-A690 road (known as the Murton By Pass), which is proposed to pass through the site (see policy 78/paragraph 6.25) and is programmed to commence in the year 2001. As the timescale for implementing this road is uncertain it may be necessary to serve the site by an alternative route, such as the construction of the part of the Murton By Pass from the A19(T) to the site. The existing road from the site into Murton is not considered suitable to serve the proposed development as it would carry industrial traffic into the centre of the village, to the detriment of residents. This road will, therefore, need to be extinguished or its use restricted as part of any redevelopment scheme.'

Policy 50 - This policy has lapsed

~~The former Hawthorn Cokeworks will be reclaimed and redeveloped to provide 42ha of open space and landscaping and a 'prestige industrial estate extending to about 33ha: proposals for class B1 (business) class B2 (general industry) and class B8 (warehousing)~~

~~will be approved, provided that:~~

- ~~(i) adequate treatment and/or removal of contaminants on the site is completed~~
- ~~(ii) high standards of layout, building design and landscaping are achieved, in accordance with policy 35;~~
- ~~(iii) there is no adverse effect on SSSIs or SNCIs, in accordance with policies 15 and 16;~~
- ~~(iv) safe, attractive and convenient access arrangements are made for pedestrians, cyclists, public transport and the private car, in accordance with policy 36;~~
- ~~(v) adequate measures are secured to enable a significant proportion of the district's residents to travel to and from the site for work by means other than the private car.~~

- ~~1. English Partnerships will fund the reclamation scheme.~~
- ~~2. English Partnerships will prepare a development brief, based on the Environmental Impact assessment, to guide the redevelopment of the site.~~

Development of Small industrial estates

4.29 Although the major industrial estates should provide most of the industrial land required over the Plan period, the Council is aware of the need to provide a range of small industrial site/opportunities to expand existing sites. The provision of such sites is consistent with the County Structure Plan and can provide local job opportunities thus reducing the need for outward commuting.

4.30 Further details of the Blackhall and Sea View industrial estates are contained within paragraphs 9.11 and 17.12-17.14 of the respective settlement chapters. The Thornley Station estate lies just to the south of Shotton. It predominantly caters for bad neighbour industrial uses. It plays an important role in widening the range of local employment opportunities for a number of small former mining settlements in the area and in so doing reduces the need to travel longer distances to work. The estate is, however, now almost fully developed and a small extension is therefore proposed. The proposal involves the development of a small area of greenfield land. However, there are no other suitable alternative previously developed sites nearby. Moreover, utilising the existing location would prevent potentially adverse impacts on residential areas. The modest size of the proposal, its location adjacent a bus route, on the edge of one of the large colliery villages in the District and close to the main town of Peterlee, means that there would be no significant increase generated in the number of journeys by car. The site north of Murton Street, Murton is allocated for a range of alternative uses including industry and will play a key role in the regeneration of the village. Further details of this site are contained in paragraphs 19.20-19.24 of the Murton settlement chapter.

Policy 51

23.3 hectares of land is allocated for new small industrial estates/ expansion of existing estates at the following locations:

- (i) Blackhall Industrial Estate (5 ha) (see policy B3).
- (ii) Sea View Industrial Estate, horden (11 ha) (see policy Ho5).
- (iii) Thornley Station Estate (3 ha).
- (iv) North of Murton Street, Murton (4.3 ha) (see policy M8).

Implementation

1. *Subject to the availability of finance the Council will develop small industrial estates listed above.*
2. *The Council will approach the Rural Development Commission with a view to them undertaking these developments themselves or on a partnership basis with the Council. Grant aid will also be sought from the European Unions Objective 2 or RECHAR programmes.*

Monitoring

- 4.31** Whilst the priorities and sites allocated in the Plan are based on the most up to date information available, the employment situation and future requirements are very difficult to predict beyond the next two or three years. Monitoring will, therefore, be very important. If sites currently available are developed sooner than expected or new sites allocated within the Plan subsequently prove to be difficult to develop or long delays seem likely, or further sites are required, the Council will consider making additional allocations or substituting alternative sites. In such circumstances the Council may need to bring forward additional sites as departures from the Plan. It is therefore essential that the Council adopts a flexible approach to the allocation of industrial land.

Premises, incentives and training

- 4.32** The allocation of sufficient land of the right type is an essential pre-requisite of industrial development but to be successful, an industrial development strategy must include other features. Most importantly a supply of suitable premises should be readily available and financial incentives and training initiatives that are offered in the District should be vigorously promoted.

Premises

- 4.33** In recent years the District Council, County Council and the former Aycliffe and Peterlee Development Corporation, together with the Rural Development Commission, English Partnerships (formerly English Estates) and the former British Coal Enterprise Ltd. have undertaken an important programme of advance factory construction in the District aiming to ensure that a variety of premises is available. Since 1983, the District Council has expended over £4.7 million on the provision of 175,000 square feet on factory floorspace on its ten industrial estates throughout the District. Due to budgetary limitations and other spending priorities the Council's factory building programme is in abeyance. During the Plan period the Council will encourage the other agencies and the private sector to construct factory units on these estates.
- 4.34** In addition to new construction there is a role for the conversion of existing buildings. The re-use of such buildings and the associated infrastructure can sometimes be very cost-effective. An additional benefit is that conversion brings back into use buildings which could otherwise become derelict. The conversion of these buildings is encouraged by Policy 59 (re-use and adaptation of buildings in the countryside for industry and business).

Financial incentives

- 4.35** Financial incentives can play an important part in the decision of a firm to locate in a new area. In December 1995 the Government designated 92 hectares of land as Enterprise Zone on prestige industrial estates at Seaham Grange, Dawdon, Foxcover, Peterlee North-West/South-West Industrial Estates and at the Brackenhill Business Park. The Enterprise Zones offer a range of financial incentives including exemption from business rates for industrial and commercial enterprises and a 100% allowance for corporation and income tax purposes for capital expenditure on industrial and commercial building.
- 4.36** A range of other financial incentives is available from the Department of Trade and Industry because the District is classed as a Development Area, though the western part which lies within the Durham Travel To Work Area, has Intermediate Area status.
- 4.37** The Rural Development Commission offers grant aid for a range of economic development, environmental and social and community projects within Rural Development Areas (RDAs). In 1994 the Commission completed a review of the RDAs and designated the whole of the District (outside the settlements of Seaham, Peterlee and Horden) as being eligible for assistance.

- 4.38** In addition, Easington District Council operates a number of special incentives, through the East Durham Development Agency, such as rent-free periods, start-up grants and consultancy grants. Other incentives and loans are available from Central Government, from the European Regional Development Fund, and the European Coal and Steel Community.
- 4.39** The County Council, as part of its aim of regenerating the economy and reducing population losses from the east and west of the County, operates a range of incentives within Easington District, including rates equivalent grants, business consultancy grants, property development grants, small business grants and site preparation grants. This package of incentives is currently being reviewed by the County Council, as part of the preparation of its Economic Development Strategy. Further incentives, including financial and professional advice, are available from the Rural Development Commission and the County Durham Training and Enterprise Council (TEC).

Industrial promotion

- 4.40** Aycliffe/Peterlee Development Corporation was wound up on 31st March 1988 following the sale of its industrial assets to Helical Bar plc. The former Development Corporation's role in industrial promotion has now been assumed by the East Durham Development Agency which is supported by the Council and private firms in the area. Other agencies with a role in the promotion of the area's economic development include the Northern Development Company, the County Council, the County Durham Development Company, County Durham TEC, the Rural Development Commission and One NorthEast.

Training

- 4.41** The provision of a skilled workforce plays an important role in enabling existing local firms to expand and attract new firms to the area. A number of organisations operate in the District with responsibility for delivering training including the County Durham TEC, the County and District Councils, East Durham Community College and the private sector. The Employment Service is also active in this field through the training, employment and enterprise programme.

Industrial land uses

- 4.42** The District contains four broad types of industrial estates: business parks, prestige estates, general industrial estates and small industrial estates. The types of uses permitted on these estates are controlled to ensure that they remain attractive to existing businesses and incoming industrialists and to ensure that the overall environment of the locality and the District is both preserved and enhanced. The land use classes cited in the following policies are defined in the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 and its subsequent amendments, as of January 1995 (see appendix 13.)

Enterprise Zones

- 4.43** Enterprise Zone status has been granted to the business park at Brackenhill and to the proposed Foxcover and Dawdon industrial estates together with land at Seaham Grange, Peterlee South West and Peterlee North West industrial estates. Within these zones, special financial advantages apply including exemption from business rates for industrial and commercial enterprises and a 100% allowance for corporation and income tax purposes for capital expenditure on industrial and commercial building together with a simplified planning regime. As part of the approved Enterprise Zone Scheme planning permission has been granted for the erection of buildings or use of land for businesses included in Class B1, B2 and B8 of the Use Classes Order 1987 at Foxcover, Dawdon, Seaham Grange and the Peterlee estates and for Class B1 use only at Brackenhill. Providing that a proposal falls within these use classes, no further permission is needed other than for prescribed details.

Brackenhill Business Park

- 4.44** In order to assist with the diversification of the local economy, following the demise of the coal mining industry the County Council is constructing a business park on 23 hectares of land to the south of the Peterlee South West Industrial Estate of Brackenhill. Planning permission was granted for the development in December 1992 and the first phase of the site has been serviced with roads and infrastructure. The marketing of the Park will be boosted by its designation as an Enterprise Zone. As part of the approved Enterprise Zone scheme planning permission has been granted for the erection of buildings/use of land in the Business Park for businesses in Class B1 Use Classes Order 1987.

Prestige industrial estates

- 4.45** Prestige industrial estates are high quality major industrial estates capable of competing against very attractive sites elsewhere in the country. For sites to be so designated they must have high quality landscaping and building design and good access to motorways and residential areas. The following prestige industrial estates have been designated in the District: Seaham Grange, Foxcover, Dawdon Colliery, together with 14.44 hectares of land south of Shotton Road, Peterlee South West Industrial Estate and 12.16 hectares north of Shotton Road on the North West Industrial Estate. Further details are contained in Table 2.
- 4.46** To ensure that local environmental quality is maintained to a high standard it is considered necessary to impose certain limitations on the types of uses permissible on prestige industrial estates. B2 (general industry) uses may be generally appropriate where there are no serious environmental effects; however, where they are likely to cause environmental problems they are unlikely to be appropriate as their presence may dissuade other industrial development from locating on nearby sites. There is also a need to ensure that the pollution free atmosphere required by many new technology industries exists. It should be noted that the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 removes those permitted development rights relating to a change of use class or a change in the nature of any existing operation that is within the same use class where any proposal would require an environmental assessment under the terms of the Town and Country Planning (Assessment of Environmental Effects) Regulations 1988.
- 4.47** It is also necessary to prohibit retail developments on prestige industrial estates because the special efforts and extra resources which are being devoted to enhancing and maintaining industrial sites to a prestige quality should not be wasted. Exceptions to this general approach may be appropriate where retailing is of a small scale and is designed to serve the daily needs of workers on the estate and where it is related to the subsidiary sale of products manufactured on the estate, in accord with Policy 105 (retailing on industrial estates).
- 4.48** With the exception of those parts of the Seaham Grange Industrial Estate, which have been developed, all the prestige industrial sites have been designated as Enterprise Zones. Policy 52 applies to that part of Seaham Grange which does not form part of the Enterprise Zone.

Policy 52

The part of Seaham Grange Industrial Estate excluded from the Enterprise Zone is designated as a prestige estate. proposals for class B1 (business), B2 (general industry) and B8 (warehousing) will be approved provided:

- (i) the proposal incorporates high standards of site layout building design and landscaping in accordance with policy 35; and
- (ii) external storage is to the rear of buildings and is well screened; and
- (iii) the proposal would not detract from the environment of the estate as a whole.

Retail developments will only be approved where such development accords with policy 105 (retailing on industrial estates).

Existing General industrial estates

- 4.49** Three strategic industrial estates have been developed on the North East, North West and

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the development of a further 15.5 hectare industrial estate at Dalton Flatts following the completion of the reclamation scheme. Details of the availability of land and premises on these estates are contained in Table 2. Parts of the North West and South West Industrial Estates are designated as Prestige Sites and Enterprise Zones (see para 4.45). The remainder of the land on these estates, together with vacant premises are considered suitable for business use, or warehousing (Classes B1 and B8, Use Classes Order). B2 (general industry) uses may be appropriate where there are no serious environmental effects, however, where they are likely to cause environmental problems they are unlikely to be appropriate as their presence may dissuade other industrial development from locating on nearby sites. It should be noted that the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 removes those permitted development rights relating to a change of use class or a change in the nature of any existing operation that is within the same use class where any proposal would require an environmental assessment under the terms of the Town and Country Planning (Assessment of Environmental Effects) Regulations 1988. In certain specific circumstances retail uses may also be appropriate on these sites in accordance Policy 105 (retailing on industrial estates).

Policy 53

General industrial estates are designated at the following locations:

- (i) Peterlee north east;
- (ii) Peterlee north west (outside the EZ);
- (iii) Peterlee south west (outside the EZ);
- (iv) Dalton Flatts, Murton.

The following uses will be allowed on the general industrial estates: class B1 (business), class B2 (general industry) and B8 (warehousing) and retail uses as permitted by policy 105 (retailing on industrial estates).

Existing Small industrial estates

- 4.50** In order to assist the diversification of the local economy the Council has constructed ten small industrial estates at the following locations: Blackhall, Cold Hesledon, George Street (Seaham), Kingfisher (Seaham), Sea View/Phoenix (Horden), South Hetton, Shotton Colliery, Thornley Station, Wheatley Hill Workshops and Wingate Grange. Over 110 factory units have been built on these estates providing an important source of accommodation for small businesses and new start up firms which serve local markets. They also help to create local employment opportunities.
- 4.51** With the exception of Cold Hesledon and Thornley Station, the small industrial estates are located in towns and villages and tend to adjoin residential areas. It is important that the activities carried out on these estates do not create environmental problems. It should be noted that the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 removes those permitted development rights relating to a change of use class or a change in the nature of any existing operation that is within the same use class where any proposal would require an environmental assessment under the terms of the Town and Country Planning (Assessment of Environmental Effects) Regulations 1988.
- 4.52** In contrast, the Thornley Station Industrial Estate occupies a countryside location 400m to the south of Shotton Colliery and is remote from houses. The estate has been able to accommodate bad neighbour uses, which are those within the B2 Use Class or no use class at all (sui generis) which may have adverse environmental implications, without seriously adversely affecting residential amenity and the environment. The proposed extension is some 800m to the south of the settlement.

Policy 54

Small industrial estates are designated at the following locations:

- (i) Blackhall Colliery
- (ii) Cold Hesledon
- (iii) George Street, Seaham
- (iv) Kingfisher, Seaham
- (v) Sea View/Phoenix, Horden
- (vi) South Hetton
- (vii) Shotton Colliery
- (viii) Thornley Station
- (ix) Wheatley Hill Workshops
- (x) Wingate Grange

The following uses will be allowed on these small industrial estates: class B1 (business), B2 (general industry) and B8 (warehousing) and retail uses as permitted by policy 105 (retailing on industrial estates).

Bad neighbour uses may also be allowed at Thornley Station.

Office development

- 4.53** Large scale commercial, administrative and research activities serving a wide area generally require major office buildings. The most suitable location for such developments, because their requirements usually include advanced communications, related service

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industries and good public and private transport links, will normally be the centre of major towns. However, if advantage is to be taken of any potential office growth, the locational policy for this type of development should be reasonably flexible. The Brackenhill Business Park and prestige industrial sites listed in paragraphs 4.44-4.45 may attract a major office development with a high standard of layout and design, for which a suitable town centre site is unavailable. An office park may, therefore, be appropriate on a prestige industrial estate. Such a development would be predominantly for business uses and preferably would include a major user such as a Government department or a company's headquarters. Alternatively, there may be opportunities to convert large dwellings standing in their own extensive grounds into offices, provided the proposal does not adversely affect the character, amenity or appearance of the building/area and does not create highway problems. With any major office development it will be necessary to have particular regard to traffic generation and, in the shopping centres, the need to maintain the character and vitality of the shopping area in accord with Policy 112 (non-retail uses).

~~Policy 55 - This policy has lapsed~~

~~New major office developments (class B1) will be approved in or on sites adjoining the main shopping centres of Seaham and Peterlee, or on the prestige industrial estates, including the part of the Seaham grange prestige industrial estate excluded from the enterprise zone, provided they accord with policy 1 of the plan and the principles relating to design and layout, access, parking and designing out crime and design for art, set out in policies 35-39.~~

Implementation

1. The shopping centres for each town are defined within the appropriate settlement chapters.

In the Countryside

Agriculture and Forestry

- 4.54** Whilst it is important to protect the appearance of the countryside, development is essential if the health and vitality of the rural economy is to be maintained and enhanced. Agriculture and forestry are important sectors of the rural economy.
- 4.55** The countryside can accommodate many forms of development without detriment if the location and design of development is handled with sensitivity. Many agricultural and forestry buildings do not require specific planning permission because of permitted development rights, however, such developments are subject to a process of prior approval. This enables the Council to consider the potential impact of the proposed development on the landscape and the appearance of the local area and its relationship to any areas of designated importance such as conservation areas and sites of special scientific interest etc. Any proposal will be considered in relation to species and habitat protection as indicated in Policy 18.
- 4.56** In general, however, new development in rural areas should be sensitively designed and located in relation to existing settlement patterns and buildings and to the historic, wildlife and landscape resources of the area in order to protect the character and appearance of the countryside. Where it is necessary, for operational reasons, to locate development in an isolated position it should be sited to minimise its visual prominence and it should be appropriately screened.

Policy 56 - This policy has lapsed

~~Development in the countryside for agriculture and, forestry will be granted planning permission provided that:~~

- ~~(i) where appropriate, it is adjacent to existing development;~~
- ~~(ii) where it is in an isolated position the proposal incorporates adequate screening;~~
- ~~(iii) it does not have a serious adverse affect upon the amenity, character or appearance of the land and/or building(s);~~

Diversification of the use of agricultural land

- 4.57** The increasing efficiency of agricultural producers and changes in agricultural policy means that retaining as much land as possible in agricultural use no longer has the same priority. It is now more important to promote diversification of the rural economy so as to provide wide and varied employment opportunities for rural people, including those formerly employed in agriculture and related sectors.
- 4.58** Development of land for agriculture, forestry and informal recreation and small-scale tourism or craft-related schemes connected with the diversification of farm enterprises may, therefore, be acceptable provided it remains a subsidiary function relative to the main agricultural operation, if it sustains the rural economy and it helps to preserve the character of the countryside without detracting from its appearance. Any proposal will also be considered in relation to species and habitat protection as indicated in Policy 18.

Policy 57 - This policy has lapsed

~~The development of agricultural land and buildings for uses related to the diversification of the agricultural operation will be approved provided that the proposal satisfies the following conditions:-~~

- ~~(i) it does not have a serious adverse affect upon the amenity, character or appearance of the land and or building(s);-~~
- ~~(ii) the site can be served by roads capable of accommodating any increase in traffic generated by the development.~~

~~New buildings related to agricultural diversification will only be approved where they are adjoining an existing grouping, are well designed and located where they would not otherwise adversely affect the character and appearance of the countryside.~~

New industrial development in the countryside

- 4.59 Industrial development in the countryside is generally undesirable as it involves journeys to work on routes which are not well served by public transport, is likely to detract from the appearance of the District and may involve the development of high quality agricultural land. There are situations, however, where small-scale development of this nature may be appropriate to a rural location, for example when the processing of minerals or agricultural produce needs to be located close to the source of the raw material. Such development may help to maintain and promote rural employment. Modest extensions to existing industrial uses in the countryside may also be acceptable provided they do not create nuisance or amenity problems or seriously detract from the appearance of the area. Any proposal will also be considered in relation to species and habitat protection as indicated in Policy 18. Major expansion or new investment should take place on an industrial estate.

Policy 58 -This policy has lapsed

~~New industrial development in the countryside will only be approved provided it is directly related to the winning, processing, treatment and transportation of minerals or the processing of agricultural and forestry products, if it is essential for such processing to take place close to the source of raw materials and where the proposal satisfies the following conditions:-~~

- ~~(i) it does not have a serious adverse affect upon the amenity, character or appearance of the land and or building(s);-~~
- ~~(ii) the site can be served by roads capable of accommodating any increase in traffic generated by the development;~~
- ~~(iii) permission for such development will be related to the expected life of the raw material source.~~

~~Extensions to existing industrial uses in the countryside will be approved provided that the proposal does not have a serious adverse affect upon the amenity, character or appearance of the area.~~

Re-use and adaptation of buildings in the countryside for industry and business

- 4.60 There may be opportunities to re-use and adapt sound agricultural buildings and other premises in the countryside for new uses. Such buildings could provide accommodation for small businesses involved in a range of uses including art and craft, industrial, sporting, recreational or tourism uses and farm shops and thereby aid the diversification of the rural economy. The re-use and adaptation of buildings in the countryside into residential dwellings may also be appropriate provided certain conditions are met as detailed in Policy 70 (re-use and adaptation of buildings in the countryside for residential use).
- 4.61 The structural condition of the building must be basically sound and the proposal must not require the removal of the bulk of the external fabric of the building such as the roof structure, complete walls etc. for any conversion to residential use to be considered.

The developer may be required to provide an expert structural survey to demonstrate that the building is structurally sound and capable of adequate and appropriate conversion to the proposed use. If extensive rebuilding works are required, the proposal will be considered as industrial development in the countryside and would be determined in terms of Policy 58.

- 4.62** It is considered important, however, that any such conversion does not detract from the character of the countryside or the immediate locality. A number of these buildings may be of architectural, historic or visual merit. In these instances it is important to ensure that any conversions do not damage or alter the character of the building, which may in themselves be a feature in the countryside. Proposals should be sympathetic to the need to conserve the rural character. Agricultural and other buildings in the countryside are often important for protected species such as owls and Policy 18 (species and habitat protection) will need to be considered, where applicable.

Policy 59 - This policy has lapsed

~~The re-use and adaptation of sound buildings in the countryside into class B1 (business), B2 (general industry), class B8 (storage and distribution), class C1 (hotels) uses, farm shops, (which accord with policy 107) holiday cottages or other sporting, art, craft, tourist or recreational uses will be approved, provided the proposal fulfils the following criteria:~~

- ~~(i) it does not have a serious adverse affect upon the amenity, character or appearance of the area;~~
- ~~(ii) in the case of buildings of architectural, historical or visual merit, it does not damage or substantially alter the character of the building;~~
- ~~(iii) the site can be served by roads capable of accommodating any increase in traffic generated by the development.~~

Re-use of dwellings in the countryside

- 4.63** Throughout Easington District there are a number of dwellings standing in their own extensive grounds. Although many of these buildings are not of visual, architectural or historic importance they are an important feature of the area. The size of these buildings can, however, militate against continuing residential use and consequently there is likely to be a demand for changes of use. Although some dwellings can lend themselves to conversion to flats, existing internal arrangements can make this impractical. There may be opportunities to convert these dwellings into hotels, offices, business or industrial uses provided the character of the building is retained and adequate opportunities already exist for car parking and access, and the proposal does not adversely affect the character, amenity or appearance of the area. Evidence will normally be required to prove that the building is structurally sound and capable of conversion without significant demolition and rebuilding.

Policy 60 - This policy has lapsed

~~The sub-division or re-use of large dwellings in the countryside into residential flats, class B1 (business), B2 (general industry), class C1 (hotel), or other sporting, art, craft, tourist or recreational uses will be approved provided the proposal fulfils all the following criteria:~~

- ~~(i) it does not have a serious adverse affect upon the amenity, character or appearance of the area;~~
- ~~(ii) it does not damage or substantially alter the character of the building;~~
- ~~(iii) the site can be served by roads capable of accommodating any increase in traffic generated by the development.~~

Other industry and business policies

Industrial estate enhancements

- 4.64** Industrial estates have been developed throughout the District for over 40 years. As a consequence several of the older estates are not up to modern day standards. The factory units are outdated and in need of upgrading. These estates also suffer from problems of break-ins and vandalism and this creates difficulties in letting the units. Security measures to combat this problem also need to be provided. On certain estates the quality of the physical environment is poor and would benefit from comprehensive landscaping schemes to enhance their visual appearance and to provide a wildlife resource. The use of native tree and herbaceous species will be encouraged. In a number of instances, car parking

provision is inadequate and results in vehicles being parked on the highways.

- 4.65** In 1991 the Council launched a new initiative to upgrade/enhance the Council's industrial estates in order to make them more attractive to prospective industrialists, to help safeguard existing businesses and to upgrade the area. The success of this initiative also depends on the involvement of existing industrialists. The East Durham Groundwork Trust is, therefore, involved in encouraging industrialists to improve their premises through its "Brightsite"

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initiative. The Council is also setting up liaison groups to work with the industrialists on the initiative. The County Council, through its economic development strategy, is also seeking to implement similar initiatives on those other estates in the District not owned by the District Council.

Policy 61 - This policy has lapsed

~~An industrial estate enhancement/revitalisation programme is proposed covering the following estates: Blackhall, Cold Heslodon, Peterlee North East, Seaham Kingfisher, Shotton Colliery, South Hetton, Wheatley Hill Workshops, Wingate Grange, Sea View, Seaham Grange and Peterlee North-West and South West.~~

~~The works proposed in this initiative will include, where appropriate:~~

- ~~(i) the refurbishment of factory units;~~
- ~~(ii) comprehensive landscaping schemes;~~
- ~~(iii) the provision of off-street parking facilities;~~
- ~~(iv) improved security systems.~~

Implementation

1. *Finance will be sought from the Rural Development Commission / Countryside Commission / European Commission, and the Council's funding programmes, as appropriate.*

Working from home

- 4.66** Businesses are often started by people in their own homes. The operation of a business from a dwellinghouse does not necessarily require planning permission provided there is no change in the overall character of the property's use as a residence. However, where the business use becomes dominant or intrusive resulting in a change to the character of the dwelling, planning permission will be required.
- 4.67** Many businesses can be carried out in residential areas without disturbance to the occupiers of neighbouring properties. Others, however, can cause significant problems owing to the nature of the activity itself or through the level of deliveries and callers to the property. It is important to ensure, therefore, that those activities run from home do not seriously detract from the amenity of neighbouring properties.
- 4.68** The encouragement of new and existing small businesses from home can assist in the diversification of the local economy and the creation of new job opportunities. Home working can also serve to reduce the need to travel to/from work and thereby contribute to the objective of energy conservation and the reduction of carbon dioxide emissions.

Policy 62

The operation of a small business from a residence requiring planning permission will only

be approved where there is no serious adverse impact on the amenity of nearby properties or the character of the area by reason of visual intrusion, noise, other pollutants and traffic generation.

Control of taxi businesses

- 4.69** The operation of taxi businesses will in many cases require planning permission. In residential areas and in the case of dwelling-houses, the operation of a single vehicle by the occupier which is also a personal mode of transport may not require permission unless the character of the dwelling changes. The operation of more than one vehicle from such a dwelling, the installation of radio equipment and the attraction of other vehicles and drivers to that dwelling would, however, in the majority of cases involve a material change of use. In these circumstances the operation of such a business is likely to result in noise and disturbance to residents as well as indiscriminate parking leading to conditions prejudicial to road safety.
- 4.70** Taxi businesses are more likely to be able to operate in town and local shopping centres without causing noise and disturbance to local residents. This depends, however, on whether there are any adjacent residential properties, the number of vehicles operated, the operational hours of the particular use, the provision of driver and/or customer waiting facilities, provision for vehicle maintenance and the availability of off-street car parking. Such operations should function without serious nuisance being caused, and provide sufficient off-street parking.
- 4.71** Similarly, taxi businesses are also more likely to be able to operate on industrial estates without causing undue noise and disturbance. However, such use should not be at the expense of economic activities that are capable of generating more direct and indirect job opportunities.

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Policy 63

The operation of taxi businesses from dwelling-houses in residential areas will not normally be approved.

Planning permission for taxi businesses in town and local shopping centres will be approved where serious problems of noise, disturbance and traffic hazards would not arise and where the vitality or viability of the shopping area is not detrimentally affected.

Planning permission for taxi businesses on general and small industrial estates will be approved where serious problems of noise, disturbance and traffic hazards would not arise and where a shortage of readily available serviced industrial land and/or buildings would not result.

Hazardous substances and associated development

- 4.72** The Planning (Hazardous Substances) Act 1990 introduced new controls over the storage and use of hazardous substances. There are considered to be no suitable sites in the District to accommodate new uses which may lead to a significant risk of major fire, explosion or toxic hazard. No sites are, therefore, allocated for this purpose in the Plan. Proposals which do lead to serious risk to people living and working in the vicinity of sites shall be refused hazardous substances consent. This would be the case in either the extension of existing facilities or the introduction of completely new installations which would have such an effect on the health and safety of people in the vicinity. Such uses are unlikely to be appropriately located in the countryside.

Policy 64 - This policy has lapsed

~~Proposals involving development of existing notifiable hazardous installations or the introduction of new notifiable hazardous substances will be granted hazardous substances consent within defined settlement boundaries or on designated industrial estates where:~~

- ~~(i) proposals are not considered to present significant health and safety risks to people living and working within the vicinity of application sites;~~
- ~~(ii) the related safeguarding zone or extended safeguarding zone required for consultation purposes with the health and safety executive does not significantly inhibit the full development of adjacent industrial sites or nearby development sites.~~

Bad neighbour uses

- 4.73** Within the District there are a number of businesses which can be described as "bad neighbour uses". These are uses within the B2 Use Class or no use class at all (sui generis) which may have adverse environmental implications and include activities such as coal depots, motor vehicle salvage operations, haulage depots or waste transfer stations. Uses of this nature can have a generally adverse affect on their surrounding areas particularly in terms of noise, smell and dust which can emanate from such concerns. In many cases such uses are inappropriately located in or adjacent to newer industrial estates or in residential areas. It is accepted that in certain cases, these businesses are already established adjacent residential areas throughout the District.
- 4.74** New development of this nature should only take place where there is no significant nuisance to adjacent premises and occupiers in terms of noise, dust, smell, smoke or visual intrusion where the proposals would not seriously adversely affect the character and appearance of the area and where the development would not cause conditions prejudicial to road safety. Such uses are unlikely to be appropriately located in the countryside.
- 4.75** Applications involving the use of land for the carrying out of operations in or on land for the deposit of refuse or waste materials, or applications concerning the erection of any building, plant or machinery designed to be used wholly or mainly for treating, storing, processing or disposing of refuse or waste materials are deemed to be the responsibility of the County Council.

Policy 65 -This policy has lapsed

~~The development, use or extension of sites for bad neighbour uses will only be approved within defined settlement boundaries or on designated industrial estates where:~~

- ~~(i) it will not have an adverse impact on occupiers of adjacent premises in terms of noise, dust, smell, smoke or visual intrusion;~~
- ~~(ii) the proposal would not be seriously detrimental to the character and appearance of the area and is adequately screened;~~
- ~~(iii) the site can be served by roads capable of accommodating any increase in traffic generated by the development;~~
- ~~(iv) the site is of a sufficient size to accommodate the use and adequate car parking and servicing provision.~~



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Housing

Summary of policies

Housing Land Distribution

- 66. [Provision of outdoor playspace](#)
- 67. [Windfall housing sites](#)

Housing Development in the Countryside

- 68. ~~Housing development in the countryside~~ - This policy has lapsed
- 69. ~~Rural workers dwellings~~ - This policy has lapsed
- 70. ~~Re-use and adaptation of buildings in the countryside for residential use~~ - This policy has lapsed

Other Housing Development

- 71. [Rest homes, nursing homes, and sheltered accommodation](#)
- 72. [Control of sites for travellers](#)

Housing Improvement

- 73. [Extensions and/or alterations to dwellinghouses](#)

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Introduction

- 5.1 The primary role of the Local Plan in relation to housing is to ensure that adequate land is allocated in the most suitable locations to meet new housebuilding requirements over the Plan period in accordance with Objective D2 of the Development Strategy and Objectives S1 and S2 of the Spatial Strategy, which seek to promote a sustainable pattern of housing development in the District. This chapter also establishes policies in relation to housing development in the countryside, other forms of housing development and the design of extensions to dwellings.
- 5.2 The Local Plan cannot deal with certain housing issues and problems where they are addressed under housing legislation rather than the Planning Acts. These include aspects of housing conditions, housing management and various means of improving the housing environment. This chapter does, however, consider the improvement of the housing stock and environment where this can be achieved or promoted through planning powers, in accordance with Objectives E1 and E2 of the Environment Strategy, respectively. In this way, the Council seeks to undertake and implement a corporate approach to the preparation and co-ordination of the Local Plan and the Council's Housing Strategy.

Tenure

- 5.3 When the Easington District Local Plan was originally prepared in 1982 the District had a marked tenure imbalance, with 57% of all dwellings being owned by the Council and only 30% of dwellings being owner-occupied. Since then, however, as a result of sales of Council and British Coal properties and construction in the private housing sector, the

balance of tenures has changed. In April 1997, 33% of all dwellings were owned by the Council, whilst 63% were owner occupied. Nationally approximately 25% of dwellings are publicly owned and 65% privately owned. It is likely that, with continuing sales of Council properties and further private housing development, changes in the tenure of the District's housing stock will continue over the Plan period.

Housing clearance

- 5.4 The last of the Council's slum clearance schemes was completed during the early 1980s. The level of housing clearance is likely to be on a lower level than in previous decades. Continuing reductions in the amount of finance available and the introduction of 'means tests' for renovation and repair grants will, however, lead to an increase in the amount of sub-standard stock beyond the Plan period and an increase in the number of properties which have to be cleared. The Plan therefore assumes that there will be a relatively high level of clearance during the Plan period. A number of the former British Coal houses in Easington Colliery and Dawdon are vacant and in a substandard condition. The future of these dwellings is considered in the relevant settlement chapters.

Declining public finance

- 5.5 Over the past few years the Council has been faced with substantial cuts in the finance made available under the Housing Investment Programme (HIP) which has curtailed the Council's various housing programmes. In April 1990, a new system of capital expenditure was introduced with the Government specifying borrowing approval for its housing and other functions (this is considered in detail in the Implementation chapter). The national trend of continuing reductions in the availability of finance has continued under the new system of credit approvals.

Council housing

- 5.6 The District's total population is likely to stabilise/increase slightly during the Plan period (see para. 5.12). When coupled with changing social trends, whereby the number of people living together as a household is decreasing, there is a consequent need for more dwellings and specifically dwellings which meet the housing needs of these smaller households. In the past the Council has attempted to meet this need through the construction of purpose-built dwellings and the conversion/adaptation of existing dwellings. Due to other spending priorities, the Council's involvement in providing new dwellings is likely to be limited. The Council will be increasingly dependent on housing associations and other bodies to provide dwellings to meet housing need.

New initiatives

- 5.7 Although finance for Council housebuilding will be limited over the Plan period, the Council can make a positive contribution to the housing market through other means. Where appropriate, the Council will contribute to partnership schemes with private housebuilders and/or housing associations. In addition, guidance will be given to new housing initiatives such as self-build schemes and housing co-operatives.

Private housing

- 5.8 Between April 1982 and April 1998 over 2258 private dwellings have been built in Easington District, compared with just over 520 units built by the local authority and housing associations. The majority of the private houses were built on large estates in Peterlee and Seaham although significant developments occurred in a number of the former colliery settlements notably at Murton, South Hetton, Shotton, Wingate and Blackhall. The majority of public sector housing was built in the early 1980's. Because the Council's contribution to housebuilding over the Plan period is likely to be very limited greater reliance will have to be placed on the private sector to ensure an adequate supply of housing in the District. Indeed, the East Durham Task Force's Programme for Action recognises the very important role private housing development will have in the regeneration of many of the former colliery settlements and in the District as a whole.

Definition of housing development

- 5.9 For the purposes of the Local Plan 'housing development' is considered to include the following:
- (i) a new building to be used for residential purposes;

- (ii) substantial extensions to an existing residential building (i.e. so as to fundamentally change the character of the building and/or be potentially capable of sub-division for use as a separate dwelling unit);
- (iii) the change to residential use of the whole or part of an existing building;
- (iv) the sub-division of an existing residential building to form additional residential units;
- (v) a residential caravan in permanent occupation;
- (vi) the rebuilding of a building previously used for residential purposes involving either:
 - (a) the demolition of an existing building and the construction of a new building in its place;
 - (b) or the use of an existing building where the bulk of the building's external fabric would not be retained.

5.10 Small extensions to existing dwellings, provided they are not of a scale or nature which would fundamentally alter the character of an existing building and are not capable of potential use as a separate dwelling unit, are not covered by the definition of housing development.

Housing Land Requirements

5.11 Durham County Council has prepared a review of the County Durham Structure Plan, covering the period 1991-2006. The Structure Plan Review was considered at an Examination in Public held in Autumn 1996, modifications were published in January 1997, and in November 1998, the County Council resolved to adopt the modified Plan. Following the placement of the modified Plan 'on deposit,' it was formally adopted on 25th March 1999.

5.12 In its strategic development and housing policies, the Structure Plan Review repeats and expands upon national and regional guidance in respect of the amount and location of residential development. The Structure Plan Review envisages that the population of Easington District will stabilise at around 98,000 by the year 2006. Policy 7 instructs the District Council to make land available for the development of an additional 2,700 dwellings during the period 1991-2006 in addition to those needed to replace cleared dwellings.

5.13 Policy 3 seeks to concentrate future housing development in the two main towns of Peterlee and Seaham. Policy 9 re-emphasises that the main towns should be the principal locations for new housing development land that elsewhere provision should be made, in local plans, for housing development consistent with the scale and function of other settlements served by public transport and with a reasonable range of services and facilities.

Housing Land Requirement 1998-2006

5.14 The housing land requirement figure contained in the Local Plan Review is derived from the dwelling requirement figure contained in Policy 7 of the Structure Plan Review. As figures contained in the Structure Plan exclude the replacement of cleared dwellings it is necessary to include this element in calculating the dwelling requirement figure in the Local Plan Review.

5.15 The dwelling requirement figure contained in the Pre-Inquiry Changes used a base date of 1st April 1998 and covers the period 1998-2006. The figure has been calculated from the following factors:

- a) Structure Plan housing requirement 1991-2006 = 2700 dwellings.
- b) Dwellings built 1991-1998 - Since the Structure Plan Review figure covers the period April 1991-March 2006 it is necessary to deduct the number of dwellings built since 1991. 965 dwellings were built between April 1991 and 31 March 1998.

- c) Demolitions 1991-1998 - The Structure Plan housing requirement figure excludes demolitions. The number of houses demolished during this period (508 units) has

therefore to be added to the figure.

- d) Future Demolitions - The estimate for future demolitions has been revised from 75 dwellings per annum to 150 dwellings per annum during the period 1998-2006, a total of 1200 units. This figure is higher than most of the other Durham Districts but reflects the Council's current programme of housing demolitions on-going/proposed in Seaham and in the former colliery villages in the District.

Housing Land Provision 1998-2006

- 5.16** A reappraisal of the provision of housing land contained in the Local Plan Review utilising April 1998 base date identifies land for the construction of a total of 3018 dwellings during the Plan period, 1998-2006. The housing provision is calculated from sites with planning permission or under construction, the capacity of all proposed new housing land allocations and an allowance for projected windfall developments which has been revised from 20 per annum to 35 per annum over the period 1998-2006, as defined in the table below:

	Total commitments and allocations made in Deposit Plan	Total commitments and allocations made in Modified Plan	Commitments and allocations likely to materialise within Plan period: modifications
Structure Plan requirement 1991-2006	2700	2700	2700
Dwellings built 1991-98	-965	-965	-965
Dwellings demolished 1991-98	508	508	508
Future demolitions @ 75 pa revised to 150	600	1200	1200
Future structure plan requirement 1998-2006	2843	3443	3443
Dwellings started and with planning permission	960	960	896
Dwellings allocated	2265	1778	1587
Windfalls estimated @ 20 pa revised to 35	160	280	280
Total Housing Provision In The Plan	3385	3018	2763
% Surplus/Deficit over Structure Plan requirement	+20%	-12%	-20%

- 5.17** A breakdown of the housing provision is given below:

- a) Sites with planning permission/under construction have the potential to accommodate a total dwelling capacity of 960 units. (see Tables 1 & 2 in Appendix 4)
- b) Local Plan allocations have a capacity to accommodate 1778 units (see Table 3, Appendix 4)
- c) Windfall Housing Site Calculation - The Local Plan review is required to make an allowance in its provision for windfall developments. For purposes of the Local Plan Review windfall housing sites are defined as land which becomes available for development during the Plan period which was either not available when the Plan was prepared, or which it would be inappropriate to allocate for a specific use. During the six year period April 1991 to March 1997, approximately 250 dwellings

were built on windfall housing sites (at an average of 40 dwellings per annum). These were on a range of sites: former school sites playing fields, redundant industrial sites, plus the redevelopment of housing sites cleared during the 1970's and 1980's. Assessment of extant planning consents and the increase in the availability of previously developed land through higher demolition rates indicates that the contribution from windfall housing is likely to be maintained at a high level throughout the Plan period.

Most of the dwellings are expected to come from two particular sources:

- i) sites allocated for mixed uses in the Local Plan Review, which have not been included in housing calculations;
- ii) the redevelopment of cleared housing sites, as yet unidentified, in the former colliery villages

The figure of 35 dwellings per annum is considered to be realistic, making a total of 280 units over the remaining Plan period. The total housing land provision for the District in the Local Plan Review is 3018 units.

Assessment of housing land provision

5.18 In numerical terms the reappraisal of housing land provision would provide for the construction of 425 dwellings below the requirement figure of 3443 dwellings. In accordance with paragraph 45 of PPG3 it is important to analyse critically the housing sites to provide a robust figure for the number of dwellings likely to be actually developed as not all of the commitments and allocations are likely to materialise within the Plan period.

5.19 The housing provision identified in the Modified Plan contains three categories:

5.19.1 Sites with planning permission/under construction (Tables 2 & 3 in Appendix 4)

- a) There are 11 sites (plus small sites) with the benefit of outline or detailed planning permission with potential to produce 627 dwellings. Based on local knowledge and consultation with the House Builders Federation a total of 563 dwellings are expected to be built on these sites during the Plan period. Details are contained in Appendix 4.
- b) 333 units remain to be completed of the total of 488 units on sites which are currently being developed. It is reasonable to expect that all of these units will be constructed during the Plan period

It is anticipated, therefore, that 896 units will be produced from sites which either have planning permission or are under construction.

Housing land allocations

(Table 3, Appendix 4)

5.19.2 The Modified Local Plan identifies 60 housing sites with a dwelling capacity of 1778 units. Based on local knowledge and consultation with the House Builders Federation it is expected that 1,587 units will be built on these sites during the Plan period.

It is anticipated, therefore, that 2483 units will be produced from housing sites allocated within the Modified Local Plan.

Windfall sites

5.19.3 The number of units to be developed on windfall sites, based on recent trends and extant planning consents, is estimated at 35 dwellings per annum, equating to an output of 280 units between 1998-2006.

5.20 In summary, following a detailed examination of the housing sites based on local knowledge and discussions with the House Builders Federation, it is expected that 2,763 units will be built between 1998-2006. This figure equates to a deficit of 680 units (20%) below the Structure Plan housing requirement of 3443 dwellings.

5.21 However, when assessed against the current rate of house building across the District, the Council is confident that the allocated housing land is adequate to meet a 5-year supply as advised by national government guidance in PPG1, General Policy and Principles, even though it is not sufficient to meet the requirement identified in the Structure Plan. Recent building rates in the District have been considerably lower than that assumed at the time the Structure Plan was adopted in 1999. Between 1991 and 1998, an average of only 135 dwellings were built across the District, ranging from 95 units in 1992/1993 to 178 units in 1997/1998, whereas 215 units are required annually throughout the Plan period if the Structure Plan requirement is to be met. Until the level of housing need in the District can be reviewed in the light of more recent trends, the Modified Local Plan provision of 2,827 dwellings over the remaining Plan period to 2006, which equates to an average of over 350 units per annum, is more than adequate to meet a 5-year housing land supply even if building rates in the District were to increase sharply in the future. The Council therefore contends that the Modified Local Plan has identified sufficient housing land to meet the housing need of the District during the Plan period and to provide a range and choice of housing sites in accordance with the provisions of PPG3.

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Monitoring

- 5.21A** The Council is concerned to ensure that the housing land allocations continue to be appropriate to the needs of the District and that there is a continuous and adequate supply of housing land throughout the plan period, particularly in the major centres of Seaham and Peterlee where it is proposed that most employment and commercial development is focused. In accordance with PPG3 the Council undertakes a regular review of the availability of housing land, in consultation with the County Planning Authority and the House Builders' Federation. Where necessary the Council will consider the substitution of sites within the overall amount of land allocated. This will be considered provided it does not compromise other policies and proposals contained in the Plan.

Range and Mix of Housing

- 5.21B** The Durham County Structure Plan Review Deposit Draft stipulates that local plans should allocate a range and mix of sites to meet the various housing needs in the districts. These include sites for executive housing, the elderly and disabled, and for affordable housing.

Executive housing

- 5.21C** The Council is aware of the perceived shortage of suitable sites for high quality, low density executive housing in the District. This is supported by surveys undertaken by the Business Leaders Forum. The provision of such sites is seen to have the potential to assist the regeneration of the District in two ways. First, providing sites for incoming industrialists can act as a positive incentive to them for locating their businesses within the District. Second, the District is currently under represented by people in the managerial and professional sectors and the provision of such sites can attract and retain entrepreneurs in this sector who would otherwise have moved to adjacent areas.
- 5.21D** The Local Plan seeks to overcome the shortage by the identification of land for the construction of approximately 170 such dwellings on sites in Peterlee, Seaham, Castle Eden, Hawthorn and Seaton. Further details of the particular allocations are contained in the appropriate settlement chapters.

Affordable housing

- 5.21E** The Secretary of State for the Environment considers that in certain circumstances there is a need to make provision for low cost rural housing in accordance with PPG3 and Circular 13/96. A survey has been undertaken involving housing associations, local estate agents, the Housebuilders' Federation and the District Council as the housing authority, to ascertain the need for low cost housing, both for rent and purchase, within Easington District. The participants in the survey were unanimous in their opinions that there is no shortage of low cost housing in the district. As of 1st April 1993, 87% of the District's housing stock (amounting to approximately 35,000 dwellings) was categorised as belonging to Band A (worth £40,000 or less) for the purpose of the Council Tax. Due to the population decline which has occurred during the past 20 years the District has a supply of vacant Council houses for rent and relatively short waiting lists for family accommodation. There is also a plentiful supply of low cost housing available for purchase, in most of the villages in the District. There are a wide range of housing sites either with planning permission/allocated in the Local Plan which could be partly developed for low cost housing if the need arose. The Council would expect developers to provide a range of house types, including low cost dwellings on sites identified in the Local Plan, except for those specifically allocated for executive/aged persons/special purpose dwellings.

Elderly persons/special purpose dwellings

- 5.22** On the basis of an assessment of housing need there is likely to be a shortage of elderly persons/special purpose dwellings during the Plan period in the settlements of Blackhall, Easington Colliery, Murton, Seaham and Shotton. Appropriate sites have therefore been identified in the relevant settlement chapters of the Local Plan which could be developed by a housing association/private developer for these purposes.

Making the best use of land

- 5.23** PPG3 indicates that local planning authorities should avoid the inefficient use of land. Local planning authorities are advised not to place unduly restrictive limits on the amount of housing appropriate to a particular site. Instead, they should have regard to wider considerations in putting forward policies for residential development, such as the location of the site, the type of housing envisaged, and the types of household likely to occupy the housing. Hence, developments of less than 30 dwellings per hectare net should be avoided, whilst encouragement should be given to development which makes more efficient use of land, typically at densities of 30 to 50 dwellings per hectare net. Greater intensity of development should be sought at places with good public transport accessibility.
- 5.24** Whilst it is not considered appropriate to base the development of sites solely on the issue of density, this is regarded as a key factor. The above densities are therefore given as a guide to development, although other aspects mentioned will also be taken into account in assessing the suitability of development proposals.

Housing Land Distribution

Principal housing land allocations

- 5.25** New housing land allocations have been made in accordance with the Structure Plan Housing Strategy (see paragraph 1.35, Introduction) and Objectives S1 and S2 of the Spatial Strategy (see paragraph 1.60, Introduction). The Spatial Strategy is consistent with the concept of sustainable development in that it recognises the need to conserve the natural and built environment and seeks to minimise the need to travel and to make needlessly long journeys to shops, jobs and other facilities. In particular, in line with Structure Plan policy, sufficient land has been identified in Seaham and Peterlee to maintain their role as major centres in the district. Housing development will also be guided towards suitable derelict or redundant sites within existing towns and villages. This principle will assist regeneration, relieve pressure for development in the countryside or on greenfield sites and contribute towards energy conservation and the reduction in carbon dioxide emissions.
- 5.26** The distribution of outstanding planning permissions for residential development (at 1 April 1998) and proposed housing land allocations is summarised in the table below and is expanded upon in the following paragraphs. A schedule of the housing sites identified in the Plan/with planning permission is contained in appendix 4.
- 5.27** For sites capable of accommodating ten or more dwellings it is considered important that children's play space is provided as an integral element of the development and Policy 66 (provision of children's play space) will apply.
- 5.28** Furthermore, to maintain and enhance the sense of community identity, spirit and sense of place that exists in Easington, the Council operates and promotes a 'per cent for art' policy. In all developments of a significant scale or nature the provision of public art is encouraged in accord with Policy 39 (design for art).
- 5.29** An allowance for 'windfall' housing sites is considered in para 5.17. Details of the criteria used to allocate each individual housing site is given in paragraph 5.33.

Table 3: Distribution of Housing Land

		Peterlee	Seaham	Rest of District	Total
Sites with Planning permission & under construction provision	Anticipated provision	124	169	603	896
	All allocations	124	179	657	960
Allocations	Anticipated provision	90	675	822	1587
	All allocations	90	677	1011	1778
Sub-total	Anticipated	214	844	1425	2483
	All	214	856	1668	2738
Windfall sites					280
Total Housing Provision In Plan	Anticipated provision				2763
	All allocations				3018

Major centres

5.30 The major centres of Peterlee and Seaham perform an important role since they provide jobs, recreational shopping facilities, educational and other services for their residents and for most of the people in the surrounding villages. It is, therefore, essential that sufficient housing land is allocated in Peterlee and Seaham to support, maintain and enhance this role. The concentration of housing land allocations in these major centres is consistent with the principle of sustainable development in that it will provide the greatest opportunity for residents to take advantage of local sources of employment and services and thus minimise the need to travel long distances by car.

Former colliery villages

5.31 Outside the major centres, it is intended that most of the remaining housing need should be met in those villages which have a reasonable range of services and facilities including some shops, a primary school and a good bus service, thus providing the greatest opportunity to minimise the need for car borne travel. The settlements considered most suitable for general housing development are the former colliery villages of Blackhall, Easington (including Easington Village), Haswell, Hesleden, Horden, Murton, Shotton, South Hetton, Thornley, Trimdon Station, Wheatley Hill and Wingate/Station Town. It is important that housing land is allocated in these settlements to assist their sustainability and their economic regeneration.

Rural villages

5.32 The remaining villages of Castle Eden, Dalton-le-Dale, Haswell Plough, Hawthorn, High Hesleden, Hutton Henry, Little Thorpe and Seaton are small settlements containing very few shops, facilities and sources of employment. Any large scale housing development is, therefore, likely to generate significant additional car borne trips as residents travel to adjacent settlements to places of employment, shops, schools and other facilities. It is therefore intended that housing in these settlements should be limited to small scale developments provided it is appropriate in scale, character and form with the existing village.



Former colliery village

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Remaining Provision and Distribution of Housing Allocations within the Plan Period

Settlement	Outstanding commitments & planning permissions	Anticipated allocations*	Total in settlement	Windfalls
Peterlee	124	90	214	
Seaham	169	675	844	
Total Main Towns	293	765	1058	
Blackhall SRI	0	89	89	
Easington SRI	94	139	233	
Haswell	4	81	85	
Hesleden	3	51	54	
Hornden SRI	51	0	51	
Murton SRI	100	15	115	
Shotton	101	81	182	
South Hetton	27	55	82	
Thornley	2	95	97	
Trimdon Station	12	15	27	
Wheatley Hill	0	35	35	
Wingate SRI	140	149	289	
Total Colliery Villages	534	805	1339	
Castle Eden	0	15	15	
Dalton le Dale	0	1	1	
Hawthorn	0	37	37	
High Hesleden	3	1	4	
Hutton Henry	0	2	2	
Seaton	0	22	22	
Total rural villages	3	78	81	
Countryside & small sites	51	0	51	
Total Rest of District	588	883	1471	
Windfall Sites				280
Grand total outstanding housing provision in Plan	881	1648	2529	2809

* Excludes sites already completed, table 1 & 2, App. 4.

Implementation

1. Specific housing sites are allocated in the settlement chapters.

Provision of outdoor play space in new housing development

- 5.32A** There is a shortage of outdoor recreational provision throughout the District, which will be exacerbated if new housing developments did not include their own provision. The National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) applies minimum standards for outdoor playing space in urban areas. The NPFA advises that the minimum standard for all outdoor playing space of 2.43 hectares per 1000 people should be met by a combination of outdoor sport provision (at 1.6 - 1.8 hectares per 1000) and children's play space (at 0.6-0.8 hectare per 1000). Children's play space includes both informal space for play and equipped play areas. Until the work done to assess the adequacy of provision at a local level has been completed, it is considered that these standards should be utilised to determine the level of outdoor playing space in all new development. In the implementation of the standards, the level of existing open space in the locality will be considered with a view to determining the amount that should be provided.
- 5.32B** To ensure that outdoor playing space is provided as an integral element of new housing development, the Council will seek its provision in the determination of planning applications for traditional residential development of ten or more dwellings, on sites of 0.4 or more hectares. This will include new housing development containing family housing (ie houses of two or more bedrooms) to provide safe and accessible areas of outdoor playing space and to create an attractive setting for new housing. Where the characteristics of the site prevent the provision of open space in the context of a particular housing scheme, or where it is desirable that the provision should be located elsewhere, an appropriate contribution may be sought. The requirement for playing space will not apply to special needs housing development such as sheltered housing or one-bedroom dwellings. In addition, the Standard may be relaxed where development of an allocated housing site is necessary for the regeneration of a settlement and it can be demonstrated that the provision required would price the dwellings beyond the level that the local housing market could reasonably be expected to support.

- 5.32C** The NPFA standard operates down to a minimum site size of 0.4 hectares which the Council equates to ten or more dwellings which could accommodate 25 people, assuming an average household size of 2.5 people per household (based on the 1991 Census figure). If the minimum standard for outdoor playing space provides 2.4 hectares per 1000 people, when applied to 25 people a total of 600 square metres of outdoor playing space is required. This can be met through any combination of outdoor sport provision and children's play space, but at least a minimum of 400 square metres of the former or 150 metres of the latter, provided that the total playing space amounts to 600 square metres. Children's play space within housing areas will be most appropriately located where it is easily accessible on foot, away from roads and overlooked by other housing to allow surveillance. Such play space should be designed to offer a variety of play opportunities to children and should be situated close to family housing, however, space for outdoor sport may need to be located further afield. The location and nature of all outdoor playing space needs careful design to avoid nuisance to adjoining residential property and its siting close to housing designed for the single and/or elderly will generally be inappropriate on the basis of amenity. The location and level of all existing provision within the locality will be taken into account when determining total outdoor playing space requirements for new development.

Policy 66

The council will require developers to provide adequate provision for children's play space and outdoor recreation space in relation to new housing developments of 10 or more dwellings. The level of provision required will be based on the national playing fields association's standards of:

- (i) 0.6 hectares per 1000 people for children's playing space;
- (ii) 1.6 hectares per 1000 people for outdoor sport.

In applying this policy, the council will take into consideration existing provision within the locality, the characteristics of the proposed development and relevant economic circumstances. Where it is inappropriate to make provision within the development site, it

may be necessary to secure provision elsewhere, commensurate with the nature and scale of the development.

Housing site appraisal

5.33 A range of criteria have been adopted in appraising and selecting potential housing sites for allocation in the District Local Plan, including whether the site would;

- (i) make a positive contribution to the form of the settlement. For a site to make a positive contribution to the settlement it should:
 - have housing/built development along all or the majority of at least two and preferably three sides; and
 - not extend into the countryside;
- (ii) be well related to shops, schools and other public facilities;
- (iii) be appropriate in scale and character to the existing settlement;
- (iv) be acceptable in terms of its impact on the environment, which includes adjacent countryside and where appropriate, areas of high landscape quality and areas of nature conservation importance and archaeological importance;
- (v) avoid the loss of high quality agricultural land (grades 1,2 and 3a) unless it can be demonstrated that no suitable alternative exists;
- (vi) wherever possible make full and effective use of derelict underused or vacant land in urban areas and maximise the use of previously developed land and the conversion of existing buildings;
- (vii) avoid the loss of existing outdoor sports facilities or landscape and amenity open space, unless alternative provision is made;
- (viii) be capable of being served by a safe vehicular access;

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- (ix) be capable of being served by water/sewers, electricity and other infrastructure;
- (x) be free from adverse ground conditions, or other constraints such as landfill/mine gas or contaminated land. Where such problems exist these should be capable of being resolved economically;
- (xi) either be well served by public transport or be in locations where it can be demonstrated that good public transport provision can be secured, thereby minimising the need for residents to make journeys by car;
- (xii) be in a location where people want to live;
- (xiii) be free from land ownership constraints. Where such problems exist these should be capable of resolution.

5.34 In addition to ensuring that housing sites are allocated in environmentally suitable locations, the Council is keen to promote high standards in the layout and design of new housing development. Further guidance to assist planning applicants and developers on residential layout and design is therefore included in appendix 6.

Release of housing sites for development

5.34A It should also be noted that, in accordance with the advice given in PPG3 (paras.32 and 33) and County Durham Structure Plan Policy 9, a presumption will apply that previously developed sites (or buildings subject to re-use or conversion) should be developed before greenfield sites. The potential and suitability of such sites will be assessed against the following criteria:

- the availability and suitability for housing use;
- the location and accessibility;

- the capacity of existing and potential infrastructure to serve them;
- the ability to contribute to the building of communities;
- the physical and environmental constraints on land development.

Where previously developed sites exhibit severe deficiencies in relation to these criteria then the Council may not insist on the normal order of priority for development and may consider the earlier release of more appropriate greenfield sites.

Windfall housing sites

- 5.35** Sufficient housing land has been identified in the settlement chapters or exists with planning permission to meet the requirements of providing a 5 year land supply. During the operational period of the Local Plan, the Council is, however, likely to receive planning applications for housing development on sites within established settlements, which are not allocated for this purpose in the Plan. Government guidance in 'Planning Policy Guidance Note 3: Housing' makes it clear in paragraph 36 that 'no allowance should be made for greenfield windfalls.' This stipulation applies as much to sites within settlement boundaries as it does to those outside them. Thus any sites brought forward as 'windfalls' within established settlements should be previously developed land. The fact that a greenfield site happens to lie within a settlement boundary does not of itself confer any presumption that development will be acceptable in principle but it will be assessed against the availability and suitability of previously developed sites as discussed in 5.34A above. Residential development on a previously developed site will normally be acceptable provided that it is appropriate in scale and character to the area or settlement concerned and does not conflict with the general policies of the Plan.
- 5.36** Additionally in a number of the settlements, such as Castle Eden and Dalton le Dale, strict policies are applied on housing development in order to safeguard the character, setting and appearance of these villages. Proposals for windfall housing sites should not, therefore, conflict with another policy covering all or part of these settlements.

Policy 67

Housing development will be approved on previously developed sites within settlement boundaries of established towns and villages provided the proposal is appropriate in scale and character and does not conflict with specific policies relating to the settlement or the general policies of the plan.

Housing development in the countryside

- 5.37** The Council considers that housing development should normally only be approved on sites within the towns and villages of the District as defined in the settlement chapters and sufficient land has been identified within the settlements to meet demand over the Plan period. There are several reasons for this approach. First, new housing development within the settlements can help to maintain (or in the case of villages where there has been large scale housing clearance, recreate) the compact and convenient village form which is most appropriate for the support of shops and facilities.

Second, it can also reduce the need for people to travel to facilities. Third, it can help to keep public expenditure on the provision of services to new houses to within reasonable limits. Finally, it can help to protect high quality agricultural and forestry land and to ensure the retention of the open nature of much of the countryside.

- 5.38** For the purposes of the Plan housing development outside the settlement boundaries identified on the Proposals Maps will be described as being located in the countryside. A fuller explanation is contained in paragraph 2.4 of the General Principles of Development and in paragraphs 3.11 - 3.14; Policy 3 severely restricts development, including housing development in the countryside.

Policy 68 - This policy has lapsed

~~Other than as provided for in policies 60 (re-use of dwellings in the countryside), 69 (rural workers dwellings) and 70 (re-use and adaptation of buildings in the countryside for residential use) housing development in the countryside will not be approved.~~

Rural workers dwellings

- 5.39** New housing development in the countryside will generally be inappropriate but may, however, be allowed here where it is required to meet special local circumstances where it can be shown to be essential. This will be principally for agricultural, forestry and other workers in appropriate rural enterprises whose duties make it essential for them to live very close to their place of work as defined by the financial and functional tests. In order to assess whether a new dwelling within the countryside is justified, the Council will require the submission of a report which establishes whether the applicant's intention to live off the land is genuine, reasonably likely to materialise and capable of being sustained for a reasonable length of time. In assessing applications the Council may apply functional and financial tests. The functional test will establish whether it is essential for the proper operation of the enterprise for workers to reside at the site to be readily available at all times both to tend animals or agricultural processes at short notice or to deal with emergencies which could lead to the loss of crops. Where such tests are inconclusive, financial tests may be applied to establish further evidence of need.

In instances where the Council is minded to approve a planning application for such a dwelling an occupancy condition will be imposed. This is to ensure that the dwelling is kept available to meet the needs of other farm, forestry or other appropriate rural businesses in the locality if it is no longer required by the original business, thus avoiding a need for a proliferation of dwellings in the countryside. In addition, in order to safeguard the appearance of the countryside, any essential new housing should be satisfactorily accommodated within the local environment in terms of its location and materials used, and wherever possible be situated adjacent to existing buildings.

Policy 69 - This policy has lapsed

~~New housing development in the countryside will only be approved if dwellings are required for occupation by persons engaged solely or mainly in agriculture, forestry or other appropriate rural enterprises who must live close to their place of employment to perform their duties. In such instances planning permission will be granted subject to:~~

- ~~(i) a clear justification of need;~~
- ~~(ii) the imposition of an occupancy condition;~~
- ~~(iii) the location of the dwelling being in keeping with the local environment and adjacent to existing buildings, where possible.~~

Re-use and adaptation of buildings in the countryside for residential use

- 5.41** There may be opportunities to re-use and adapt sound buildings in the countryside for industrial, recreational or tourist uses or farm shops. This issue is considered in Policy 59 (re-use and adaptation of buildings in the countryside for industry and business). There may, however, be certain instances where a residential conversion is the only viable alternative.
- 5.42** Any residential conversion proposal that would result in a feature which is alien to the character of the countryside is likely to be inappropriate. The creation of a residential curtilage around the building may be harmful to the landscape, particularly in Areas of High Landscape Value and Green Belt, whilst the character of the building may be adversely affected by closing old or installing new door and window openings as well as constructing garages, drives, hardstandings, sheds and greenhouses etc. In instances where planning approval is given for a residential conversion the Council may seek to preserve the character and setting of the building by imposing a planning condition to withdraw permitted development rights, thereby controlling any future extensions to the buildings and the erection of structures in the curtilages.

This is most likely to be the case in environmentally sensitive areas including Areas of High Landscape Value, the Coast and locations in or adjacent to Conservation Areas.

- 5.43 The structural condition of the building must be basically sound and the proposal must not require the removal of the bulk of the external fabric of the building such as the roof structure, complete walls etc. for any conversion to residential use to be considered. The developer may be expected to provide an expert structural survey to demonstrate that the building is structurally sound and capable of adequate and appropriate conversion to the proposed use. If extensive rebuilding works are required, the proposal will be considered as a new dwelling in the countryside under the definition of housing development (see paragraph 5.9) and would be determined in terms of Policy 68. Where conversions can be shown to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of a listed building or its setting, they will be encouraged.
- 5.44 Any direct or indirect implications for a protected species as a consequence of any such proposal will be a material planning consideration as detailed in Policy 18 (species and habitat protection). For example, planning conditions may be necessary relating to the design or programming of works to overcome problems where development would affect seasonal bat roosts.

Policy 70 - This policy has lapsed

~~The re-use and adaptation of sound buildings in the countryside into residential dwellings will be approved provided the proposal complies with all the following conditions:-~~

- ~~(i) it does not have a serious adverse affect upon the amenity, character or appearance of the area, where appropriate~~
- ~~(ii) it does not damage or substantially alter the character of the building;~~
- ~~(iii) where necessary to protect the environment, permitted development rights may be withdrawn by means of a planning condition:-~~

Other Housing Development

Rest homes, nursing homes and sheltered accommodation

- 5.45 Since 1984, when the Registered Homes Act came into effect, there has been a significant increase in the number of privately operated rest homes. To facilitate easy access to shops, services and public transport facilities for residents and staff, and to enhance their accessibility for staff, visitors and deliveries, the development of further rest homes/nursing homes and sheltered accommodation will be most appropriately located within those towns and villages with a reasonable range of services and facilities and transport links. These principles accord with those of sustainable development.
- 5.46 Any such proposals will be the subject of the same considerations as proposals for new residential development in terms of design and layout, however, attention will need to be given to the particular sensitivity of such accommodation in terms of noise and disturbance and the level of amenity to be provided.
- 5.47 The Council has come under considerable pressure to limit the number of new residential institutions being developed on the grounds that there are already sufficient establishments to meet the needs of the District. The Government's view is that it is not the responsibility of the planning system to regulate the number of institutions. The County Council, as the Social Services/Registration Authority can ensure that new homes conform to standards, but cannot control/limit the provision of new homes. The District Council can, therefore, only determine planning applications for proposals of this nature on planning grounds and not on the basis of the level of supply.

Policy 71

New residential institutions (class C2) and sheltered accommodation will be approved within the defined settlement boundaries of Peterlee, Seaham, Blackhall, Easington, Haswell, Hesleden, Horden, Murton, Shotton, South Hetton, Thornley, Trimdon Station, Wheatley Hill and Wingate/Station Town provided the proposal accords with the provisions of policies 35-37.

Living over the shop

- 5.48 Living in or near shopping centres has advantages such as close proximity to shops, services and employment with the consequent reduction in the need for travelling long distances. The vitality of town and local centres can be enhanced by increasing their

residential population. Unused upper floors over shops can provide much needed accommodation for single persons and other small households and provide rental income for shopkeepers. The Department of the Environment operates a "Living over the Shop" initiative to encourage the re-use of upper floor premises as residential flats.

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Following the introduction of the 1995 General Development Order legislative changes such development can be undertaken without the need for planning permission.

Control of sites for travellers

- 5.49** Travellers, including gypsies and travelling show people, make up a small proportion of the population but their land use requirements still need to be addressed. Many travellers are self-employed people involved in a whole range of work associated with an itinerant lifestyle including scrap and scrap-metal dealing, laying tarmacadam, seasonal agricultural work, casual labouring, furniture dealing, carpet selling and other related occupations. Some travellers prefer to run their businesses from the site on which their caravans are stationed.
- 5.50** Under the Caravan Sites Act 1968 it was a statutory duty of local authorities to provide accommodation on caravan sites for travellers residing in or resorting to their areas. The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 has repealed this duty and discretionary powers are now available to local authorities to provide such sites whilst travellers can apply for planning permission to establish private sites.
- 5.51** Sites for travellers are not regarded as being amongst those uses of land which are appropriate in the Green Belt nor are they considered to be appropriately located in areas of open land where development is strictly controlled, such as in the coastal zone, or where they would visually intrude into the countryside. Locations beyond the built-up area and even outside settlement boundaries, but within a reasonable range of services and facilities, such as shops and schools, may be appropriate provided that care is taken to avoid visually intrusive sites.
- 5.52** Given the nature of travellers sites and the possible mix of business and residential uses on them the Council will need to consider the highway implications, the potential for noise and disturbance from vehicles and other business activities and the visual impact of the proposal, together with the safety of the proposal for both occupants and visitors to the site, when considering planning applications to establish travellers sites.
- 5.53** There are different types of travellers sites including permanent sites, with or without work areas, temporary sites and transit sites. All sites will be likely to require a reasonable level of services including electricity and drinking water supplies, washing facilities and sewage disposal facilities. Depending on the nature of the site, there may be a need for work, domestic and play areas to be segregated and for hard surfaces to be provided.

Policy 72

The development of permanent, temporary or transit accommodation for travellers will not be allowed in the green belt, the coastal zone or on visually intrusive sites in the countryside. Elsewhere such developments would be allowed provided that:

- (i) the site is within a reasonable distance of local facilities and services;
- (ii) safe and adequate access capable of serving the amount and nature of traffic to be generated by the development is provided, in accord with policy 36 (design for access);
- (iii) there is no serious adverse affect on the amenity of people living and working in the vicinity of the development site and the existing use of adjacent land or buildings in terms of privacy, visual intrusion, noise other pollution and traffic generation in accord with policy 35 (impact of development);

The site is planned comprehensively to include segregated areas for residential, business and other uses, where appropriate, incorporating the use of hard surfaces and landscaping.

Adequate foul and surface water drainage is available to serve the development in accord with policy 26 (waste water management).

Housing Improvement

House conditions

- 5.54** Despite substantial progress in clearing sub-standard dwellings and providing basic amenities, much of the District's housing stock is still in need of revitalisation works. Whilst all dwellings have basic amenities, a significant proportion of the Council stock is still in need of improvement or renovation. Within the District as a whole, 8,500 Council properties require improvement or repair (as at 1 April 1998). Nevertheless, provided current bids and improvement programmes are approved, it is envisaged that some 5,200 dwellings (over 60%) will have been fully or partially renovated over the Plan period. Those improvements include comprehensive works to some 300 dwellings on the Parkside estate at Seaham and partial works involving the installation of full central heating systems in some 900 properties in the District; an additional 4000 dwellings are to be upgraded with replacement boilers.

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Clearance and improvement of unfit dwellings

	Cleared dwellings	Built dwellings	Improved dwellings	Total unfit dwellings treated
Seaham, Dawdon estate	155			155
Seaham, Parkside (demolish)	220			220
Seaham, Parkside (build)		240		
Murton	103			103
Easington Colliery	105		215	320
Other cleared dwellings	267			267
Total cleared and built	850	240		
Net clearance		610		
Improvement to Council stock			2500	2500
Repairs to private property			800	800
Total	850		3515	4365

Housing improvement

- 5.55** In summer 1997 the Government published a consultation paper on the use of capital receipts accrued by local authorities. The paper suggested that there would be increased opportunities to utilise the receipts on the repair and improvement of the housing stock. The outcome of the consultation exercise and the implementation of any subsequent legislation is likely to be a key determinant in the level of improvements to the Council housing stock during the Plan period.
- 5.56** Under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, the offer of grants to private dwellings is conditional upon a financial assessment of household income. This will not only further reduce grant eligibility but could result in fewer terraced properties being improved to the detriment of the housing stock as a whole.

Housing environment

- 5.57** The District's worst housing areas were cleared some time ago. Elsewhere, despite improvements to the dwellings themselves, substantial areas of older terraced housing still

have a drab uninviting appearance. This problem has been recognised in the Task Force's Signs of Hope document, which has put forward a strategy for settlement renewal and recommended a variety of measures including a co-ordinated programme of housing refurbishment and environmental improvement.

- 5.58** Since 1984 the Council has implemented a policy of improvements to dwellings and their surroundings on Council estates. An Estate Action scheme is underway at Deneside in Seaham, a comprehensive scheme has been completed at Newholme Estate, Station Town and proposals are being drawn up for an Estate Action scheme in Parkside, Seaham. Whilst the schemes have been successful this is a large scale problem requiring continued commitment if progress is to be made. The areas where there is most scope for co-ordinated housing and environmental improvement are identified in the appropriate settlement chapters.

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- 5.59** The environment in many older private and former British Coal housing areas, notably in Easington Colliery and Dawdon, also requires improvement. The most appropriate method of improvement would have been the designation of the areas as Renewal Areas (RAs) whereby housing improvement is encouraged and environmental works carried out, the latter usually by the Council. Financial restrictions have, however, previously prevented the use of this approach in the past. Although no areas are put forward in the Plan for RA treatment this approach could well be considered in the future. Meanwhile the Council has commenced a comprehensive housing renewal initiative in Easington Colliery including clearance and redevelopment, landscaping and the provision of car parking and amenity space. Other specific housing areas are identified for environmental improvement in the appropriate settlement chapters.

Extensions and/or alterations to dwellinghouses

- 5.60** There is a range of dwelling types in the District including terraced, semi-detached and detached houses. When considering proposals to extend or alter such dwellings it is considered important to at least maintain and, where possible, improve the amenities of residents living in the older housing areas whilst maintaining the planned standards of residential amenity associated with modern housing estates.
- 5.61** Not all kinds of alteration and/or addition to a dwelling, however, require planning permission. Any development proposal within the curtilage of a dwelling where consent is required will need to be considered on its own particular merits and there are a number of material planning considerations that need to be taken into account. These include the impact of the proposal on neighbouring properties in terms of overlooking, visual intrusion and loss of daylight, the quality of its design and appearance relative to the scale and character of the existing building and the surrounding area, and also the implications of the proposed development in terms of any potential effects on road safety. Whether extensions are proposed at the front or rear of dwellings will be immaterial in determining the seriousness of such effects.
- 5.61A** Any direct or indirect implications for a protected species as a consequence of such development will be a material consideration as detailed in Policy 18 (species and habitat protection). For example, planning conditions may be necessary relating to the design or programming of works to overcome problems where development would affect seasonal bat roosts.
- 5.62** Further planning guidance in respect of the Council's general approach to determining household extension planning applications is provided in appendix 7.

Policy 73

Extensions or alterations to an existing dwelling, requiring planning permission, will be approved provided that:

- (i) there is no serious adverse effect on the amenities of residents of adjoining properties in terms of either overshadowing, loss of light, overlooking or visual intrusion;
- (ii) the proposal is in keeping with the scale and character of the building itself and the area generally in terms of site coverage, height, roof style, detailed design and

materials;

- (iii) the proposal does not result in the loss of off-street car parking spaces or lead to conditions that are prejudicial to road safety.

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Transport

Summary of policies

Sustainable Transport

- 74. [Footpaths and other public rights of way](#)
- 75. [Provision for cyclists and pedestrians will be reviewed](#)
- 76. ~~[New cycleways/walkways will be developed](#)~~ - This policy has lapsed

Public Transport

- 77. [Encourage the improvement of the public transport service](#)
- 78. ~~[Construction of the second phase of the Dawdon-A690 link road](#)~~ - This policy has lapsed
- 79. [Planning permission for development](#)
- 80. [Roadside service station](#)
- 81. [Minimise the adverse impact of heavy goods vehicles](#)

Other Communications

- 82. ~~[Proposals for new mast sites](#)~~ - This policy has lapsed
- 83. ~~[Planning permission for satellite dishes](#)~~ - This policy has lapsed

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Introduction

- 6.1** An effective transport system is vital to the economic and social regeneration of the District but continuing growth in road transport and consequent environmental impacts present a major challenge to the objective of sustainable development. There is a need, therefore, for land use and transport planning to be co-ordinated and for the demand for travel, particularly the use of the private car, to be reduced so as to conserve resources for future generations whilst ensuring an effective and efficient transport system. By guiding the location of development the Local Plan can affect both the need for travel and the choice of transport mode.
- 6.2** With the exception of the A19(T), for which the Department of Transport is responsible, Durham County Council is the highway authority for the administration, financing and improvement of all public roads in Easington District. Policies and proposals for transport are determined by the County Council and its partners in the County Durham Local Transport Plan (LTP). The role of the District Local Plan in relation to transport is to formulate policies which ensure the accessibility of development and which enable people to exercise choice in their mode of transport, to influence those decision making bodies responsible for the transport system and to protect land required for future development to secure the objectives of the Local Plan's Transport Strategy.
- 6.3** Telecommunications and the management of information are becoming increasingly significant to the needs of business and industry and to people's everyday activities. The growth of telecommunications and subsequent investment in new technology and

infrastructure has land-use implications and the Local Plan seeks to provide criteria based policy to guide telecommunications development.

Sustainable Transport

Footpaths and other public rights of way

- 6.4** Walking and cycling are environmentally friendly forms of transport. To assist with the objective of reducing the level of vehicle emissions there is a need to encourage people to walk and cycle. Policy 36 (design for access) seeks to ensure that major new developments provide safe and attractive walkways /cycleways as an integral part of development. There is also a need to ensure that the existing public rights of way network in the District is maintained and that routes are accessible, signposted and waymarked. The extent of this network is defined by the highway authority's definitive maps and statement. There may be occasions when a public right of way needs to be diverted to accommodate development. In such instances, the alternative route should be suitably landscaped, convenient and attractive to prospective users. Where possible and appropriate, new routes should be added to the network to facilitate yet further access for the pedestrian, cyclist and horse rider (see Policy 76: new cycleways/walkways and Policy 87 coastal footpath).
- 6.5** Public rights of way should be accessible to as many sectors of the population as possible and routes should accommodate people with access difficulties wherever this is feasible.

Policy 74

Public rights of way will be improved, maintained and protected from development. Where development is considered acceptable, planning permission will be granted if a suitably landscaped alternative to the affected public right of way is provided which is convenient and attractive to users.

Cycling and walking

- 6.6** The development of a safe network of cycleways and walkways across the district will assist with the twin objectives of providing better links into the countryside for recreation and providing alternative means of transport to the private car. This will be done by reviewing the existing provision for cyclists and pedestrians in order to identify networks and routes where they should have priority. Resources may not permit all improvements to be undertaken immediately and initial efforts will be focused on Seaham. The aim will be to establish an integrated programme of works that relates to other proposals, policies or programmes. Specific improvements and additions to the network will be identified. In addition, the need for secure and convenient cycle parking in town centres will be explored and the provision of appropriate cycle storage facilities at bus and rail stations will be pursued. Traffic calming and other traffic management features may need to encompass the aim to encourage journeys made on foot or cycle.
- 6.6A** A number of former railway lines, some of which are already walkways, will be developed for cycling in

order to provide a way to work, to school and to the shops as well as attractive recreational routes. They will also provide links between settlements in the District and links to the National Cycle Network which is a network of routes connecting the centres of the major towns and cities across Britain. Many of the former railway lines in the District now provide valuable wildlife habitats. In these and all other cases where new cycleways are proposed due regard should therefore be paid to nature conservation interests, in line with Policy 19.

Policy 75

Provision for cyclists and pedestrians will be reviewed to establish a programme to provide safe and convenient networks within and between settlements which, together with other appropriate facilities, encourage cycling or walking journeys to work, to town centres, to transport interchanges and for other purposes, as resources permit.'

Haswell to Hart Walkway

- 6.7 The Haswell to Hart Walkway follows the route of a former railway line. It is proposed to develop this route for the use of cyclists also with cycle access from the adjacent settlements of Haswell, Shotton Colliery, Wingate, Castle Eden and Hesleden. The walkway currently runs into Hartlepool Borough. Agreement would, therefore, need to be concluded with the Borough Council concerning the development of the route within its administrative area.

Former Station Town to Thorpe Thewles railway line

- 6.8 The section of this railway line in the former Cleveland County has already been reclaimed as a recreation route and a walkway/cycleway is to be created on the stretch in Sedgfield District. It is proposed to develop the remainder of the line into a walkway/cycleway route, linking with the section in the former Cleveland County and by public rights of way, with the Haswell to Hart route.

Former Tuthill Quarry to Ryhope railway line (via former Hawthorn Cokeworks)

- 6.9 The mineral railway line from Tuthill Quarry via the former Hawthorn Cokeworks to Ryhope has closed and become surplus to requirements, following the closure of Murton Colliery. Durham County Council has purchased the former line between the Hawthorn Cokeworks and the Council boundary and is currently reclaiming it into a walkway/cycleway. The remaining section from the Cokeworks to Tuthill Quarry remains to be reclaimed. The proposed facility would link with the Haswell to Hart route and the Station Town/Thorpe Thewles route and thus provide a network through the entire length of the District. The mineral railway presently runs into the City of Sunderland. Agreement would, therefore, need to be concluded with the City Council concerning the development of the route within its administrative area.

Former Seaham to Hawthorn Cokeworks railway line

- 6.10 The mineral railway line from Hawthorn Cokeworks to Seaham Harbour closed in 1985 and subsequently became surplus to operational requirements. Part of the former line between Cold Hesledon and Seaham has already been reclaimed as a walkway and is to be reclaimed to a cycleway. Durham County Council proposes to purchase the remainder of the line to the Hawthorn Cokeworks site and to reclaim the whole route into a walkway/cycleway. The proposed facility would link with the proposed Tuthill to Ryhope route and add to the long distance network being provided throughout the District. Further routes are being developed within Seaham, see Policy S16.

Policy 76 - This policy has lapsed

~~New cycleways/walkways will be developed along the routes of the following former railway lines:~~

- ~~(i) Haswell to Hart Walkway;~~
- ~~(ii) Station Town to Hurworth Burn;~~
- ~~(iii) Tuthill Quarry to Hawthorn Cokeworks;~~
- ~~(iv) Seaham to Hawthorn Cokeworks.~~

~~Where possible routes will be accessible to pedestrians, people with disabilities and horse riders as well as cyclists. Their development should also pay due regard to nature conservation interests in accordance with policy 19.~~

Implementation

1. *New routes will be developed in co-operation with One NorthEast, Sustrans and partners in the Millennium project to restore the Durham coast, including Durham County Council, the National Trust, the Countryside Commission, as appropriate.*

Public transport services

- 6.11** Public transport has an important role to play in the District in both providing for the mobility needs of those people without their own means of transport and in offering an alternative mode of transport to the private car. Easington District has a car ownership rate considerably below the national average. In 1991, 47% of households had no car, compared with 32.4% nationally and, as a consequence of the persistently

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high levels of unemployment, car ownership is expected to remain relatively low. The availability of public transport services is, therefore, important in determining the accessibility of development and services.

Bus

- 6.12** Buses provide an important public transport service in the District. The nature of the bus service was fundamentally altered when deregulation took place in October 1986, in accordance with the Transport Act 1985. This Act created two separate groups of bus services into those provided by the commercial operators and those secured under contract to the County Council, as the local traffic authority. The change to commercial operations has resulted in the frequency of some socially necessary bus services being reduced because of their lack of financial viability.
- 6.13** The Council regards the maintenance of bus services as vital bearing in mind the low car ownership rate and the dispersed settlement pattern of the District. In addition, the greater use of this form of public transport could result in fewer car journeys being made which would help to reduce congestion on the roads, associated environmental problems and the consumption of non-renewable resources.
- 6.14** The County Council and the District Council are aware that the absence of bus services linking the settlements in the District, with the main industrial estates, is restricting job opportunities for residents who do not possess cars. A study of this issue has therefore been jointly undertaken by the County Council and the East Durham Development Agency, on behalf of the Business Leaders Forum, to assess the problem and to undertake an initiative to fund a programme of improved bus services to places of employment. The County Council propose to seek funding for this initiative from the European Commission, Rural Development Commission and its own budgets. The implementation of this initiative would both improve accessibility to places of employment and provide opportunities to reduce car journeys.
- 6.15** To maintain and promote the use of buses it is important that facilities for passengers, including bus stops, shelters and stations are adequate, safe and accessible. There is one bus station in the District in Seaham and a bus interchange location at Peterlee, both of which are in need of improvement. Specific proposals for these sites are considered in the relevant settlement chapters (Policy S33) Seaham chapter and paragraph 20.47, Peterlee chapter).

Rail

- 6.16** The Durham Coast Rail Line connects the conurbations of Tyneside, Wearside and Teesside, serving the centres of Newcastle, Sunderland, Hartlepool and Middlesbrough. It is routed through the District, for the most part within one kilometre of the coast, but the only passenger halt on the line in the District is at Seaham. The route is hampered by its circuitous nature which results in long journey times that do not compare favourably at present with other means of transport.
- 6.17** A study commissioned by the Durham Coast Rail Joint Steering Group, which is a grouping of those local authorities through which the Durham Coast Rail line passes, on the future of the Durham Coast Rail (DCR) line has concluded that the route has a vital strategic

future role in linking several major population centres and that there is significant scope for increasing patronage on the line. Whilst the line has suffered from under-investment compared with roads it is generally in good condition and the study suggests that the quality of the passenger service can be upgraded at a relatively modest cost. There is a range of investments, including the improvement in rail journey times, the improvement of all stations on the line and increased train service frequencies (to two trains per hour), that will lead to a likely increase in the patronage base.

- 6.18** Between Sunderland and Stockton Seaham is the second busiest station on the line and is well positioned in relation to proposed areas for housing development at the Vane Tempest and Seaham Colliery sites but it is relatively distant from the town centre and other facilities offered by the town. The possibility of relocating the station has been examined in the context of the DCR study and the Seaham Regeneration Strategy; however, it is generally concluded that little gain in passenger usage would be secured and that efforts should be concentrated on increasing the accessibility and facilities of the existing station. Policy S16 of the Seaham chapter contains proposals to achieve this aim.
- 6.19** The provision of additional stations/halts at Dawdon, Hawthorn Hive, Blackhall, Easington and Horden would increase the accessibility of the rail service for residents, visitors to the coast and those seeking employment. In the case of Horden, the development of a station is vital for sustainable transport provision for Peterlee. In 1995 a bid was submitted to Millennium Commission to fund the construction of

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these stations as part of the 'Turning The Tide' Initiative. Unfortunately, this bid was unsuccessful but alternative sources of funding are to be examined. With regard to Blackhall, Easington and Horden, sites for new halts are allocated and identified in the relevant settlement chapters. The issue of a new halt at Dawdon is discussed in the Seaham chapter. A site has yet to be identified at Hawthorn Hive.

- 6.20** The line forms a valuable through route for freight and also serves local flows. Rail transport of freight can reduce road congestion and is more environmentally friendly than road transport. Its local role has been closely associated with the collieries beside the line, all of which have now closed.

Policy 77

The council will seek to encourage the improvement of the public transport service and the rail transport of freight in the district through the enhancement of the existing services and facilities and the provision of new services and facilities.

Roads and Traffic

Land for roads

- 6.21** The highway network is the most extensive part of the county's transport system and whilst the use of alternative modes of transport is to be encouraged the use of private vehicles, including cars and lorries, will remain significant. An efficient local and regional highway system which connects goods and markets is essential for trade and the economic prosperity of the area.
- 6.22** The principal highway in Easington is the A19(T) which runs north-south through the District, linking Tyneside with Teesside and the A1 further north and south. Since 1983 the Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions has undertaken a number of improvements to the road including the erection of crash barriers along the entire length of the central reservation, the construction of a grade separated junction/flyover at Peterlee and two additional slip-roads at Cold Hesledon together with the introduction of metre strips to the verge of the carriageway, new lighting and other junction improvements. The Council consider that these improvements, whilst welcome, are insufficient and it contends that the road ought to be upgraded to the standard of a

motorway.

- 6.23** Durham County Council, as highway authority, has the responsibility to provide, improve, manage and maintain the system of county roads to an adequate standard for the safe and efficient transport of people and goods. Through the Structure Plan, the County Council has indicated where improvements to the primary route network are required. To assist with the objective of economic regeneration in Easington it is considered that improvements should be made to the east-west road links thereby connecting the area with major transport routes.
- 6.24** The local highway authority proposes to construct a new road from the A19(T), east of Wingate to the A1(M) at Bowburn. As part of this proposal by-passes have been constructed to the north of Wingate and to the south of Wheatley Hill comprising the first two phases of this road development. The highway authority is seeking funding for the construction of the final part of the road, from Wheatley Hill to Bowburn, through the Local Transport Plan; however, this entire section falls within the administrative boundary of the City of Durham.
- 6.25** The highway authority also proposes to construct a new link road between the former Dawdon Colliery site and the A690, which links with the A1(M) at Carrville. Work on the construction of the first phase of the route, from Dawdon to the A19(T) at Cold Hesledon is complete. The line of the second phase of the road, from Cold Hesledon to the A182 west of South Hetton at Snippersgate has been determined with due regard to an environmental assessment of potential alternative routes and with regard to the need to provide an access to the former Hawthorn Coke Works site identified in paragraph 4.28. A Corridor of Interest is identified on the Proposals Map to safeguard the route from other development.
- 6.26** In association with the proposed Dawdon - A1(M) road is the proposal to link the new route with the centre of Seaham which would enhance the accessibility of the town centre and the port and also serve to reduce the environmental disruption caused by heavy vehicles passing through existing routes into the town. The line of this road has been safeguarded by Policy S14 (Seaham Chapter).
- 6.27** The County Council also proposes to provide a roundabout at the junction between the A1018/B1285, north of Seaham Grange industrial estate, when funding is available, a preliminary scheme for which has been prepared.
- 6.28** In the implementation of any road proposals the local highway authority will be encouraged to ensure that the environmental effects of any new roads are taken into account in the planning and design stages. The visual impact of the roads can be minimised by taking steps to ensure that they blend into the countryside through which they pass. The design of suitable horizontal and

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vertical alignments together with the careful planting of indigenous trees and shrubs and the creation of earth mounds can help to screen the roads from adjacent properties and is also beneficial in reducing traffic noise levels.

- 6.29** Where new roads need to be built the design of them offers the opportunity to provide new wildlife habitats and to create visually attractive landscape corridors. The appropriate use of soils, wildflower seed mixtures and shrub and tree species can provide important refuges for wildlife and be visually attractive to road users.

Policy 78 - This policy has lapsed

Land required for the construction of the second phase of the Dawdon-A690 link road from A19(T) at Cold Hesledon to the A182 at Snippersgate, South Hetton, will be safeguarded from other development.

Accesses onto the A19(T)

- 6.30A** The Council's policies towards such development and contained in this plan are based on

the official policy of the DETR, who have power where necessary to direct the Council to refuse planning applications for development which would affect trunk roads. The DETR's current policy is therefore outlined below.

- 6.30B** Where a development is likely to generate a material increase in traffic (as defined in PPG13), either via an existing direct access or via an otherwise acceptable new access to a trunk road, which would result in the access becoming overloaded, the Secretary of State would advise (but if necessary direct) the Local Planning Authority to refuse the application. More likely, if improvements to the existing or proposed new access could be designed consistent with the secretary of State's 15-year design horizon, normally applied to those schemes he initiates himself, to provide the additional capacity, the Secretary of State could advise (or again, if necessary, direct) the Local Planning Authority to impose conditions on any planing permission that the development should not occur unless and until those improvements have been carried out.
- 6.30C** The Highways Agency would thus not expect to object to developments consistent with the proposals in the Local Plan subject to completion of any highway works which it considered necessary and acceptable in relation to the trunk road access such that the traffic generated by the development, together with all other traffic could be accommodated forward to the design year (normally 15 years from the first opening of the development).
- 6.30D** Where a development is likely to generate a material increase in traffic on the main line of a trunk road, the Agency would not normally object, subject to the completion of any necessary and acceptable highway works, which leave the trunk road no worse off than had the development not proceeded. In other words, where a developer agrees to fund an improvement to the highway which, taken together with the impact of the development, would leave the expected conditions on the mainline of the trunk road much the same as those anticipated without the development, then such solution would in general be acceptable to the Agency.

Policy 79

Planning permission for development that seeks to create new accesses on to the A19(T) will only be approved where no material adverse impact on highway safety will result. Road junction improvements on the A19(T) in the vicinity of major development sites may be required.

- 6.31** There is, however, a clear need for fuel, parking, toilet and refreshment facilities, including picnic areas, to be provided at intervals along trunk roads. The length of the A19(T) within the district amounts to just over ten miles and road users are served by the Hawthorn Services which is located on the trunk road approximately three miles from the administrative boundary with Sunderland. Government advice suggests that it is not unreasonable to expect a driver to travel for 30 miles before reaching petrol and related facilities. That would suggest that no provision need be made in the Plan for additional service areas. However, a suitable site exists where a safe access could be provided to the A19(T) and where roadside services would improve an unsightly area beside the North West Industrial Estate at Peterlee. It is considered that a new and modern facility located within the largest town in the District would make a useful contribution to improving the image of the area.

Policy 80

0.73ha of land to the west of the A19(T) at Peterlee is allocated for a roadside service station, subject to the site being satisfactorily accessed in accordance with policies 36 and 79 of the plan.

Movement of Freight

- 6.32** Freight movements have become increasingly concentrated onto roads following the introduction of larger and heavier loads. The movement of heavy lorries can have a severe environmental impact upon the local communities through which they pass.

Noise, fumes and vibrations caused by heavy lorries can create disturbance to local residents, pedestrians and other road users. Heavy lorries can also cause increased wear and tear to road surfaces and bridges. Proposals for developments which will generate the movement of heavy lorries will only be encouraged to locate close to defined lorry routes which are suitable for such traffic. These routes include the A19(T), A1086, A181, Seaham Southern Link Road and the B1280 to A19(T) at Murton in the south, to Ryhope in the north. The Dawdon-A19(T)-Snippersgate, Dawdon-Seaham Town Centre roads would be added to the list following their construction. Heavy goods vehicle operators will be encouraged to use these routes which are constructed to an appropriate standard and avoid residential areas. In accordance with Policy 77 the movement of goods, particularly bulky items, by rail rather than road will be encouraged as this will help improvement of environmental conditions on the road.

Policy 81

The council will seek to minimise the adverse impact of heavy goods vehicles on communities by:

- (i) seeking the co-operation of vehicle operators to use the defined lorry routes;
- (ii) defining special routes, including new sections of road where appropriate, to serve major development proposals generating such traffic;
- (iii) encouraging the introduction of weight restrictions on routes not considered suitable for heavy goods vehicles;
- (iv) encouraging the carriage of freight and bulky materials by rail, in accordance with policy 77.

Implementation

1. *Identifying and signing routes suitable for heavy goods vehicles, in co-operation with Durham County Council. Seeking the co-operation of heavy goods vehicle operators to use these routes.*
2. *Deciding planning applications and entering into planning agreements with developers to utilise agreed routes for heavy lorries and, where feasible, rail facilities for the transportation of freight.*

Other Communications

Control of large telecommunications development

- 6.33** Modern telecommunications are an essential and beneficial element in the life of the local community and in the national economy. Access to, and the exchange of, information electronically is of increasing significance in everyone's lives. Fast, reliable and cost-effective communications can assist business and encourage new methods of employment, such as home-working (see Policy 62: working from home). Modern telecommunications can also be of benefit to the environment by reducing the need to travel and hence reducing vehicle emissions of carbon dioxide and other pollutants.
- 6.34** The government is supportive of the growth of new and existing telecommunications systems and local planning authorities are advised to respond positively to telecommunications development proposals that extend the national network. Indeed, the significance of any proposed large telecommunications development to the development of the national network is deemed to be a material planning consideration.
- 6.35** Large telecommunications can have a significant visual impact on the landscape and the siting of development in sensitive and prominent locations should be avoided wherever possible, to ameliorate the loss of visual amenity. Furthermore, the sharing of masts is to be encouraged in order to keep to a minimum the proliferation of such structures and to minimise the visual impact of the development of a national network. Applicants for large masts will be expected to provide evidence that they have explored the possibility of erecting antennae on an existing building, mast or other structure. Applications for planning permission to install masts used by amateur radio operators, radio taxi firms and other private and commercial users will generally have less scope for using alternative sites or for sharing sites; however, such developments may only be appropriate where they are of such a scale as to have no serious impact on local amenity.
- 6.36** In terms of siting and design, the height of proposed development, the scale, layout, siting and design of ancillary structures and the scope for landscaping and screening will be

important considerations. However, the particular locational and technical requirements of such development will be taken into account as material considerations in the determination of planning applications of this nature, as will environmental policy objectives which are of relevance to interests of acknowledged importance.

- 6.37 In any development, significant and irremediable radio interference with other electrical equipment of any kind can be a material planning consideration. Where there is evidence that significant electrical interference will arise or where there may be physical interference, these aspects will be taken into account in determining a planning application.

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Policy 82 - This policy has lapsed

~~Wherever possible new telecommunications equipment should be located at an existing mast site. Proposals for new mast sites will only be approved where the use of an existing site would not be appropriate for technical or operational reasons. In such cases operators will be required to provide evidence that they have explored the possibility of utilising existing sites.~~

~~In considering applications for new telecommunications development, the significance of the proposals to the national network and the particular locational and technical requirements of the proposal will be taken into account.~~

~~Whether on an existing or new site, developments will only be approved where:~~

- ~~(i) it would not have a significant adverse effect upon the amenity of the surrounding area, and~~
- ~~(ii) it would not cause significant interference with other electrical equipment.~~

Control of satellite dishes

- 6.38 Under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 the erection of a non-network satellite dish will not require planning permission provided that specific criteria are met. Where the proposed development does not meet these criteria or where it is proposed to erect a satellite dish on a building containing residential flats then planning permission will be required.

- 6.39 Satellite dishes can have a detrimental effect on the environment if they are not sited with care. It is important to minimise the visual impact of this form of development on the street scene, and particularly in sensitive locations such as within conservation areas and on listed buildings. Even where the erection of satellite dishes is permitted development it is a condition of the permitted development right that the antenna, so far as is practicable, be sited so as to minimise its effect on the external appearance of the building upon which it is installed.

Policy 83 - This policy has lapsed

~~Planning permission for satellite dishes, where it is required, will be granted provided there is no adverse visual impact on the street scene, on the character of a conservation area contrary to policy 22 or on the setting or appearance of a listed building contrary to policy 24.~~

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Recreation, Community Facilities & Tourism

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- 97 ~~Accommodation for visitors~~ - This policy has lapsed
- 98 ~~Caravan, camping and chalet sites~~ - This policy has lapsed
- 99 ~~Redevelopment of caravan sites~~ - This policy has lapsed
- 100 ~~Static caravan, chalet and other self-catering accommodation occupancy~~ - This policy has lapsed

Introduction

- 7.1** This chapter establishes policies and proposals for recreation, sport, tourism and community facilities under three main headings: coastal and countryside recreation, urban recreation and community facilities and tourism and seeks to implement objectives D1, D4, D5 and D7 of the Development Strategy. It is recognised, however, that there is considerable overlap between these categories. Implementation of the policies will be subject to the availability of finance, in particular, from other public bodies and private organisations and the co-operation of landowners in certain circumstances.
- 7.2** A number of studies have been undertaken during the past five years which specifically

sought to identify opportunities for tourism development and other regeneration studies have been commissioned where a potential for tourism development has been recognised. Where appropriate, the proposals from these studies have been included in the Plan.

- 7.3** Recreation, sport and tourism are activities with major land use resource implications. It is vital, however, that the quality of any resource, upon which recreation, sport and tourism might be based, is not degraded by harmful development. There is a need for a balance to be struck between the provision of recreational and sporting opportunities, the promotion of tourism as an element of economic regeneration and the maintenance of environmental quality, as the primary resource, in accord with the principles of sustainability. This is particularly applicable to certain sensitive locations such as historic and/or architecturally significant areas and areas of landscape, wildlife or geological value. Whilst, therefore, it is the purpose of the planning system to ensure that adequate land and water resources are allocated for organised sport, informal recreation and tourism, there is a need to take into account the nature of any particular activity and the ability of land to sustain such activity in the long term.
- 7.4** The provision of community facilities, embracing the areas of education, health and social services is not primarily the role of the District Council but falls within the responsibility of other agencies. The local plan is, therefore, mainly concerned with the adequacy of the levels of provision and the need to facilitate new development, where appropriate, through liaison with the relevant agencies. It is also concerned with promoting the maintenance and enhancement of these facilities.

Coastal and Countryside Recreation

Coastal recreation

- 7.5** The Durham Coast essentially comprises three distinct elements; firstly, the majority of its eleven miles is undeveloped and comprises open clifftops that are covered with natural vegetation or crops and a cliffline with distinct headlands and bays which is dissected by deep wooded denes. In the southern stretch of coastline at Crimdon, the cliffs are replaced by sand dunes. Secondly, there is the coastal town and port of Seaham, where built development extends right up to the high water mark. Finally, there is the resort at Crimdon which currently provides accommodation at a caravan park in a coastal setting of cliffs and dunes. All of these areas are within the defined coastal zone (see para 3.35 and Proposals Maps).
- 7.6** The ability of the coastal zone environment to sustainably accommodate development and different forms of recreational and sporting activity varies within the three distinct areas of the coast, as described, and a policy framework has been established to reflect this.

Undeveloped Coast

- 7.7** The undeveloped coast represents a significant environmental and ecological resource. The landscape, comprising a cliffline with distinct headlands and bays, is visually attractive and the area is of national significance in terms of nature conservation (see para 3.38-3.39). On this basis it has great potential in terms of informal outdoor recreation and tourism.
- 7.8** This potential has, however, not been realised to date owing to the despoliation of much of the foreshore as a result of mining activities and the disposal of untreated sewage. The level of despoliation is likely to decline as colliery spoil is removed from the shore through the natural action of the sea and reclamation works which have been undertaken on the foreshore at Easington Colliery and Horden (see paras 3.115 and 3.116). Pollution from sewage will also decline as a consequence of Northumbrian Water implementing proposals to conform to the standards embodied in the European Commission's Bathing Water and Waste Water Directives.
- 7.9** As restoration of the coastal zone environment takes place, through natural processes and

intervention, increased recreational use of the coast is likely and its significance as a recreation and tourism asset will increase. Whilst access to this area should be enhanced for both residents and visitors alike, it is important that the inherent value of this natural resource is not diminished. Only uses of a scale and intensity compatible with the fragile nature of the undeveloped coastal environment, in terms of its landscape, wildlife and geological value, are likely to be appropriate. In addition to Policy 84, proposals may need to take account of other policies in the Plan. Those likely to be particularly relevant, depending on circumstances, include policy 7 (protection of areas of landscape value), policy 8 (protection of the coastal zone environment), policy 15 (protection of Sites of Special Scientific Interest), policy 16 (SNCI's Local Nature Reserves and ancient woodlands), Policy 85 (Crimdon) and Policy S28 (North Dock, Seaham).

- 7.10** Access to the coast is currently limited. Whilst the coastal environment is sensitive it is considered that the facilitation of access for the quiet enjoyment of the area (viz. passive uses such as walking and angling) is appropriate. The provision of facilities such as small scale car parks and footpaths (see Policy 86) that are sensitive in terms of scale, design and location are supportive of this objective.

Policy 84

Recreation, art, sport and/or tourism development in the coastal zone, as defined on the proposals map, will only be approved where it is for the quiet enjoyment of the coast and the scale and intensity of the proposal is compatible with the character and nature of the coast, or where it is in accord with other policies in the plan. The development of car parking facilities that enable access to the coast will be approved where they are appropriately located, designed and of a suitable scale.

Crimdon

- 7.11** Crimdon Park was established in the inter-war period as a minor resort but has suffered a significant decline in popularity. The site comprises a caravan park and associated facilities with a capacity of approximately 750 vans together with a day visitor area consisting of a large (1,000 capacity) car park, an adventure playground and small promenade. A private riding stable is situated within the day visitor area and a number of seasonal concessions are operated in the area. Parts of the site are underused, presenting a poor appearance, and detract from the remainder of the park which is managed by a private company. The overall condition of the park is likely to detract from and undermine the initiatives being undertaken to manage and improve the coast as part of the Turning the Tide project. A strategy has therefore been agreed by the Council designed to complement the Turning the Tide Initiative by protecting and reinforcing the natural features and positive characteristics of the area. The approach agreed by the Council seeks to:

- maintain public access to the coastline and nearby denes
- remove redundant, deteriorating features such as the very large car park
- support the area as a 'Gateway' to the coast
- promote the improvement of the existing caravan site
- restore natural vegetation cover where appropriate

- 7.12** Crimdon is a visually attractive location and an important access point to the foreshore and the cliffs and has great potential in terms of tourism and recreation in this respect. The northern part of the site has a severe cliff edge to the shore but allows access to the cliff tops. The southern part of the site comprises a sand dune system which abuts an extensive sandy beach. The natural resources of the area are, therefore, an inherent attraction and recreational or tourism development which requires and can exploit these resources, in a sustainable manner, whilst maintaining access to the foreshore and cliff top for the general public, is likely to be appropriate.

- 7.13** It is important to note that the location of the site is also significant in terms of its wildlife and landscape value. The area between the cliff edge and the beginning of the dune system from Cross Gill in the north to the local authority boundary in the south, to the mean low water mark is designated as a SSSI. This area, the site of Crimdon Park itself, together with Crimdon Dene to the south of the site, forms part of the southern ALV also. Only development proposals which are sensitive to these environmental parameters are likely to be acceptable.

Policy 85

The development of land at Crimdon for recreation, sport or tourism uses will be approved where it does not conflict with policy 7 (protection of areas of landscape value), policy 14 (protection of special areas of conservation), and policy 15 (protection of sites of special scientific interest).

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Seaham

- 7.14** The town and port of Seaham is recognised as having potential in terms of the development of sporting, recreational and tourism facilities based on its environment and/or heritage. Indeed the town already has a minor resort function based on these aspects. The policy framework dealing with this issue relates only to land within the defined settlement boundary for Seaham and is, therefore, located in the chapter dealing specifically with Seaham.

Countryside recreation

- 7.15** The characteristics of the countryside are inherent attractions to visitors and include those natural resources that may be used for sport and recreation. Walking is the most popular activity in the countryside and Easington District is fortunate in having an extensive network of public rights of way (202 km of mainly footpaths) leading from settlements into the country and along the coast. The network is one of the main environmental assets of the area, especially for the 47% of households who do not own cars, and, together with informal paths and walkways/cycleways, allows a quick escape from the built-up areas to the quietness and beauty of the countryside. Protection of this asset is covered by Policy 74 which follows the principles laid out in Department of Environment circular 2/93 Annex D: Public Rights of Way and Development. Additionally, a small but growing number of people are taking part in organised sport and recreation. When this general trend is considered with the encouragement of agricultural diversification for potential sporting and recreational pursuits, it is apparent that there is likely to be an increase in the extent and variety of sport and leisure development proposals in the countryside. Such development proposals are likely to include those sport and leisure pursuits that are based on the natural resource of the countryside or which would otherwise be inappropriately located in towns and villages such as golf courses, riding stables and land and water based activity centres, amongst others.
- 7.16** The countryside can accommodate many forms of development without detriment if the location and design of development is handled with sensitivity. Such development should be in sympathy with the existing settlement patterns and buildings and the wildlife and landscape resources of the area in order to protect the character and appearance of the countryside. It should avoid any serious adverse impact upon the amenity of those who live and work in the countryside. Where development will generate an increase in traffic it is likely that it will only be appropriate where the existing road network can accommodate such traffic and where it is accessible by public transport.
- 7.17** There are landscape areas within the countryside which are particularly attractive and these have been designated as Areas of High Landscape Value. Within these areas the protection of the character and landscape quality are primary considerations in the assessment of development proposals. Only countryside recreation proposals that are sympathetic to these considerations are likely to be acceptable in AHLVs under the terms of Policy 7 (protection of Areas of High Landscape Value).
- 7.18** Whilst agricultural diversification initiatives are to be encouraged (see Policy 57: diversification of the use of agricultural land), recreational and sporting development proposals in the countryside that will result in the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land are unlikely to be acceptable under the terms of Policy 12 (the protection of agricultural land). The re-use of buildings in the countryside for recreation and sport may be acceptable under the terms of Policies 59 and 60 (the re-use and adaptation of buildings and dwellings in the countryside).

Policy 86- This policy has lapsed

~~Development in the countryside for the purposes of sport and recreation will be approved provided that:~~

- ~~(i) it does not seriously adversely affect the amenity, character or appearance of the area.~~

- (ii) ~~it has no serious adverse affect on the amenity of people living and working in the vicinity of the site and the existing use of adjacent land or buildings in terms of privacy, visual intrusion, noise, other pollutants and traffic generation;~~
- (iii) ~~it can be served by roads capable of accommodating any increase in traffic generated by the development.~~
- (iv) ~~it does not lead to the permanent loss of best and most versatile agricultural land in accordance with policy 12.~~

Coastal footpath

7.19 Since 1984, the Council, in conjunction with Durham County Council and the Countryside Commission, has progressed the development of a coastal footpath along the length of the Durham Coast. This development has been made with the assistance of the National Trust as a major landowner along the coastline. To date a footpath has been developed between the former Dawdon Colliery to Warren House Gill and along the length of Hawthorn Dene and Warren House Gill. Further south, smaller stretches have been completed on the coast at Horden, Castle

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Eden Dene Mouth and Blackhall. It is proposed, subject to the agreement of landowners, to complete the development of the footpath along the entire length of the coastline.

7.20 The definitive route of the proposed footpath cannot be shown on the Proposals Map as this remains to be precisely determined. The route of the proposed path should be close to the cliff edge subject to safety considerations and Policies 14 and 15.

7.21 Whilst part of the route is already a public right of way much of it is not. Upon completion, it is proposed that the entire length will be designated as the coastal footpath. The development of the coastal footpath presents opportunities to provide footpath links to the coastal dunes, nearby villages and also those coastal footpaths being developed in the City of Sunderland and the Borough of Hartlepool, to create a recreational and tourist facility of sub-regional significance.

Policy 87- This policy has lapsed

~~Development of the coastal footpath will be completed along the entire length of the Durham coast.~~

Implementation

1. *The route will be developed by Durham County Council and Easington District Council in co-operation with partners in the Turning The Tide project to restore the Durham coast including the National Trust and the Countryside Agency as appropriate. Durham County Council will acquire the land for the route by agreement or by compulsory purchase.*

Urban Recreation and Community Facilities

Development of new or improved leisure and community buildings

7.22 Despite the economic decline a strong spirit of community remains within the settlements of the District. This needs to be supported through the provision of appropriate facilities.

7.23 Venues for sport, leisure and community activities can attract large numbers of people both during the day and the evening and such development is only likely to be appropriate where it can be easily reached by all members of the community whether

travelling by car, bus, bike or foot, where sufficient parking is available and where there is no serious adverse affect upon the amenity of people in the locality.

Sport and leisure facilities

- 7.24** The two leisure centres at Peterlee and Seaham and the many village halls, community centres, sporting and non-sporting clubs throughout the District provide venues for indoor sporting and leisure activities. Deficiencies in the provision of indoor sports facilities do exist, however, in the west of the District. The District has one swimming pool/leisure facility at Peterlee. However an indoor public swimming pool is required to serve the north of the District which now has no swimming pool following the closure of those at Murton and Dawdon.
- 7.25** Where the public provision of indoor sport and leisure facilities is deficient, it may be possible to secure access for the community use of school sports facilities. Such use is likely to be appropriate in planning terms and will be encouraged, where possible, however this is dependent upon the express consent of the school governing body.

Policy 88

The development of an indoor swimming pool in the northern part of the district will be approved provided that the proposal

- (i) is located within a settlement boundary
- (ii) does not seriously affect the amenity, character or appearance of the area
- (iii) has no seriously adverse effect on the amenity of people living and working in the vicinity of the site and the existing use of adjacent land or buildings in terms of privacy, visual intrusion, noise, other pollutants and traffic generation:
- (iv) makes provision for access and parking in accord with policies 36 (design for access) and 37 (design for parking)
- (v) can be served by public transport provision in accord with appendix 5

- 7.26** With the restrictions on local government finance and priority for Council expenditure over the Plan period being on regeneration initiatives, finance available for community facilities is likely to be severely limited. In this situation, the Council will concentrate on seeking alternative means of providing for community facilities. Grants have been awarded by the Rural Development Commission for a number of schemes which would not otherwise have been possible such as the South Hetton Community Centre. Grant aid is now also available from the National Lottery. This approach should be continued over the Plan period, with priority being given to areas where there is greatest demand or where no facilities exist. Wherever possible, the opportunity will be taken to link community provision with recreation provision since this can be a particularly cost-effective means of providing both facilities.

- 7.27** To maintain and enhance the sense of community identity, spirit and sense of place that exists in Easington, the Council operates and promotes a 'per cent for art' policy. In all developments of a significant scale or nature the provision of public art is encouraged in accord with Policy 39 (design for art).

Library facilities

- 7.28** The provision of a library service is the responsibility of the County Council. In the District there are seven full-time and five part-time libraries and two mobile libraries. The further development or improvement of the library service in the District is dependent upon the availability of capital resources over the Plan period.

Policy 89

The development of new and the extension or improvement of existing leisure, sport and community buildings and facilities within the settlements of the district will be approved provided that the proposal:

- (i) does not seriously adversely affect the amenity, character or appearance of the area;
- (ii) has no serious adverse affect on the amenity of people living and working in the vicinity of the site and the existing use of adjacent land or buildings in terms of privacy, visual intrusion, noise, other pollutants and traffic generation;
- (iii) makes provision for access and parking in accord with policies 36 (design for access) and 37 (design for parking);
- (iv) can be served by public transport provision in accord with appendix 5.

The community use of existing school sports facilities will be encouraged.

Open space

- 7.29** The maintenance of recreational and amenity open space in urban areas is important and can contribute significantly to the life of the community for reasons of health, the sense of well-being, sporting excellence and because of its amenity value. People should have easy access, particularly on foot, to local public open space close to where they live. This is particularly important for children and elderly people.
- 7.30** Within a built-up area there are clearly different types of open space, each with different functions and users. In broad terms, there is open space used as outdoor playing space by both adults and children which can include all forms of playing surfaces whether open to the public or specific members for outdoor sport and recreation use, children's equipped playgrounds and casual or informal play space within housing or neighbourhood areas that are also used by children. There is also open space that has a broader amenity function in visual terms, by providing a green space in an urban area, or as a recreational resource for all ages to walk, sit and play on or in recreational terms, by providing for specific recreational activities, such as tending an allotment. These areas can include public parks, village greens, commons, open and landscaped open spaces in settlements and allotment gardens. Playing fields can also, in certain circumstances, be significant in terms of visual amenity.
- 7.31** The use of land as open space in a built-up setting is, therefore, a legitimate use of land and is no less important than other land uses. Playing fields and open spaces are a finite resource within the District and once built upon, likely to be permanently lost to the community. Planning decisions therefore need to take into account the long term impact of the loss of such space.
- 7.32** The government does not consider it helpful to prescribe national standards of recreational provision as local circumstances differ greatly. The National Playing Fields Association's (NPFA) proposals for minimum standards of outdoor playing space in urban areas are, however, widely recognised as a useful guide to the adequacy of provision. The NPFA advise that the minimum standard of 2.43 hectares of outdoor playing space per 1000 people should be met by a combination of outdoor sports provision (@ 1.6 - 1.8 ha/1000) and children's play space, which includes both equipped and informal areas (@ 0.6 - 0.8 ha/1000). Provision required in new housing development is discussed in paragraph 5.32.
- 7.33** NPFA standards do not reflect the different level, quality and type of sports facility provision and access to such facilities, as well as access to children's play space at a local level. As a consequence, the application of this model standard is not considered appropriate in its entirety, to the adequacy of outdoor playing space provision throughout the District, but rather that its constituent aspects serve as a useful guide when applied at specific spatial levels. During the period of the Plan the Council will produce a playing pitch strategy for the District as recommended by the Sports Council. The completed Playing Pitch Study and Strategy will provide an accurate, up to date and all-encompassing assessment of outdoor formal playing pitches for the sports of cricket, football and rugby. It will provide the current level of deficiencies/surpluses settlement by settlement and on a District wide basis. The Playing Pitch Study and Strategy will be the basis upon which the Council will assess requirements across

the District and safeguard these valued open spaces.

Protection and provision of outdoor sports facilities

- 7.34** A District-wide analysis of outdoor sports facilities conceals varying levels of provision throughout the settlements of the District. It is considered, however, that the application of the NPFA standard to all of the settlements in the District is inappropriate as the standard was derived for urban areas and takes little account of the distribution of population and the resultant population densities in a more dispersed, rural locality, together with population profiles and participation rates in outdoor sport. On this basis, the NPFA standard of 1.6-1.8 ha. outdoor sports surfaces per 1000 people is considered appropriate as a target figure in the major centres of Peterlee and Seaham but that elsewhere the adequacy of provision should be examined on a District-wide basis.
- 7.35** On that premise, taking existing dual use of school playing fields into account, there is approximately 155 hectares of outdoor sports facilities available at present which falls slightly below the minimum NPFA standard of 157 hectares (based on 1.6 ha. /1000 at the 1991 Census population level). In the light of this and in view of the population projection for a small increase in the number of residents living in the District, it is evident that there is a need to safeguard and enhance the existing level of provision. The loss of playing surfaces used for outdoor sport as a consequence of a development proposal is, therefore, unlikely to be appropriate.
- 7.36** The changing needs of schools may require the rationalisation of sports facilities and playing fields. Where school playing fields are deemed, by the local education authority, to be surplus to requirements the development of such facilities will only be permitted where it fully accords with the criteria set out in Policy 90. The Council will assess any such proposals against the level of provision within the District as a whole or within the main centres of Seaham and Peterlee.
- 7.37** At best, NPFA standards are a crude quantitative measurement and do not take account of the quality of outdoor sport surfaces. There may be circumstances whereby the development of outdoor sport surfaces is appropriate where, for example, the construction of changing rooms improves the use of sports pitches, or where the provision, by a developer of new and/or replacement facilities, may enhance their quality and accessibility. The only other circumstance where the development of outdoor playing surfaces is likely to be appropriate is where there is an excess of outdoor sports facilities; however, even in this case the recreation and amenity value of such provision should be taken into account. In some instances playing fields can make a significant contribution to the visual amenity of an area.
- 7.38** To maximise the availability of outdoor playing space to the wider community, the Council will encourage school governing bodies to permit the community use of sports facilities. The reclamation of derelict land or the re-use of vacant and under-used land is considered to offer the greatest opportunity to further enhance the level of provision within the settlements with new playing surfaces. Specific proposals in this respect are detailed in the appropriate settlement chapters (see 'site specific proposals in the settlement chapters').

Policy 90

Development which would result in the loss of an area of outdoor sports facilities will not be approved other than in one or more of the following circumstances:

- (i) where the development of a small part of a larger area of outdoor sports facilities enables the enhancement of that remaining;
- (ii) where alternative provision of outdoor sports facilities of equal or enhanced community benefit, in terms of quality and/or accessibility that is capable of serving the existing population, is provided;
- (iii) where development involves the provision of new outdoor sports facilities which are related to the existing outdoor sport area;
- (iv) where there is an excess of outdoor sports facilities in the area, taking into account the recreation and amenity value of such provision.

The council will seek to secure a minimum level of 1.6ha. Outdoor sports facilities per 1000 people in the defined settlements of Peterlee and Seaham and at a district-wide level.

To secure the provision of sufficient outdoor sports facilities in the settlements of the district planning permission for the development of outdoor sports facilities within the defined settlement boundaries will normally be approved.

Implementation

1. The Council will monitor the availability and use of outdoor sports facilities.
2. The Council will prepare a 'Playing Pitch Strategy' following guidelines produced by the Sports Council.

Protection of children's play space

7.39 The Council is aware that play is very important in the

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development of children. Delinquency, vandalism and other problems can be decreased by the provision of more opportunities for positive play experience. Access is crucial in terms of the spatial provision of such open space, therefore, it should be provided at a local or neighbourhood level where it is immediately accessible on foot. The NPFA categorisation of children's play space includes local areas for play, local equipped areas for play and neighbourhood equipped areas for play within housing areas and these are all included in the definition of children's play space employed here.

- 7.40** The application of the NPFA standard for children's playspace of 0.6-0.8 ha. per 1000 people does not reflect the need for immediate local accessibility. It is useful, however, as a guide to assess, on a quantitative basis only, the existing level of provision. Analysis on a settlement basis reveals serious deficiencies in many of the larger settlements throughout the District. Some settlements satisfy the minimum NPFA standard, but in no circumstances is there a surplus of children's play space. This is largely the result of high density terraced forms of housing, with little provision for play space, that predominate in the former colliery villages. Similarly, only limited provision has been made in many of the inter/post war Council housing estates.
- 7.41** Where a limited amount of play space has been provided within housing areas, it is considered important to safeguard this from development. Where play space has not been included as an integral element of housing development it is clearly difficult to make up for the deficiency in provision. In such circumstances it will be appropriate to safeguard open space that is accessible from, but not an integral part of residential areas, from development. Clearly, where opportunities arise within housing areas to address a deficiency at a local level, for example through clearance, these should be taken and the land safeguarded from other forms of development.
- 7.42** The NPFA standards cannot account for the quality of facilities and there may be circumstances where the development of children's play space may result in the provision of new and/or replacement facilities of a better quality and greater accessibility. The only other circumstance where the development of children's play space is likely to be appropriate is where there is an excess of provision. Whilst this can only be measured on a quantifiable basis at a settlement level there is a need also to take into account the local accessibility of such provision in the determination of planning applications.

Policy 91

Development which would result in the loss of an area of children's play space will only be approved in one or more of the following circumstances;

- (i) where the development of a small part of a larger area of children's play space enables the enhancement of that remaining;
- (ii) where alternative provision of equal or enhanced community benefit, in terms of quality and/or accessibility that is capable of serving the existing local population, is provided;
- (iii) where development involves the provision of new children's play space which is related to the existing play space area;

- (iv) where there is an excess of children's play space in the area measured on a settlement basis but taking into account the accessibility of such provision at a local level.

Implementation

1. *The Council will monitor the availability of children's play space.*

Provision of children's play space

- 7.43** The provision of children's play space is considered in paragraphs 5.32A - C/Policy 66 of the Housing Chapter.

Protection of amenity open space

- 7.44** Much of the housing built in the former colliery villages during the 19th/early 20th centuries made no provision for informal open space. Similarly only limited provision has been made in many of the inter/post war Council housing estates. In the newer private housing estates amenity open space has been provided. In Peterlee, open and landscaped amenity open space has been provided as an integral element in the design and layout of the new town. This is an important aspect of the town and is addressed specifically in the Peterlee settlement chapter.
- 7.45** The development of landscaped and amenity open space is unlikely to be appropriate where there is a need both to ensure the maintenance of existing open spaces in the District whilst safeguarding the appearance and character of settlements. Such amenity open spaces are likely to include public parks, village greens, commons, and major areas of landscaping in respect of the 'softening' of urban development in accord with Policy 35 (Impact of development). Playing fields may also be included in this category where they are of significant local visual amenity value.

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- 7.46** There may be circumstances where the development of amenity open space may result in the provision of new and/or areas of a better quality and greater accessibility. This may involve the reclamation of cleared sites or the provision of additional landscaping. Opportunities exist to increase provision of open space by allocating additional land on former colliery sites following the completion of reclamation schemes. Where relevant, such sites are identified in the settlement chapters.

Policy 92

Amenity open space will be protected from development except where:

- (i) the development of a small part of a larger area of open space enables the enhancement of that remaining; or
- (ii) alternative provision of equal or enhanced community benefit, in terms of quality and/or accessibility that is capable of serving the existing population, is provided.

Facilities for the arts

- 7.47** The District has a rich heritage of thriving arts and cultural activity which can contribute greatly to the quality of local life. Activity related to the arts also has the potential to assist the local economy, create new job opportunities and provide a recreational /tourism focus.
- 7.48** If the potential for artistic activity in the District is to be allowed to develop, there is a need for the provision of facilities suitable for use as studios, workshops and

gallery/exhibition space. To accord with the general principles of sustainable development, any such proposal would be most appropriately located in the existing settlements of the District. There may be scope to locate such uses in the countryside where such development involved the re-use and adaptation of dwellings or other buildings in accord with Policies 59 and 60 (re-use and adaptation of buildings and dwellings in the countryside respectively). The District is also without a specific venue for performances of art, drama, dance, music, film and other cultural activities.

- 7.49** Cultural venues can attract large numbers of people and such development is only likely to be appropriate where it can be easily reached by all members of the community whether travelling by car, bus, bike or foot, where sufficient parking is available and where there is no serious adverse affect upon the amenity of people in the locality. The major centres of Seaham and Peterlee are likely to provide the most suitable locations for the development of such facilities.

Policy 93

The development of new arts facilities comprising studios, workshops and venues for the performance of the arts will be approved within the settlements of the district provided that the proposal:

- (i) does not seriously adversely affect the amenity, character or appearance of the area;
- (ii) has no serious adverse affect on the amenity of people living and working in the vicinity of the site and the existing use of adjacent land or buildings in terms of privacy, visual intrusion, noise, other pollutants and traffic generation;
- (iii) makes provision for access and parking in accord with policies 36 (design for access) and 37 (design for parking);
- (iv) can be served by public transport provision in accord with appendix 5.

Such development may be approved in the countryside where it is accordance with policies 59 and 60 (re-use and adaptation of dwellings and other buildings in the countryside).

Provision of new or improved education facilities on existing sites

- 7.50** The provision and maintenance of school facilities within the District is the responsibility of Durham County Council as the local education authority. Some schools are provided by other bodies (the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church) but these are supported by the County Council and form part of the overall provision. In total there are 57 schools in the District: five nursery schools, 44 primary schools (including those with nursery classes attached), six comprehensive schools and two special schools.
- 7.51** Over the 1970s and 1980s the number of children of school age in the District declined. In 1989 there were estimated to be 13,400 children of school age (viz. 5-15 years old) in the District. The number is expected to increase by 8.3% to 14,500 by 1996, and to remain at a similar level to the year 2001 before declining significantly to approximately 13,150 by 2006.
- 7.52** In recent years, the local education authority has sought to rationalise its provision relative to the level of anticipated need. Expenditure on education facilities over the Plan period is, therefore, likely to be concentrated on the improvement or replacement of

schools, rather than on additional premises. Only where significant new housing development occurs is there likely to be a need to provide extra accommodation in the form of new schools or extensions to existing schools. The level of spare capacity in schools throughout the District varies between settlements. The need for new schools as a

consequence of proposals for significant housing developments is considered within the individual settlement chapters, where relevant.

- 7.53** The responsibility for further education in the District rests with East Durham Community College. Further education and participation in training and retraining initiatives are crucial to the economic and social regeneration of the District and the college has an important part to play in the future development of East Durham. To encourage further involvement in higher education and training/re-training the college needs to offer an attractive learning environment which may involve extensions or alterations to the existing premises.
- 7.54** The impact upon the level of outdoor sports provision within the District of any proposal to provide new buildings or to extend existing buildings within the grounds of any educational establishments will need to be considered in terms of Policy 91 (protection and provision of outdoor sports facilities).

Policy 94

Within the grounds of educational establishments planning permission for the development of additional educational facilities or the extension and/or alteration of existing educational premises will be approved provided the proposal accords with policy 90 (protection and provision of outdoor sports facilities).

Provision of health facilities

- 7.55** Health facilities in the District are largely provided and administered by the district health authorities based in Sunderland, Hartlepool and Durham.
- 7.56** Whilst the majority of residents have to travel to Sunderland, Hartlepool or Durham for general hospital facilities a new general/community hospital at Peterlee does provide a limited community service. All the main settlements in the District have health centres or health clinics.
- 7.57** Health centres and surgeries need to be in locations where they are easily accessible to the entire community. Such facilities will, therefore, be most appropriately located in close proximity to town or village centres where there is likely to be a higher level of public transport provision.
- 7.58** In smaller villages where there is no defined shopping centre such developments will be most appropriately located within the defined settlement boundary. Development proposals for new facilities of this nature will, however, need to ensure the provision of adequate car parking in accord with Policy 37 (design for parking).

Policy 95

Planning permission for health centres, doctors', dentists' and other surgeries will be approved provided that the proposal:

- (i) is located within or on the edge of defined town and local shopping centres, where possible;
- (ii) has no serious adverse affect on the amenity of people living and working in the vicinity of the site and the existing use of adjacent land or buildings in terms of privacy, visual intrusion, noise, other pollutants and traffic generation;
- (iii) makes provision for access and parking in accord with policies 36 (design for access) and 37 (design for parking).

Protection of Village Shops and Community Facilities

- 7.58A** Within the District's smaller settlements, village shops, public houses, post offices, surgeries and village halls play a vital commercial, social and community role and are central to the continued vitality of these settlements. In recent years, a variety of demographic, social and economic factors have resulted in the loss of such facilities and put the continued operation and availability of others under threat. This trend is likely to be sustained with the continued development and expansion of town centre and out of centre stores, and increased personal mobility.
- 7.58B** Although many of the district's villages lie relatively close to either the main towns of Peterlee or Seaham or other large former colliery villages where shops and facilities are available, car ownership levels in the district are significantly lower than the national average and nearly half of households do not have access to a car. At the same time, public transport options are limited - none of the villages has access to the rail network and bus services are variable and in any case, often only secured at their current levels through public subsidy. The further loss of shops and community facilities would have the combined effect of disadvantaging those without access to the car, whilst conversely encouraging more trips by car for those with access to them.

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This would both undermine rural communities and be contrary to the principles of sustainable development and government policy set out in PPG's6, 7 and 13. Apart from Seaham and Peterlee, there are no settlements in the district of over 10,000 people and over half of the district's population live in the villages. Further loss of village facilities would therefore affect a substantial proportion of the district's population.

7.58C Whilst it is not the role of the planning system to stifle change or prevent competition, it is important that unnecessary losses of shops and community facilities in the District's villages are avoided. In particular, all options for the retention of such facilities should be explored for it may not follow that just because one party has not been able to make a village shop or facility successful, that others may not be able to do so or are unwilling to try. In many cases, the District Council is undertaking or plans to commence settlement renewal initiatives involving the use of public finance to support community facilities and improve buildings and make local shopping centres more attractive. A policy to avoid unnecessary loss through change of use or redevelopment of such facilities would compliment these initiative and maximise the value of public investment.

7.58D For the reason stated above, the District Council will only allow redevelopment or changes of use which would lead to the loss of a village shop or community facility where one of three circumstances apply:

- (i) where the applicant can clearly demonstrate that the facility is no longer financially viable. In such circumstances, the applicant will be required to provide evidence that the property or business has been advertised locally on the open market for a reasonable period and that no reasonable offer which would allow the retention of the facility has been refused. This will normally involve the facility being advertised at least four times over a twelve month period at roughly equal periods over the year with the valuation attributed to it reflecting its existing use;
- (ii) where there is no longer a significant need for the facility in that locality. In assessing this, the Council will pay particular attention to views of local people and the relevant Parish Council;
- (iii) where equivalent and accessible alternative facilities are available or would be made available nearby.

Policy 96

Outside of the towns of Seaham and Peterlee proposals which, through conversion or redevelopment, would result in the loss of a community facility (village shops, post offices, public houses, doctors/dentists surgeries and village halls) will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that:

- (i) the facility is no longer financially viable; or
- (ii) there is no significant demand for the facility within that locality; or;
- (iii) equivalent facilities in terms of their nature and accessibility are available or would be made available nearby.

Tourism

7.59 It is envisaged that as the environment of East Durham is reclaimed and restored from the dereliction of the coal mining industry, the image and perception of the area will change and its potential as a tourist destination will increase. The coastline, its rich natural history and the area's heritage all have the potential to attract visitors to the area.

7.60 These potential attractions are based on natural physical features and the historic fabric of the District's settlements and landscape. If any potential tourism development is to exploit these particular elements it is important that such development is sustainable to ensure

that the value of the initial attraction is not diminished. Sustainable tourism developments can assist in both the diversification of the local economic base and the regeneration of the District. The policies contained in the Local Plan aim to encourage tourism development whilst safeguarding the unspoiled and attractive features of the District. Policies are therefore included which seek to guide decisions relating to permanent visitor accommodation, caravan sites and caravan storage sites.

Accommodation for visitors

- 7.61 There is very little visitor accommodation in the form of hotels, motels, guest houses and bed and breakfast facilities in the District at present. The development of new visitor accommodation of this nature within the settlements of the District is likely to be appropriate, particularly in Seaham, which is considered to have significant tourism potential and in Peterlee, which may serve to complement its role as a major centre and a location for industry and business. New development of this nature in the countryside and in the coastal zone is unlikely to be acceptable except where it is specifically encouraged

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by other policies in the plan such as development at Crimdon (Policy 81) and where it involves the diversification of an agricultural operation (Policy 55) and the re-use and adaptation of buildings and dwellings in the countryside (Policies 57 and 58)

- 7.62 Such development is only likely to be appropriate where it does not adversely affect the amenities of local properties and where the incidental increase in vehicular movements does not cause problems of highway safety.

Policy 97- This policy has lapsed

~~The development of visitor accommodation will be approved within existing settlement boundaries provided that the proposal:~~

- ~~(i) has no serious adverse affect on the amenity of people living and working in the vicinity of the site and the existing use of adjacent land or buildings in terms of privacy, visual intrusion, noise, other pollutants and traffic generation;~~
- ~~(ii) makes provision for access and parking in accord with policies 36 (design for access) and 37 (design for parking);~~

~~Such development in the countryside will only be approved, subject to the above conditions, where it accords with policy 85 (crimdon), policy 57 (diversification of the use of agricultural land) and policies 59 and 60 (re-use and adaptation of buildings and dwellings in the countryside respectively);~~

Caravan, camping and chalet sites

- 7.63 An adequate range of visitor accommodation throughout the District serving all aspects of the tourism market is essential to the growth of the tourism industry and it is important that forms of self-catering accommodation are available. Sites throughout the District for touring and static holiday caravans or for camping are likely to be appropriate to serve this aspect of the market provided they do not damage the landscape or local amenity. Sites to store touring caravans are also required as there is a growing need especially in the vicinity of urban areas and these will be treated under the same policy framework as that for static and touring sites.

- 7.64 There are landscape areas in the District that are particularly attractive where stricter control is necessary to ensure that these areas are not spoiled by inappropriate new development. The coastal zone is one of these areas and development here is controlled by Policies 8 (protection of the coastal zone environment) and 84 (undeveloped coast). Because of the open and exposed nature of the coastline the development of sites for touring and static holiday caravans, chalets or for camping are unlikely to be appropriate in visual terms except at the established resort of Crimdon (see Policy 85).

- 7.65** The landscapes of the Northern and Central Areas of Landscape Value (AHLVs) are also unlikely to be able to accommodate such development without significant visual intrusion and it is unlikely this sort of development will be appropriate here. The nature of the landscape in the Southern and Elemore AHLVs is considered more able to accommodate the development of sites for touring and static holiday caravans, chalets or for camping and such development will be more appropriate here apart from the part of the coastal zone that is within the Southern AHLV and the Castle Eden Conservation Area. Any such development will, however, need to accord with the provisions of Policy 7 (protection of Areas of High Landscape Value). In line with Central Government guidance contained in PPG2, such development will not be considered appropriate within the Green Belt.
- 7.66** The careful choice of design, materials and colour of chalets and static caravans and their distribution on site can assist in reducing the visual impact of such development in the countryside and this is to be encouraged. Chalets, caravans and tents can be more readily absorbed in those areas where, throughout the year, there is well developed tree cover or other established screening which is compatible with the landscape. Where the tree cover gives effective screening only when in leaf it is likely that touring caravans, tents and associated facilities will need to be removed at the end of each summer season to ensure that they do not seriously detract from the visual amenity of the area.
- 7.67** Where sites are approved in areas screened by trees and woodland it may be necessary to impose conditions on any new permission to ensure the future maintenance of tree cover so as not to expose the chalets, caravans or tents to harmful views in the landscape.
- 7.68** The need to ameliorate the visual impact of caravan development applies equally to sites for storing touring caravans as their impact on the landscape can be considerable. Extensions to existing caravan, camping or chalet sites will be treated in the same way as new sites.

Policy 98- This policy has lapsed

~~The development or extension of sites for chalets, camping, touring and static holiday caravans and caravan storage will not be approved in the green belt, the northern and central areas of landscape value, in the Castle Eden conservation area or in the coastal zone, except at Crimdon (policy 85). Elsewhere the development or extension of sites for chalets, camping, touring and static holiday caravans and caravan storage will be approved provided that:~~

- ~~(i) the scale of development does not adversely affect the landscape nor the amenities of local residents;~~
- ~~(ii) the design, materials and colour of chalets and static caravans are chosen to merge with the surroundings;~~
- ~~(iii) the scheme is comprehensively planned on a site where trees or other screening compatible with the landscape adequately conceal permanent development throughout the year;~~

~~Where the tree cover gives effective screening only when in leaf, touring caravans, tents and associated facilities may be acceptable provided that they are removed at the end of each summer season;~~

Redevelopment of caravan sites

- 7.69** The provision of a higher standard of self-catering accommodation can serve to act as an attraction in itself and the redevelopment of caravan sites, in part or as a whole, to chalet sites is consistent with this. Such redevelopment can also provide an all year facility, as opposed to a seasonal one, which can have benefits for the local economy.
- 7.70** The development of permanent chalet facilities is likely to be more appropriate where the site is well screened throughout the year. Such development may be appropriate, on a site where the tree cover gives effective screening only when in leaf, if the replacement of caravans with chalets is of a design and a material that is more sympathetic to the local landscape.

Policy 99- This policy has lapsed

The redevelopment of a caravan site to provide chalets will be approved provided that the development is comprehensively planned on a site where trees or other screening compatible with the landscape adequately conceal permanent development throughout the year. Where the tree cover gives effective screening only when in leaf such development will only be approved where the design, materials and colour of chalets are chosen to merge with the surroundings.

Static caravan, chalet and other self-catering accommodation occupancy

- 7.71** In recognition of the need to provide a range of tourist accommodation throughout the District the Plan seeks to allow the development of static caravan, chalet and other self-catering accommodation in the countryside. It is important that this accommodation is, however, kept available to visitors as this form of accommodation is not built, designed or located for permanent residential use. This will be controlled through the use of planning conditions to prevent their establishment as permanent residential buildings in the countryside.
- 7.72** Where the accommodation is of a design or construction that is unsuitable for continuous occupation, especially in the winter months, seasonal occupancy conditions will be applied. In other circumstances, such as that of holiday cottages, a holiday occupancy condition will be more appropriate.

Policy 100- This policy has lapsed

Static caravan, chalet and other self-catering accommodation will only be approved subject to an occupancy condition.



Local Plan 2001 - 2006

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District of **easington.**



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Shopping

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Introduction

- 8.1** Within a regional hierarchy of retail centres, Peterlee and Seaham are town centres serving large parts of the District. Whilst they have the largest shop sales area in the District (at approximately 15,500 sq.m. and 11,250 sq.m. net retail floorspace (August, 1995) respectively) both centres are currently largely reliant on convenience trade and have a relatively low representation of national stores. They provide a range of services and facilities and act as a focus both for the community and public transport.
- 8.2** Peterlee and Seaham do, however, lie within the secondary catchment areas of the shopping facilities in Sunderland and Hartlepool. These larger neighbouring centres, together with other large retail centres in the region at Middlesbrough, Stockton and Teesside Park to the south, Durham to the west and Washington, Newcastle upon Tyne and the Metro Centre to the north, provide a wide range of comparison shopping, specialist shops and other facilities. The larger centres are also strongly represented in convenience goods facilities both within the town centres and at out-of-centre retail parks. As a consequence, there is evidence which indicates a significant outflow of retail expenditure from the District.

- 8.3** Within the shopping hierarchy in the district, however, Peterlee and Seaham town centres represent major centres. A secondary tier of shopping provision is represented by the former colliery villages of Blackhall, Easington Colliery, Horden, Murton, Shotton, Wheatley Hill and Wingate/Station Town which provide a limited range of local shops and services, including at least one small supermarket in each village, which cater for the day-to-day needs of local residents and perform a valuable social and community function.
- 8.4** Neighbourhood shopping centres, comprising a limited number and range of local shops in the outlying areas of the larger settlements, also cater for the daily needs of nearby residential areas and represent a third tier of shopping provision. In the remaining settlements any retail provision is in the form of small individual local shops providing a limited local service.

National planning and other guidance

- 8.5** National and regional planning guidance emphasise the importance of encouraging new shopping development and other developments that generate travel to locate in town centres so as to maintain their vitality and viability, as well as ensuring that accessibility to shops and other services is maintained, particularly for those without the use of a car. This approach recognises the important social as well as economic functions of town centres, and also assists the social and economic regeneration of urban areas, reduces the need to travel and serves to protect the countryside.
- 8.6** National retail planning policy, revised and subsequently issued in June 1996, further strengthens this approach with a greater emphasis on sustaining and enhancing town centres and consolidating retailing in locations which are accessible by a choice of means of transport, including support for local and neighbourhood centres. This is well illustrated by the suggestion that local planning authorities adopt a sequential approach to selecting sites for new retail development such that first preference should be for town centre sites, where suitable sites are available, followed by edge-of-centre sites and only then by out-of-centre sites in locations that are, or can be made accessible by a choice of means of transport. Policies contained within the County Durham Structure Plan reflect national policy guidance by seeking to guide retail and other development to those towns within the County that possess the greatest range of social, economic and cultural facilities. Peterlee and Seaham are specifically mentioned in this respect.
- 8.7** The function of the local plan is to ensure an adequate provision of sites for retail development which ensures people have access to the retail services they need but that also accords with the objective of sustainable development. This is to be achieved through policies and the identification of locations and sites for retail and other development with a strong preference for accessible locations through the adoption of a sequential approach. The policies and proposals contained within the local plan have been formulated on the basis of the effectiveness of previous plan policies, the relationship between the shopping hierarchy in the district and data relating to retail patterns, provision and expenditure produced by a number of retail studies in 1994/5.

Town and Local Shopping Centres

- 8.8** As a result of socio-economic decline in the majority of the District's settlements over recent decades the number of shops throughout the area has decreased and the number of vacant shop premises has increased, particularly in the former colliery villages. In response and in an attempt to support, maintain and improve the remaining shopping facilities planning policy in the adopted Local Plan, prepared in the early 1980's, sought to encourage new retail development in the existing town and local shopping centres.
- 8.9** The need to revitalise and regenerate the existing shopping centres in the District remains. This approach is given further support, however, by the need to ensure that the residents of the District have the retail services that they need in locations which are accessible to them from a variety of means of transport. In a district where there is a relatively low

level of car ownership it is even more important that everyday shopping facilities are situated where people can reach them easily. It is important, therefore, that existing town, local and neighbourhood shopping centres are promoted and protected by seeking to guide new retail development, that is appropriate in scale and character, in or on the edge of them and seeking to prevent other retail development outside them that would adversely affect their health and vitality.

- 8.10** It is not the role of the planning system to restrict competition or to stifle innovation in the retail sector. The significant amount of retail interest expressed in the District in 1994/95 is evidence of an unmet retail demand as perceived by the retail sector, in the locality. This is further supported by the level of retail expenditure lost from the District. It is clear, therefore, that there is scope to strengthen existing town and local shopping centres through the encouragement of new retail development. Such encouragement is appropriate, in locations that are easily accessible by a variety of means of transport, by applying the sequential approach to site selection and in the determination of planning applications.
- 8.11** Developments other than shops, such as leisure, recreation, tourism and offices will be encouraged in town and local centres as these activities serve to add to the diversity, vitality and attractiveness of the existing local centres. Housing can also serve this function and its provision is encouraged at a first floor level. Following the implementation of the 1995 General Development Order, such proposals can be undertaken without the need for planning permission. The Council, in association with those with an interest in the development of the district's town and local shopping centres, will continue to promote and implement improvements in these centres.

Protection and promotion of town centres

- 8.12** Peterlee and Seaham town centres are accessible to a large proportion of the District's population by a variety of means of transport. The towns have the greatest concentration of the District's residents and their centres are served by road, public transport and are linked to residential areas by footpath. Concentrating major new shopping development in these town centres will ensure that the majority of the District's residents will have easy access to the retail services that they need, even if they do not have the use of a car to go shopping. Where sites are unavailable within the defined town centres the development of new retailing activity on the edge of town centres, where it remains easily accessible, may be appropriate, in accord with the sequential approach.
- 8.13** The vitality of these town centres depends on their diversity and activity and both centres are important not only for shops and shopping but also for other services, as places of work, as centres for the community and for social and leisure time. The development of uses that are complementary to the principal shopping function of the town centre, such as cafes and restaurants, will be encouraged, where appropriate, in accord with Policy 112 (non-retail uses).
- 8.14** Improving the appearance, and making access to the centres easier by a variety of means of transport, including the provision and upgrading of car parking facilities, will help enhance the attractiveness of the town centres to investors, developers and shoppers alike. Development and redevelopment opportunities, environmental and infrastructure improvements will help Peterlee and Seaham to compete with other shopping centres in the region and may help to stem the loss of retail trade from the District and reduce the need to travel outside the District to shop.
- 8.15** To assist with the regeneration of the District, to improve the quality of the environment and to enhance the character and appearance of the District's shopping centres, high quality forms of development will be sought and policies relating to the impact of development (Policy 35), design for access (Policy 36), design for parking (Policy 37), and designing out crime (Policy 38) will apply.

policy. In all developments of a significant scale or nature the provision of public art is encouraged in accord with Policy 39 (design for art).

- 8.16** Details of the respective strategies and site-specific proposals to enhance the town centres are provided in the relevant settlement chapters.

Policy 101

The role of Peterlee and Seaham town centres, as the main retailing centres in the district, will be protected and promoted. Proposals for new development should be appropriate in scale and character to the existing centre and should accord with policies 35-39 of the plan. Within the town centres, as defined on the proposal map, planning permission will be granted for:

- (i) further shopping, office, leisure, recreation and community developments and/or;
- (ii) the improvement of the town centre through the redevelopment, conversion or modernisation of buildings, environmental improvements and improvements to access, traffic circulation, public transport infrastructure and parking arrangements;

The town centres of Peterlee and Seaham will provide the main locations for major retail and town centre developments. Where sites within the defined town centre are unavailable such development on the edge of the town centre may be approved.

Local and neighbourhood shopping centres

- 8.17** Local shopping centres provide a range of shops and services which, in the main, meet the daily needs of the residents of the larger villages in the District. They also serve to provide a focal point for the community and act as a social meeting place. On the basis of their present size, composition and geographical position the Council considers that the shopping centres of the following villages perform this role: Blackhall, Easington Colliery, Horden, Murton, Shotton, Wheatley Hill and Wingate/Station Town.
- 8.18** The neighbourhood shopping centres perform a similar role for the residential areas of the larger settlements of the district by serving the everyday shopping needs of the immediate locality. The Council has identified neighbourhood shopping centres and has defined them on the Proposals Map at Dawdon, The Avenue, Station Road, Parkside and Westlea in Seaham and at York Road, Acre Rigg, Edenhill Road, Yoden Road and Grampian Drive in Peterlee.
- 8.19** These local and neighbourhood shopping centres need to be maintained and improved and the development of individual shops and small supermarkets (usually of less than 1000sq.m. floorspace) that are appropriate to the scale and character of the centre will be encouraged. Any developments which are of a size and scale that may damage the health of the town centres of Peterlee and Seaham are unlikely to be appropriate.
- 8.20** Local and neighbourhood shopping centres are usually surrounded by residential areas and new retail developments within them are only likely to be appropriate where they do not cause a nuisance or adversely affect the character of the neighbouring area. High quality forms of development will be sought and policies relating to the impact of development (Policy 35), design for access (Policy 36), design for parking (Policy 37), designing out crime (Policy 38) and design for art (Policy 39) will apply.

Policy 102

Outside the defined town centres of Peterlee and Seaham, new retail development, will be approved within or on the edge of the local shopping centres of Blackhall, Easington Colliery, Horden, Murton, Shotton, Wheatley Hill and Wingate/Station Town or the neighbourhood shopping centres of Dawdon, The Avenue, Station Road, Parkside and Westlea in Seaham and at York Road, Acre Rigg, Edenhill Road, Yoden Road and Grampian Drive in Peterlee, as defined on the proposals map, provided the proposal:

- (i) is compatible with the scale and character of the centre;
- (ii) is capable of being served by a variety of means of transport in accord with policy 36 (design for access);
- (iii) can provide adequate parking space in accord with policy 37 (design for parking);
- (iv) would have no serious adverse affect on the amenity of people living and working in the vicinity of the development site and the existing use of adjacent land or buildings in terms of privacy, visual intrusion, noise, other pollutants and traffic generation.

Individual local shops

- 8.21** Small local retail and service establishments, such as corner shops which cater for immediate needs, are required where residents are a considerable distance from a shopping centre, for example, in the smaller villages or in predominantly residential areas of a

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larger settlement. Facilities of this nature are also important for those who cannot walk or travel far.

- 8.22** New shopping development of this type will be encouraged where it does not adversely affect the local environment in visual terms or the amenity of local residents through the introduction of a commercial use.

Policy 103- This policy has lapsed

~~The development of small local shops will be approved within existing settlement boundaries provided the proposal does not adversely affect the environment or the amenity of local residents living in the vicinity.~~

- 8.22A** Village shops play an essential commercial and community role. In recent years, a number of such shops in the district have been lost as a result of changing patterns in retailing and personal mobility. It is important that further unnecessary losses are avoided if sections of the population without access to a car are not to be disadvantaged and the number of car journeys is not to increase contrary to the Government's policy of sustainable development. This issue is considered along with the need to protect other village community facilities in chapter 7 of the Plan and under Policy 96.

Out-of-Centre Retail Development

Major out-of-centre retail development

- 8.23** The trend towards shopping outside town centres features food, DIY/bulky goods retailing in addition to new forms of retailing including retail parks, factory outlet centres and warehouse clubs which depend on good access to the national road network because retailers aim to serve customers who will come by car.
- 8.24** The sale of household goods (such as carpets, furniture and electrical goods) and bulky DIY items generally requires a large retail floorspace and such retailing is mainly accommodated in large, single-level stores which seek to cater largely for the car-borne customer through the development of out-of-centre/out-of-town superstores. Food retailers have also sought to cater increasingly for the car-borne customer through the development of out-of-centre/out-of-town superstores. A number of retail warehouses may be grouped together to form a retail park. These may provide large showrooms that cannot be easily accommodated in town centres. Their impact on the existing centre will depend on the range of shopping that they offer.
- 8.25** Factory outlet centres generally comprise a group of shops selling discounted end of line, end of season or 'seconds' comparison goods items. Warehouse clubs specialise in bulk sales of reduced priced goods and whilst these outlets may control the number of people allowed access to their premises through membership schemes they share many characteristics with large retail outlets such as retail warehouses and similar considerations will be applied to them.
- 8.26** The Government is concerned about the increase that some out-of-centre retail developments have generated in the length and number of trips made by private car. The

Government is also concerned that out-of-centre developments have adversely affected the vitality and viability of existing town centres. The combination of changing travel patterns to 'sheds on the edge of the town' and the demise of the town centre has also meant that those without a car have had less choice about where they could shop. The Government's objective is, therefore, to sustain and enhance existing retail centres by focusing retail developments in locations where the proximity of competing businesses facilitates competition from which all consumers, whether with or without access to a car, can benefit.

- 8.27** Significant retail developments such as food stores, bulky goods and DIY goods, retail warehouses, retail parks, factory outlet centres and warehouse clubs are best located in town centre locations where they are accessible to all sections of the community whether travelling by car, public transport, bicycle or foot. In the event of a suitable town centre site being unavailable, a location on the edge of the town centre, where people are easily able to combine trips to both the town centre and the edge of centre location, may be appropriate. Locating such developments in or on the edge of local shopping centres may also be appropriate, depending upon the scale of the proposal.
- 8.28** Exceptionally, it may be difficult to find sites either in or on the edge of town centres or local centres to accommodate this form of retail development and it may be appropriate to locate retail warehouses and other significant retail development outside the defined shopping centre, but within the settlement boundary. Owing to the general scale and character of this form of development it is unlikely to be appropriate in the smaller settlements of the District.
- 8.29** In assessing whether or not it may be appropriate to locate major retail development, which may include a superstore, a DIY/bulky goods retail warehouse, a retail park comprising food and/or non-food retail

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warehouses, a factory outlet centre or a warehouse club in out-of-centre locations, the following considerations need to be taken into account.

- 8.30** Firstly, the impact of the proposed development, individually or when taken into account with the effects of other recent or proposed development, upon existing town and local shopping centres will need to be considered. This will involve an assessment of the likely impact of the proposal upon the strategy and proposals for the town centre, changes to its physical condition, character, range of shops and services and the likely increase in vacant properties. This assessment will need to be made on the basis of information collected to assess the existing health of the centre. Only those major out-of-centre retail developments that will serve to complement and bolster the role of the nearest town centre are likely to receive further consideration.
- 8.31** The impact of out-of-centre retail developments on existing town and/or local shopping centres will depend on the range and type of shopping offered. Where an out-of-centre retail development is granted planning permission, planning conditions will be imposed to ensure that the range of goods sold can be controlled and that the nature of the development is not changed to one that would adversely affect the vitality and viability of town or local shopping centres in the District.
- 8.32** The local planning authority will also need to identify and appraise the likely accessibility of the proposed development by different forms of transport and also to assess the likely impact of the development upon travel patterns in the catchment area of the development. Such developments should be genuinely accessible by modes of transport other than the car. The developer will need to ensure that public transport does or is capable of gaining frequent access to or past the site and that the development is easily accessible by foot and bicycle. Adequate parking provision for cyclists and car users will also need to be provided. Even where development is accessible by a choice of transport modes proposals which are likely to add significantly to the overall number and length of car trips are unlikely to be appropriate.
- 8.33** For major retail developments of over 2,500 sq.m. gross floorspace any planning application will need to be supported by evidence on the details listed above (paras. 8.30 - 8.32) and also to include details of the applicant's approach to site selection and the availability of alternative sites together with an assessment of the likely impact of the development, either individually or cumulatively, upon local shopping centres,

neighbourhood shopping centres and villages, as well as town centres.

- 8.34** To assist with the regeneration of the District, to improve the quality of the environment and to enhance the character and appearance of the District's shopping centres, high quality forms of development will be sought and policies relating to the impact of development (Policy 35), design for access (Policy 36), design for parking (Policy 37), designing out crime (Policy 38) and design for art (Policy 39) will apply.

Policy 104

Where there is an identified need for major new retail development, proposals should be located within the defined town centres of Peterlee or Seaham. If it can be demonstrated that suitable sites are unlikely to be made available within a reasonable period, then proposals may be located on the edges of those centres, followed by locations at local shopping centres within those towns and finally by sites elsewhere within those built up areas, provided that:

- (i) the proposal would not, either by itself or cumulatively, undermine the vitality or viability of a 'main town' centre, or local centre, or prejudice future investment or a planned proposal intended to sustain or enhance the vitality or viability of an existing centre.
- (ii) the proposal makes provision for safe and convenient access by car, cycle, public transport and on foot, in accordance with policy 36, and includes measures to secure the opportunity for a significant proportion of customers and staff to travel to and from the development by means other than the car;
- (iii) it can be shown that the proposal is likely to facilitate the making of multi-purpose trips and to reduce the number and length of car journeys;
- (iv) the proposal would have no serious adverse affect on the amenity of people nearby in terms of privacy, visual intrusion, noise, pollution, car parking and traffic;

If no suitable site can be identified in Peterlee or Seaham, then proposals may be located within the defined local centres of the larger villages at Blackhall, Easington, Horden, Murton, Shotton Wheatley hill and Wingate/Station Town, provided that the criteria set out in (i) to (iv) above are met. If it can be demonstrated that such sites are unlikely to be made available, then proposals may be located on the edge of those local centres, followed by sites elsewhere within the built up areas of those villages, subject to the criteria set out in (i) to (iv) above.

Where planning permission is granted, conditions may be imposed to control the range of goods sold where that is justified. 'major shopping proposals' will not normally be approved beyond settlement boundaries, on 'prestige industrial estates' or on land specifically allocated for other purposes.

Retailing on industrial estates

- 8.35** Retailing on industrial estates is generally inappropriate because it can undermine existing shopping centres, can take up industrial land which has been provided at considerable public expense and may be located where it is inaccessible by a variety of means of transport which would have a significant effect on overall car use.
- 8.36** Where the amount of retailing from an industrial unit does not constitute a change of use such that it remains incidental to the main operation on the premises it will not require planning permission. In some circumstances, the scale of a 'trade counter' or a 'factory shop' may be more significant, thereby, requiring planning permission. Such a use is only likely to be appropriate where retailing is limited to goods that are made by that company on the same premises or on the same industrial estate. Any retailing proposal that is of such a scale as to compete and potentially affect the vitality and viability of any town or local shopping centre is unlikely to be at all appropriate and will need to be assessed under the terms of Policy 104 (major out-of-centre retail developments).
- 8.37** Small scale retail developments of no more than 50sq.m. on prestige and general

industrial estates providing local services to meet the daily needs of workers on the estate, such as newsagents (A1) banks (A2) and shops selling food and drink (A1/A3), may be appropriate. Where hot food take-aways are proposed, the proposals will need to be considered in terms of Policy 111 (hot food take-aways).

- 8.38** The development of such retailing on the smaller industrial estates in the District is less likely to be appropriate where the proposed development is likely to result in a shortage of starter units and is unlikely to be able to trade on the basis of custom generated only by workers on the industrial estate.

Policy 105

Planning permission for retail development on industrial estates will only be approved where the proposal:

- (i) is of a small scale; or
- (ii) relates to the sale of items manufactured on the premises or the same industrial estate where the sale of such items is subsidiary to their manufacture;
- (iii) otherwise accords with policy 104 (major out-of centre retail development).

Garden centres

- 8.39** Garden centres are best sited close to the population they serve in order to minimise the need to travel and to make them accessible to those without the use of a car as well as reducing the journey length of car users.
- 8.40** Garden centres can attract a significant amount of traffic and will need to be appropriately served by a safe and adequate access and will need to provide sufficient car parking spaces.
- 8.41** It is acknowledged that garden centres may require land for growing produce, which may also involve the erection of glasshouses, in addition to an area required for the sale of goods. The land requirements of garden centres may not always be satisfied within the centre of settlements and, therefore, their development on the edge of built-up areas within or adjoining settlement boundaries, may be more appropriate.

Policy 106

The preferred location for the development of 'garden centres' is within or adjoining defined settlement boundaries. If it can be demonstrated that suitable sites are not available, then proposals may be located elsewhere. In all cases it must be shown that:

- (i) the site can be served by a safe and adequate access in accordance with policy 36 (design for access);
- (ii) it would have no serious adverse affect on the amenity of people living and working in the vicinity of the development site and the existing use of adjacent land or buildings in terms of privacy, visual intrusion noise, other pollutants and traffic generation
- (iii) the proposal would not, either by itself or cumulatively, undermine the vitality or viability of any existing centre or jeopardise the future of a village shop important for the economic and social well-being or the rural community.

Farm shops

- 8.42** The sale of agricultural or horticultural produce that is actually produced on the holding from where it is sold does not require planning permission as it is regarded as ancillary to the main agricultural use of the land. Only when significant quantities of imported produce begin to be sold would planning permission be required.

- 8.43** The sale of fresh produce from farm shops and nursery gardens can contribute to the rural economy and meet a specific demand from consumers for fresh produce. The Council does not, however, wish to encourage the proliferation of commercial retail uses in the countryside: such activity belongs in shops in towns and villages close to where the majority of people live and where it is accessible to all. It is also therefore important to ensure that farm shops do not have a significant adverse effect on nearby village shops. Farm shop proposals which seek to sell a significant quantity of produce that is not produced on the holding or locally, (defined in PPG7 as the farm holding and its environs), are unlikely to be appropriate in the countryside. However, it is recognised that in order to provide a service throughout the year, farmers may have to bring in non-local produce to overcome the problems of seasonality, provide continuity of employment and ensure that a sufficiently wide selections of produce can be offered. The Council does not wish to be prescriptive as to the level of imported goods which will be considered acceptable as this is likely to vary according to local circumstances including the location of the farm shop, the presence or otherwise of nearby village shops and the level of activity including traffic movements which would be generated. The key test will be whether the function of the shop remains primarily the sale of locally produced goods.

Policy 107- This policy has lapsed

~~Where planning permission is required, proposals for farm shops and/or nursery gardens will be approved, provided that:~~

- ~~(i) the enterprise is primarily concerned with the sale of goods produced in the locality, with retailing of a minimal quantity of goods produced elsewhere;~~
- ~~(ii) the proposal would not result in a significant adverse effect on nearby village shops;~~
- ~~(iii) the site can be served by a safe and adequate access in accordance with policy 36 (design for access);~~
- ~~(iv) the proposal does not adversely affect the amenity of residents living in the vicinity or the character and appearance of the area~~
- ~~(v) the proposal incorporates sufficient car parking space, in accordance with policy 37 (design for parking);~~

Other Retail Developments

Petrol filling stations

- 8.44** As the towns and villages in the District are not far apart, petrol filling stations will be most appropriately located within or on the fringes of built-up areas, but within settlement boundaries, where they will be able to serve the needs of local residents and businesses.
- 8.45** Petrol filling stations can generate a high number of vehicle movements and new developments of this nature should be in locations that are appropriate from the point of view of road safety. The generation of such traffic, combined with long opening hours, can also cause noise and disturbance and these developments should be appropriately designed and located to avoid adverse effects upon the amenity of local residents.
- 8.46** During the past decade there has been an increasing trend for parts of petrol filling stations to be devoted to the sale of a limited range of convenience goods thereby fulfilling the function of a small local shop. This form of retailing from petrol filling stations, which is considered to comprise of more than just ancillary retail activity, can generate considerable amounts of additional traffic and can cause problems of congestion on forecourts, particularly when there is a shortage of parking areas. This can result in tail-backs of vehicles on the adjacent highway and the absence of footpaths can also lead to pedestrian /vehicular conflict, both of which are detrimental to highway safety. In these circumstances, the development of such retail outlets will only be appropriate where there is sufficient car parking space and where the retail operation would not cause problems of vehicular congestion. It is also important to ensure that the sales of convenience goods would not undermine the viability of any nearby village shops.

Policy 108

The development of new petrol filling stations will only be approved within the defined settlement boundary of existing settlements. Development proposals should:

- (i) be served by a safe and adequate access in accordance with policy 36 (design for

access);

- (ii) not adversely affect the amenity of residents living in the vicinity or the character and appearance of the area.

The use of a petrol filling station for retail sales will only be approved if there is an adequate access and sufficient car parking space, in accordance with policies 35 (design for access) and policy 37 (design for parking,) and where it would not adversely affect the viability of any nearby village shops.

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Shop front design

- 8.47** The character of the shopping centres is predominantly one of glazed, open fronted ground floor shop premises and, therefore, the appearance and design of shop fronts can influence the character and quality of shopping areas. Shopping streets can be subjected to rapid change as shops are modernised; however, there is a need to ensure that such changes contribute positively to the appearance of shopping areas as a whole, do not lead to the creation of clutter and eyesores, and relate satisfactorily to the character and appearance of the area.
- 8.48** In many instances throughout the District's settlements, traditional shop front design features such as stall risers, pilasters, mouldings, glazing bars, and canopies, as well as original fascias, name-boards and signs still remain and make a valuable contribution to the architectural quality and character of the local shopping centres. Wherever traditional shop-fronts and features of merit survive, every effort should be made to retain them to enhance the character and attractiveness of these areas and the Council will encourage measures to secure this objective. Further guidelines on the issue of shop front design is included in Appendix 8.
- 8.49** In the case of Seaham town centre, a programme of offering shop keepers grants to enhance their premises is being implemented as part of the Seaham Regeneration Strategy (see paragraph 21.89 Seaham settlement chapter). The rejuvenation of the shopping centres in the former colliery villages will form an integral part of the proposed rolling programme of settlement renewal projects.

Policy 109

The scale, design and materials of new or redesigned shop fronts should relate satisfactorily to the building in which the shop front is to be installed and to adjacent buildings.

Within the main shopping centre of Seaham and local shopping centres the council will seek to encourage the preservation and improvement of traditional shop-front design. New shop-fronts should incorporate traditional features, where appropriate, in order to preserve or enhance the character of such areas.

Security shutters and roller grilles

- 8.50** The increasing incidence of theft from and vandalism to shops has resulted in the proliferation of roller shutters to protect shop frontages. The provision of solid, featureless shutters which are of a material and colour that are alien to the building and which obscure the features of the shopfront can have a detrimental effect upon the character of the shopping centre. Depending on their siting, the shutter housing box and the shutter guide rails can also have a detrimental visual impact.
- 8.51** Whilst the Council is sympathetic to the needs of shopkeepers to secure their premises against damage only those security shutters and roller grilles that are appropriately designed and fitted are likely to be considered appropriate. Shutter boxes would be most appropriately located within the shopfront fascia and the shutters themselves should be of the open grill, punched lath or perforated type. Only where the applicant can demonstrate that such designs are unacceptable for justifiable security reasons will solid shutters be likely to be acceptable. In such circumstances, solid shutters should be appropriately

coloured. Guide rails will be most appropriately located within pilasters (the vertical framework of the shop front) and they should be appropriately coloured to match the shopfront. It is proposed that Policy 110 should apply to Peterlee and Seaham Town Centres; where improvement schemes are proposed; the Centres where Settlement Renewal Initiatives are programmed; and in Conservation Areas (para 3.81) where stricter controls are placed on development. Further guidance on these issues is contained in Appendix 8.

Policy 110

In Peterlee and Seaham town centres, local shopping centres the subject of settlement renewal initiatives and conservation areas, planning permission for roller shutters on shop fronts will only be approved where they do not have a seriously adverse impact upon the character or visual amenity of the Streetscene. Security shutters and roller grilles should, therefore, be perforated and colour co-ordinated with the rest of the shop front and shutter/grille boxes should be recessed and should not protrude in front of the fascia.

Hot food take-aways

- 8.52** The main planning considerations concerning hot food take-aways falling within Class A3 of the 1987 Use Classes Order are the impact of the development on local amenity and on the environment. Of particular concern are noise, disturbance, smell, litter and highway implications. Noise and disturbance can arise particularly during evening hours and can be generated both inside and outside the premises.

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The cooking of food, particularly when frying is involved, inevitably produces lingering odours and whilst extraction equipment can minimise smells, these can never be fully eradicated. The congestion of significant numbers of people outside these establishments can lead to noise and disturbance and litter can have an adverse impact on the environment. Traffic generation can lead to both noise and disturbance short-stay indiscriminate parking can result in a reduction in levels of highway safety.

- 8.53** The potential cumulative effects of hot food take aways outlined in the paragraph above, particularly late into the evening, render them unlikely to be appropriate in residential areas, (including predominantly residential areas with small parades of shops) where they are likely to detract from the amenities of local residents. In other areas, where there is a dwelling or residential flat in close proximity to a proposed hot food outlet similar nuisance could materialise, even where the residential property is in the ownership of the applicant.
- 8.54** The potential cumulative impact of the proposed development upon the character and function of the town centre or local shopping centre as primarily, a shopping centre, is also a relevant consideration in the determination of planning applications for hot food take-aways in these areas (see Policy 112: non-retail uses.)

Policy 111

Hot food take-away shops will only be approved in the town, local or neighbourhood shopping centres and on prestige and general industrial estates provided no serious problems of noise, disturbance, smell, litter and traffic hazards would arise and where:

- (i) the proposal would not adversely affect the vitality or character of the town or local shopping centre, in accord with policy 112 (non-retail uses);
- (ii) in the case of prestige and general industrial estates, it accords with policy 105 (retailing on industrial estates).

Planning permission for hot food take-away shops will not be granted where residential accommodation is situated above, on either side, immediately behind or immediately opposite the premises.

Non retail uses

- 8.55** A number of uses, other than shops, are traditionally found in town and local shopping centres and they can serve to complement the shopping function of these areas by providing diversity and adding to the vitality of the centre. It is considered important, however, that these ancillary uses, which may include restaurants, cafes, hot food take-aways, public houses and other class A3 uses in addition to non-retail uses such as amusement arcades, do not displace the main shopping uses from the centre, nor detract from the shopping character of a particular area, to the detriment of the vitality and viability of the main retail function of town and local shopping centres.
- 8.56** Whilst the scale of shopping provision in the District's town and local shopping centres is not such that primary and secondary shopping areas can be defined, the situation with regard to concentrations of class A3 and non-retail uses in the town and local shopping centres will be monitored and taken account of in the determination of planning applications.

Policy 112- This policy has lapsed

~~In town and local shopping centres planning permission for restaurants, cafes, hot food take-aways, public houses and other class A3 uses and non-retail uses (that is, non-class A1, A2 and A3 uses) will be approved provided that the overall provision of such uses does not adversely affect the character or vitality of that centre, or an area of that centre, in its primary function as a place in which to shop.~~

Markets

- 8.57** Within the past decade the Council has received a number of planning applications for markets involving large covered or open-air sales areas for the sale of convenience and comparison goods. The incidence of car boot sales has also increased and these are considered on the same basis as markets.
- 8.58** The most appropriate location for markets would be within or adjacent to existing shopping centres, where they are accessible by a variety of means of transport and where they can attract additional trade and thus help maintain the viability of existing centres. Conversely, the development of markets elsewhere would divert trade from centres and thus undermine their viability.
- 8.59** Markets tend to attract significant amounts of additional traffic and can cause congestion. It is therefore important that these developments should be served by an adequate vehicular access and incorporate sufficient off-street car parking. They can generate noise, nuisance and litter which, if not controlled, can have an adverse impact on the surrounding environment and the amenity of residents living in the vicinity.

Policy 113

Markets will be approved within or adjacent to existing shopping centres provided:

- (i) the site can be served by a safe access in accordance with policy 36 (design for access);
- (ii) where appropriate the site includes adequate car parking, in accordance with policy 37 (design for parking);
- (iii) the proposal does not adversely affect the amenity of residents living in the vicinity or the character and appearance of the area.

Offices and local services

8.60 Local offices and services such as Council offices, estate agents, building societies and banks (Class A2) are not strictly retail uses but are normally desirable components of a shopping area where they are accessible to all. They generally provide a service to people and can be visited as part of a shopping trip. Regard should, however, be paid to the need to retain continuous ground floor retail frontages in the main shopping centres of Peterlee and Seaham.

8.61 Residential areas are not considered to be appropriate locations for most local offices and services since their operation is likely to result in noise and disturbance to residents as well as parking problems. The provision of Council area housing offices that are designed to provide a service to those Council tenants living in the residential areas in which they are situated are likely to be appropriate as they are less likely to generate car-borne customers.

Policy 114- This policy has lapsed

~~In the town and local shopping centres, local offices and services (class A2) will be approved in or on the edge of the defined centre where proposals accord with policies 35-39. In primarily residential areas planning permission for local offices and services will only be approved where:~~

- ~~(i) the development involves a local area housing office, or~~
- ~~(ii) there is no serious adverse impact on the amenity of nearby properties or the character of the area by reason of visual intrusion, noise and traffic generation.~~



Local Plan 2001 - 2006

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District of **easington.**



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Blackhall

Summary of policies

Environment

- B1 ~~Proposals for Hesleden Road site~~ - This policy has lapsed
- B2 ~~Other landscaping works~~ - This policy has lapsed

Employment and Industry

- B3 [Proposals for Blackhall Industrial Estate](#)

Housing

Housing Land

- B4 ~~Land north of B1281~~- This policy has lapsed
- B5 ~~Land north of Hesleden Road~~- This policy has lapsed
- B6 ~~Land north of Glenholme Terrace~~- This policy has lapsed

Transport

- B7 ~~Proposals for off street parking~~- This policy has lapsed
- B8 [Rail facilities](#)

Recreation and Community Facilities and Tourism

- B9 ~~Formal recreation facilities~~- This policy has lapsed
- B10 ~~Open space/play areas~~ - This policy has lapsed

Shopping

- B11 [Local shopping centre](#)

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Introduction

9.1 Blackhall developed initially around the colliery which was opened in 1909. In the inter-

war period, the village was extended by private ribbon development and a Council estate south of Mickle Hill Road. As a result of this expansion, access to shops and other facilities, which are mainly concentrated in the original centre of the village, is inconvenient for many residents. In order that further expansion does not make the situation worse, any new housing developments will need to be located within the existing framework of the village and as near as practical to the main commercial area to support shops and services and reduce the need for travel.

- 9.2** When the colliery closed in 1981, removing the main source of employment from the village, the major problem facing Blackhall was the need to prevent the decline which followed pit closures elsewhere in the District. Since the closure, a new industrial estate has been built on the former colliery site in an effort to create new job opportunities in the village, resulting in employment mainly in the service and light engineering sectors.
- 9.3** As part of the Economic Regeneration Strategy for East Durham, a Settlement Renewal Initiative has been introduced which seeks to undertake a rolling programme of works to improve the economic prospects and environmental features of a number of key settlements in the District which have been hardest hit by colliery closures. Following consideration of Blackhall's problems in a consultants' report, a detailed Action Plan is in preparation. This Action Plan will be complementary to the Local Plan and will be an important means of ensuring that many of the Local Plan's policies are implemented.
- 9.4** The population of Blackhall has slowly declined since the 1950's to reach its present level of 5,310 (1991 census). With the lack of employment opportunities now in the village and falling household size, it is likely that the decline will continue unless new investment can be encouraged. This decline in overall numbers is likely to be accompanied by an increase in the proportion of elderly people in Blackhall.

Environment

- 9.5** Blackhall has been well maintained in the past and consequently the village now has a reasonable appearance. In particular, reclamation of the former colliery, the railway station and other associated sites, and the cessation of tipping onto the beach, have all made a significant difference, reinforced by a number of small landscaping schemes.

Environmental Improvements

- 9.6** Following improvements to the dwellings themselves, the housing environment between First and Eleventh Streets now requires attention. In addition, there are a number of sites elsewhere in the village which would benefit from additional planting and landscaping.
- 9.7** Overall, the setting of the village in the wider landscape, especially in relation to the improvement of the coastline, is an important consideration which should be reflected in the type and extent of 'structural' landscaping and planting schemes brought forward during the plan period. Long term measures to improve the urban fringe of the village will therefore be supported.
- 9.8** In considering the location of strategic planting schemes in Blackhall, priority should be given to the eastern side of the settlement adjacent to the coastal railway line, and those parts of the village easily visible from the main approach roads.

Policy B1

The district council will improve the site adjacent to the substation, Hesleden Road through appropriate landscaping.

Implementation

1. *Funding will be sought from the Settlement Renewal Initiative to implement the scheme.*

Policy B2

Landscaping works are proposed in the following areas:

- (i) East of Middle Street – First to Eleventh Street.
- (ii) Adjacent to 131 Middle Street.
- (iii) Adjacent to 61 Middle Street.

- (iv) Rear of Leaholme Terrace.
- (v) ~~Vacant Site, West Street.~~
- (vi) ~~Adjacent to British Legion Club.~~

Implementation

1. *Funding will be sought from the Settlement Renewal Initiative to implement the scheme.*

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Public Utilities

- 9.9** Blackhall has adequate water, electricity, gas and sewerage capacity to cater for the development envisaged over the Plan period.

Employment

- 9.10** The run-down and eventual closure of the colliery removed the major source of employment from the village. Since some miners still live in the village but commute to working collieries elsewhere outside the North East, Blackhall remains susceptible to contractions in the mining industry. With the closure of the remaining collieries in the District, employment opportunities in the village itself are limited to those provided by local services and firms on the Blackhall Industrial Estate.

Blackhall Industrial Estate

- 9.11** The District Council purchased most of the former colliery site from British Coal and has developed a fully serviced industrial estate, 2.15 hectares in area. A range of factory units have been built by the District Council and the former British Coal Enterprise Ltd. These developments have effectively completed the industrial estate. In accordance with Policy 54 (Industry and Business Chapter), the estate is designated for uses in Class B1, B2 and B8 of the Use Classes Order 1987 and retail uses permitted by Policy 105.
- 9.12** Subject to the availability of finance, consideration is being given to a five hectare extension of the estate to the south, providing a further two hectares of serviced industrial land. The land is in District Council ownership, but is the subject of a covenant restricting its use to public open space/agriculture, which would need to be lifted to enable the development to take place. The area earmarked for the extension to the estate occupies a prominent location and requires landscaping on its southern and western boundaries to lessen the visual impact of the development. The development potential of the southern part of this site is physically constrained by the presence of mine shafts and therefore this area should be landscaped.

Policy B3

The district council will construct a five hectare extension to Blackhall Industrial Estate. The southern part of the site and the southern and western edges of the extension will be appropriately landscaped.

Implementation

1. *The District Council will prepare a detailed design brief to guide the development of the site.*

Housing

Existing Stock

- 9.13 There are approximately 2,300 houses in Blackhall of which, in contrast to other villages in the District, over 60% are in private ownership. The majority of the remainder are owned by the District Council, mostly in the inter-war estate south of Mickle Hill Road.

Housing Conditions

- 9.14 During the past fifteen years the former British Coal has undertaken a programme of housing improvements at Blackhall, covering First to Eleventh Streets, Park Avenue, West Avenue and School Avenue, with grant assistance from the District Council. The District Council has also completed a housing revitalisation/environmental improvement scheme in its estate, south of Mickle Hill Road. The majority of private houses are in good condition although older properties may be eligible for renovation grants.

New Council Housing

- 9.15 The District Council development, comprising 72 units of special need accommodation, at Hesleden Road and the County Council aged persons home/day centre on the adjacent site have been completed since 1983. The need for additional Council housing over the Plan period is likely to be limited to the provision of a small number of aged persons and special purpose dwellings, and land should be allocated for this purpose.

Land North of the B1281

- 9.16 To the north of the new section of the B1281 road is an area of Council owned land, approximately one hectare in size which has remained undeveloped following the completion of the adjacent County/District Council's developments. In view of its location and proximity to the nearby shops, this area would be suitable for any additional aged persons dwellings which the District Council/housing associations may wish to develop within the Plan period. The site will therefore be retained for this purpose and in the interim will be improved through peripheral tree planting, particularly adjacent to the B1281. It should be noted that vehicular access must be obtained from the existing road serving the

adjacent Council development, and not directly from the B1281.

Policy B4

One hectare of land between the B1281 and the county council's day centre is allocated for aged persons/special needs housing. In the interim the District Council will improve the area through appropriate landscaping.

Implementation

1. A detailed design brief has been prepared to guide the development of the site.

New Private Housing

- 9.17 When the original Easington District Local Plan was adopted in 1983 there was considered to be only a limited demand for private housing in Blackhall. Prior to the adoption of the Plan, the Kenber Hill site received planning permission for housing development (for 70 units) because it was well related to shops and community facilities.

No further large allocations of land for residential development were made so as not to prejudice the development of this site.

- 9.18** Since then the Kenber Hill and a small housing site of seven dwellings at Meadow Avenue have been completed. It is considered that insufficient land exists to meet demand from the private housing market during the operational period of the Plan and therefore additional sites have been identified as indicated below.

Land North of Hesleden Road

- 9.19** This site comprises 2.63 hectares of agricultural land and associated farm buildings, on the north side of Hesleden Road. The site is bounded by the road to the south, a former school to the west, agricultural land to the north and dwellings in Hardwick Street to the east.

- 9.20** Although a previous planning application to develop the site for residential purposes was refused in 1983 so as not to prejudice the development of the Kenber Hill site, the position has now changed and further land for private housing development is required. In physical terms development of land north of Hesleden Road would enhance the framework of the village and would also relate well to the shops and facilities in the village. In visual terms the development of this site would be unobjectionable. The site is hidden from the west by the presence of trees surrounding Hardwick Hall and then the former comprehensive school. There are no distant views of the site from the south. Although the site can be seen from the west side of Maureen Avenue in Blackhall Rocks, any development would blend in with the Kenber Hill Estate in the foreground. The site would be visible from the houses in Hardwick Street, though this could be alleviated by mounding/tree planting if necessary. There are distant views of the site from the north, from parts of Horden, though the edges of any development would be softened by the trees of Hardwick Dene.

- 9.21** In order to provide a safe and convenient access it is likely that the alignment of Hesleden Road in the vicinity of the Comprehensive School will require alteration to create a new 'T' junction. Foul sewage would need to be discharged into the sewer in North Street, whilst land drainage and surface water sewage would need to be piped in to the stream in Hardwick Dene. The latter would necessitate off-site works. To safeguard the amenity of the residents of Hardwick Street, the development of this land must incorporate a substantial mounded landscaped area along its eastern boundary. It is estimated that the site could be developed for up to 65 dwellings.

Policy B5

~~2.63 hectares of land on the north side of Hesleden Road is allocated for housing.~~

Implementation

1. *The District Council will prepare a detailed design brief to guide the development of the site.*

Policy B6

~~The land north of Glenholme Terrace is allocated for a house.~~

Transport

- 9.23** The major transport problems in Blackhall have been the congestion and road safety hazards associated with heavy traffic flows through the village on the A1086. The new section of the B1281 from the former comprehensive school to the Coast Road has removed a previously difficult junction from the main shopping area. A scheme to improve road safety and relieve congestion around Middle Street has also been implemented.

- 9.24** A car park is currently being developed on the site of the former Regal Cinema, which should relieve congestion in Middle Street. On-street parking causes congestion in the Council housing estate in Blackhall Rocks and this problem is particularly severe in Attlee Avenue. The problem would be alleviated through the provision of appropriate off street parking facilities.

Policy B7

~~The District Council will provide appropriate off-street parking facilities by modifications to the carriageway and verges in Attlee Avenue, Blackhall Rocks.~~

Implementation

1. *Funding will be sought from the Settlement Renewal Initiative to implement the scheme.*

Rail Facilities

- 9.25** The Council supports rail initiatives to link coastal villages such as Blackhall, and to provide better connections to Tyneside, Wearside and Teesside. The possibility of the restoration of rail services should not be prejudiced by inappropriate development. The Council will therefore take this point into consideration in dealing with planning applications in the vicinity of the railway line at East Street, Blackhall, where the construction of a simple railway halt close to the centre of the village will be necessary if services are to be reintroduced.

Policy B8

Proposals for the development of the land in the vicinity of the railway line at East Street, Blackhall which would prejudice the construction and operation of a railway halt will not be approved. Land suitable for the siting of the halt is allocated east of East Street between Fourth Street and Sixth Street.

Implementation

1. The District Council will scrutinise carefully development proposals for land in the immediate vicinity of the railway line at East Street to ensure that the construction of and access to a railway halt remain possible. A specific area of land has been allocated for the siting of the halt between Fourth and Sixth Streets, although it is unlikely that the entire area will be required.

Recreation and Community Facilities and Tourism

Formal Recreation Facilities

- 9.26** For its size, Blackhall is adequately served with outdoor formal recreation facilities with the colliery welfare park in the north and a playing field adjacent to the Council housing estate in the south. There is, however, a small shortage in provision of approximately 0.5 hectares compared with National Standards but no opportunities exist to provide additional facilities. In accordance with Policy 90 (Recreation Chapter) the existing formal recreation facilities should be safeguarded from development.

Policy B9

~~The development of the welfare ground will only be approved for sport or recreational purposes.~~

Open Space/Play Areas

- 9.27** In overall terms, Blackhall is well provided with informal open space, with most of the sites being located east of Middle Street notably south of Coronation Avenue, south of Corry Close, adjacent to East Street and east and west of Shaftesbury Road. With the

exception of the latter all the sites are located on the fringe of housing areas rather than forming an integral part of them. In accordance with Policy 91 and 92 (Recreation Chapter) the existing open spaces should be safeguarded from development. There is a shortage of informal /children's playspace provision which is limited to the Welfare park, Scheme Houses, Attlee Avenue and Corry Close. Further provision could be made in the event of clearance of any older housing and as a part of any new private development.

Policy B10

~~The development of the following areas of land will only be approved for purposes of informal recreation~~

- ~~(i) South of Coronation Avenue~~
- ~~(ii) South of Corry Close~~
- ~~(iii) Adjacent to East Street~~
- ~~(iv) East and West of Shaftesbury Road~~

Coastline

- 9.28** Much of the coastline at Blackhall is designated as an Site of Special Scientific Interest and Area of Landscape Value. Access is readily available and is being improved through the development of the coastal footpath. (Policy 87 Recreation Chapter) In addition, Castle Eden Dene, located immediately to the north of the village, has been designated as a National Nature Reserve (NNR), and it is likely that the coastline at Blackhall will also be upgraded to NNR status.

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Education

- 9.29** Blackhall has two primary schools which have adequate capacity to cater for any increase in the number of school age children which may result from housing development during the Plan period. Following the closure of the comprehensive school, however, children aged 11 years and over are obliged to travel to adjacent villages for their education.

Health

- 9.30** Blackhall is served by a doctor's surgery but a need has been identified for a child health clinic. This may be located adjacent to the existing surgery at Hesleden Road.

Community Facilities

- 9.31** Blackhall is well provided with community facilities although their location, in and adjacent to the main shopping area, is inconvenient for residents in the south of the village.

Shopping

- 9.32** The main shopping area in Blackhall is located in Middle Street between First and Ninth Streets. The shopping area has contracted over the past decade, as the population of the village itself has declined, although it remains a vibrant and busy centre nonetheless. In order to maintain the vitality and viability of the existing centre the development of new shops and supermarkets will be directed to this area, in accordance with Policy 102 (Shopping Chapter). The District Council will, however, encourage other uses in the centre including local offices (Policy 112) and the conversion of first floor premises into residential flats. Elsewhere in the village Policy 103 (Shopping Chapter) which allows the development of small shops will be applied.

Policy B11

The local shopping centre for Blackhall will consist of Middle Street between First and Ninth Street.

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Castle Eden

Summary of policies

Environment

- C1 [Control of development](#)
- C2 [Changes of use](#)
- ~~C3 [Landscaping works](#) - This policy has lapsed~~

Housing

Housing Land

- ~~C4 [Site of Castle Eden Golf Club](#) - This policy has lapsed~~
- ~~C5 [Sub-division of large grounds of existing houses](#) - This policy has lapsed~~
- ~~C6 [Land adjacent to Ivy Cottage](#) - This policy has lapsed~~
- ~~C7 [Conversion of the Castle for residential use](#) - This policy has lapsed~~

Shopping

- ~~C8 [Provision of a post office](#) - This policy has lapsed~~

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Introduction

- 10.1** Due to a unique inter-relationship of landscape and buildings, Castle Eden forms one of the most attractive areas of Easington District and indeed of County Durham as a whole. Its present form is largely derived from the activities of the Burdon family in the eighteenth century who were responsible for many buildings including the existing Castle, the terrace known as the Factory and the inn, which was later to become the Brewery. Of equal importance to its present character, the Burdon family were also responsible for the setting out of large areas of parkland. In recognition of its historic character and its visual and architectural qualities, Castle Eden has been designated a Conservation Area. The Castle itself, a Grade II* Building of Special Architectural or Historic Interest, is set in an area of registered Historic Parkland. The remains of a medieval village have been discovered in the grounds of the Castle which have been designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument
- 10.2** Castle Eden has a very loose-knit built form with no real nucleus. The mature, planned landscape is dominant and provides the framework for the buildings, whether individually or in groups, to sit as part of a single and recognisable area. The unifying quality of the landscape is complemented by a common thread to much of the building design which is

particularly apparent in the sculptured chimneys and decorative ridges, eaves and barge boards.

- 10.3** Although a large part of Castle Eden is characterised by individual buildings or small clusters of buildings often almost hidden within the landscape, there are four larger concentrations of buildings. These are the Factory, the Foundry and Bankside, all located on the C22 road which runs north/south through Castle Eden, and the Village, which includes St James' Church and the Castle lying just north of the B1281 road to Blackhall.
- 10.4** The delicate balance between the buildings and landscape is fundamental to the character of Castle Eden. The effect of this balance has, therefore, been a primary consideration in the establishment of policies and proposals for new development to ensure that the quality of the Conservation Area is preserved and enhanced.
- 10.5** Whilst the maintenance of the character of the Conservation Area is the prime factor in determining the planning policies for the area, it is not the sole consideration and should not be regarded as a justification for discounting any further development. The economic and social well-being of the District as a whole is of concern to the Council, in particular, the establishment of new businesses and encouraging key personnel to live within the District.
- 10.6** Castle Eden clearly provides an exceptional environment of which there are few examples locally, and it is highly attractive to people seeking to live in the District. The Council's view is that, if sensitively handled, scope exists for the development of a limited number of dwellings to extend the range of choice available in the District.
- 10.7** The population of Castle Eden is estimated to be 310 (1991 Census). The population is expected to remain stable over the Plan period as new development balances further slight decline in household size.

Environment

- 10.8** In 1976 most of Castle Eden was designated as a Conservation Area and Policies 22 & 23 will be applied. Within the Conservation Area and in the area adjacent to Castle Eden, which are both covered by Tree Preservation Orders, the cutting down, topping, lopping or wilful destruction of trees is prohibited except with the consent of the District Council.
- 10.9** Within Castle Eden there are numerous areas of undeveloped land. Some are quite large areas, more akin to open countryside, others are simply spaces between existing buildings, but all play an essential part in creating its unique character. Many of these areas are likely to be subject to considerable pressures for development. Castle Eden lies within an Area of High Landscape Value. Development within these areas that would detract from the character, landscape, quality and appearance of these areas will not be approved (see Policy 7 of the Environment Chapter). In order, however, to retain the balance between the buildings and the landscape, which is so characteristic of the area, it is considered that there should be no further development in Castle Eden other than that specified in other policies and minor developments within the curtilage of dwelling-houses.

Policy C1

Within the settlement of Castle Eden all development proposals must preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the village and take account, where relevant, of the setting of any listed building. Development will not be permitted that materially alters the existing character of the undesignated land shown on the inset map or the open appearance of the landscape.

Changes of Use

- 10.10** Large dwellings standing on their own, usually in extensive grounds, are an important part of the character of Castle Eden. Their size can, however, militate against continuing

residential use and consequently there is likely to be a demand for changes of use. Although some dwellings may lend themselves to conversion to flats, existing internal arrangements can make this impractical. In this situation, other uses may be considered appropriate provided the character of the building is retained (this will normally mean that few external changes will be allowed) and that adequate opportunities already exist for car parking and access. In addition to these larger dwellings, there are a number of other buildings in Castle Eden which are, or may become, vacant and which in themselves or in conjunction with their surroundings, are attractive features. The change of use of these buildings, particularly where they are of visual or historic importance may be appropriate where this is the best way of ensuring their retention. Being located in the countryside and within the Conservation Area it is considered important that dwellings should be capable of sub-division without the need for significant additional new development which could impact adversely on the character and appearance of the area. As additional dwellings may also lead to pressure for additional extensions and domestic outbuildings in the future, it is felt that the cumulative impact of such proposals could impact on the countryside and the Conservation Area. It is therefore considered that permitted development rights for domestic development might sometimes need to be withdrawn when granting planning permission.

Policy C2

The re-use and adaptation of large buildings in Castle Eden will be permitted subject to the following criteria:

- (i) it does not have a serious adverse effect upon the amenity, character or appearance of the area.
- (ii) in the case of buildings of historical or visual merit, it does not damage or substantially alter the character of the building.
- (iii) the site can be served by roads capable of accommodating any increase in traffic generated by the development.

Overhead Wires

- 10.11** The existence of overhead wires in the Conservation Area detracts from its appearance particularly by the Factory terrace, the Church group and at the junction of the B1281 and the C22 roads. Although the District Council gives Conservation Areas priority in the selection of schemes for undergrounding of overhead wires, funds for such improvements are severely limited. The District Council will therefore approach the County Council, British Telecom and Northern Electric with a view to establishing Castle Eden Conservation Area as a high priority in the undergrounding of overhead wires.

Tree Planting

- 10.12** The District Council proposes to undertake a detailed landscape survey in Castle Eden to identify all the trees in the area and to provide the basis for maintenance and re-planting programmes. Although the entire area should be subject to an on-going programme of maintenance and re-planting, the visual corridor created by trees along The Avenue (the B1281 east of Parklands) is in particular need of attention. It is intended that Groundwork East Durham will be approached to undertake the replanting programme in association with the relevant landowners.

Other Environmental Improvements

- 10.13** In addition to the improvements already specified, there are a number of others which are required. The modern industrial buildings which form the western part of the Brewery are unattractive and are particularly prominent from the A19(T) and the B1281 to the north-west. During the past decade the company has undertaken a tree planting scheme along the southern edge of the site. Further tree planting work is, however, required to the south and north west of the Brewery to help screen the buildings and create a better entrance to Castle Eden. The condition of the brick pier and paling wall opposite the Factory terrace, which should screen the allotments to the south from the B1281, is deteriorating and is in need of repair in several places. The bus turning circle to the north of the Brewery, which uses part of the former A19, is poorly maintained and would benefit from landscaping. The land to the east of Parklands, which is used as the car park for the Cricket Club, is untidy and detracts from the setting of Parklands Hall. In addition, the gap in the shelter belt to the north west of Parklands Hall is in need of re-planting to obscure views of the estate from the B1281, the golf course and the former A19. To the east of the Foundry terrace further landscaping is required.

Policy C3

~~Landscaping works are proposed in the following areas:~~

- ~~(i) South and North West of The Brewery~~
- ~~(ii) Wall opposite Factory Terrace~~
- ~~(iii) Bus turning circle north of the brewery~~
- ~~(iv) Land east of Parklands~~
- ~~(v) Shelter belt north west of Parklands~~
- ~~(vi) East of Foundry Terrace~~

Implementation

1. *The District Council will approach the landowners, the Parish Council and Groundwork East Durham, as appropriate, to secure the improvement of these sites following consultation with the County Archaeologist.*

Public Utilities

- 10.14** Castle Eden has adequate sewerage capacity to accommodate the scale of development expected over the Plan period.

Employment

- 10.15** Although Castle Eden has a main source of employment at the Brewery, it primarily performs the role of a dormitory settlement. It is ideally situated for this function, with easy access to the A19(T).

Housing

Existing Stock

- 10.16** Of the 150 dwellings in Castle Eden, 93% are privately owned. The only Council houses in Castle Eden are adjacent to the Factory.
- 10.17** During the past fifteen years a small number of large houses, such as those in the grounds of Parklands Hall, have been built in Castle Eden. One site in the village currently has planning permission for housing: 1.5 hectares south of The Walkway. Because of its particularly attractive environment and its convenient location, pressure for further such development is expected to continue. Whilst recognising the need to preserve the character of Castle Eden it is considered that, provided it is sensitively located and designed, a further limited amount of low density housing development could take place.

Residential Development

- 10.18** There has been an increasing demand for new private housing in Castle Eden in recent years, which has been accommodated through the development of infill plots. Demand for housing in attractive and accessible locations such as Castle Eden is likely to be further enhanced given the regeneration initiatives being undertaken in the District during Plan period. Insufficient land is allocated within the existing framework of the village to accommodate this anticipated demand during the Plan period. A modest increase in housing sites is therefore considered necessary and appropriate.
- 10.19** Castle Eden represents a unique, unspoilt, dispersed settlement of high landscape quality in close proximity to the A19 and the main urban centres of the District. Large scale

development pressure would destroy the very character which makes the area special. A number of small sites exist whose development, carefully specified and sensitively handled, would enhance the character, appearance and amenity of the area.

10.20 Three areas have been identified for development:

- (i) in the vicinity of the Golf Club
- (ii) sub-division of large grounds of existing houses, (as specified)
- (iii) conversion of the Castle

In the vicinity of the Golf Club

10.21 The redevelopment of the Castle Eden Golf Clubhouse/professional store, car park and associated land is envisaged. The existing Castle Eden Golf Clubhouse and the associated professional store occupy a single storey building lying immediately west of The Factory and north west of the listed terrace of housing fronting the B1281. The Clubhouse has a substantial car park accessed directly from the road. Because the land drops away to the north, the Clubhouse enjoys views out across the course, which forms the 'parkland' of the Castle but is somewhat hidden from the B1281. Mature trees are found immediately west of the car park and in the middle distance across the course itself. The appearance of the Clubhouse is a discordant element in this part of the village, out of keeping with and unrelated to the adjacent listed terrace. The area occupied by the Clubhouse, the car park and ancillary related uses is about 1ha.

10.22 It is considered that sympathetic redevelopment of this area, with generous landscaping and planting, would make a positive contribution to the layout, form and appearance of this part of the village and would be unlikely to exacerbate any traffic conditions, since the existing access is well used in relation to the Golf Course. Because of the manner in which the land falls away to the north, and

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the abundance of mature trees in this part of the village, the impact of a sensitively designed, small scheme would be very muted. It would be much closer to the concept of infill development than a residential scheme simply tagged onto the periphery of the village.

10.23 Development of this site is clearly only possible with the co-operation of the Golf Club, and would involve the construction of a new clubhouse. This could be envisaged, for example, on a new site adjacent to the current bus turning circle.

10.24 The Golf Clubhouse redevelopment site could include the gardens to the rear of 'The Factory'. Acquisition of the gardens for development purposes would enable any scheme to be extended to achieve a more spacious layout. Up to three dwellings could be accessed off North View. However, it is likely that the main access point would be located further west, beyond Factory Terrace, where the Golf Club car park is currently situated. Details of the site development proposals would, of course, be set out in a detailed development brief agreed prior to the submission of an application.

Policy C4

~~Subject to the relocation of the Castle Eden golf clubhouse to the site shown on the proposals map, the site of the Castle Eden golf clubhouse, car park and ancillary buildings is allocated for residential redevelopment. Any development will be expected to:~~

- ~~(i) be in keeping with the form, character and setting of 'the factory';~~
- ~~(ii) be of a design which in terms of scale, proportion, materials and architectural detail is sympathetic to its surroundings;~~
- ~~(iii) respect the amenity of the adjoining residents;~~
- ~~(iv) adopt a design which will enhance this part of the conservation area~~

Implementation

1. *In view of the complex nature of any development on these sites, it is essential that early discussions with the Council are entered into and a development brief is agreed as part of any planning permission.*

Sub-division of large grounds of existing houses

- 10.25** A characteristic of Castle Eden, particularly in the Bankside area, is the presence of large detached houses, many dating from the 19th Century, standing in their own substantial grounds. In terms of development, they convey a feel of openness and restraint, and are a defining element in the composition of the Conservation Area. Maintaining 'the balance between the buildings and the landscape' is an important aspect of the Plan.
- 10.26** The District Council has previously resisted residential development in the grounds of large dwellings because of the effect upon the Conservation Area, the nature of this rural village, and access difficulties. The question of precedent has also been an important factor, since the cumulative effect of a number of applications would be to alter dramatically the appearance and functioning of the village.
- 10.27** Nevertheless where development could preserve and enhance the setting of the Conservation Area, i.e. its overall effect would be in keeping with the characteristics of the Conservation Area, then the Council has been prepared to allocate sites, as at 5-8 The Foundry, and in the grounds of Bankside. The potential for residential development in the grounds of large dwellings has therefore been examined in the light of changing circumstances, and it is considered that limited scope exists for development where:
- the grounds are spaciouly large and offer a regular shaped site
 - they are characterised by abundant, mature tree cover
 - any development would be well screened or not readily visible over a wider area
 - safe access can be achieved
 - the relationship of new development to existing, in terms of scale, massing and privacy, would be satisfactory
 - noise levels from the A19 Trunk Road would not be intrusive
 - proposals can meet the requirements of policy C1
- 10.28** Taking these factors into consideration, appropriate sites have been identified and confirmed as: Burnside (Tollgate) House (1 site), Eden Vale Cottage (1 site).

Policy C5

~~Housing development in the grounds of large houses is allocated as follows:-~~

~~Burnside (tollgate house) - 1 dwelling~~

~~Eden vale cottage - 1 dwelling~~

~~Proposals must accord with the requirements of Policy C1~~

- 10.28A** An opportunity exists to accommodate an additional modest bungalow adjacent to Ivy Cottage on a plot of about 0.05 hectares. The location of the site requires that any design for a dwelling must be in keeping with the character and appearance of the Conservation Area Arrangements would need to be secured to re-site the nearby bus shelter in order to provide a safe and convenient access to serve the dwelling. In view of the location of the site within the AHLV, additional landscaping may also be

necessary.

Policy C6

~~Land adjacent to Ivy Cottage, amounting to about 0.05ha, is allocated for one dwelling. Planning permission will be subject to:~~

- ~~(i) the design, siting and materials of the dwelling being in keeping with the character and appearance of the existing bungalow at Ivy Cottage or otherwise complying with Policy C1;~~
- ~~(ii) provision of a safe and convenient access to serve the dwelling and arrangements to secure the re-siting or removal of the adjacent bus shelter;~~
- ~~(iii) a scheme of landscaping for the site, compatible with its location in the AHLV.~~

Conversion of the Castle for Residential Use

- 10.29** The Castle is located on the southern outskirts of the Dene. The building has been vacant for 15 years and, as a consequence, its condition has deteriorated.
- 10.30** An opportunity exists for the sympathetic conversion and refurbishment of the buildings themselves to provide a very high standard of accommodation. Such an approach has been used successfully elsewhere and has the advantage of bringing back into use an historically and architecturally important building whilst allowing the setting to remain largely unaltered.
- 10.31** A sympathetic view will therefore be taken of measures to provide high quality, low density residential units in the Castle which would lead to the improvement and preservation of the structure. Conversion of the building will need to conform with the requirements of Policy 24 of the Environment Chapter.
- 10.31A** The conversion of the Castle to provide residential accommodation is the Council's preferred solution to ensure the building is retained in good condition and utilised in an acceptable manner. Use for hotel or office purposes are other possibilities which would be likely to result in the remediation and retention of the fabric of the building. However, these uses are also likely to introduce other problems such as a greater increase in traffic, or the desire for building extension, or the construction of additional buildings ancillary to the Castle. In order to ensure that the residential conversion option is given priority and is fully explored, hotel or office accommodation will therefore only be considered if it can be shown that residential use would not enable the fabric of the building to be preserved.

Policy C7

~~The re-use and adaptation of the castle to provide low density, high quality residential units will be approved where this would assist in the improvement and preservation of the building. Approval of planning permission will be subject to policy 24. Hotel or office use will only be considered if it can be demonstrated that conversion to residential use would not be a viable way to preserve the fabric of the listed building.~~

Transport

- 10.32** Construction of the A19(T) dual carriageway by-passing Castle Eden in the early 1970s added considerably to its attractive nature by removing the heavy through-traffic. The Highway Authority has undertaken an improvement to the Eden Vale junction with the A19(T) in their previous capacity as agents of the Department of Transport.
- 10.33** Although the Highway Authority has no other proposals for road improvement schemes, every effort should be made to ensure that any work is sympathetic to the immediate environment. On residential streets this could involve the use of textured surfaces or traditional paving materials.

Recreation and Community Facilities

Outdoor Sport and Recreation

- 10.34** Castle Eden and its immediate surroundings offer a number of good opportunities for outdoor recreation, in particular, the Golf Club and Cricket Club. There is also a good network of footpaths within Castle Eden and there are links to Castle Eden Dene and

Bleachery Dene. The Haswell to Hart Walkway also passes through the centre of the village and provides a good link to a number of the neighbouring villages. The existing footpaths should be better maintained and sign-posted to encourage recreational use but with minimal

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nuisance to adjacent agricultural areas. Where the opportunity arises to improve the footpath network by creating additional paths or diverting existing ones this should be carried out in co-operation with landowners, tenants and walkers.

Education, Health and Community Facilities

- 10.35** Castle Eden is largely dependent on Peterlee and Wingate for these facilities though a new village hall has recently been provided for community purposes. Shopping
- 10.36** There is no shop in Castle Eden at present, the previous one having closed in 1991.
- 10.37** Interest has previously been expressed in the provision of a Post Office to serve the local community. Because of the limited population, the dispersed form of the village; and the proximity of facilities in Peterlee and other nearby villages, it is doubtful whether the opening of a new post office would be a viable proposition. Because of the special character of the village, reflected in its Conservation Area status, a restrained development regime has always been adopted. With the exceptions indicated in the housing policies this regime is continued in the current planning policies. Whilst the provision of additional community facilities such as a post office is generally to be welcomed, this is not considered sufficient justification for the construction of a new building, whose use could not be guaranteed over the Plan period. Scope exists for the change of use and (part) conversion of existing buildings, which would have limited impact on their external appearance.

Policy C8

The provision of a post office or local shop by the conversion of an existing building will be approved subject to the provisions stipulated in policies 22 and 24 (environment chapter).

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Dalton-le-Dale

Summary of policies

Environment

- Ø1 ~~Land south of Dene Road~~ - This policy has lapsed
- Ø2 ~~Land opposite Dalton Bridge~~ - This policy has lapsed
- Ø3 ~~Control of development~~ - This policy has lapsed

Housing

Housing Land

- Ø4 ~~Land east of South Farm~~ - This policy has lapsed

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Introduction

- 11.1** Dalton-le-Dale is an attractive dormitory village situated in a narrow wooded dene. The present form of the village reflects both its historical development and the physical characteristics of its location, with a group of older buildings and farms adjacent to the church and a ribbon of inter-war development extending eastward on the north side of the road. The village is dependent on Seaham and other nearby centres for employment and facilities. However, it is physically separate from Seaham and is, therefore, considered as such in the District Local Plan. The population of Dalton-le-Dale is estimated to be 280 (1991 Census).

Environment

- 11.2** In recognition of its special character and setting and with the aim of preserving and enhancing its appearance, consideration should be given to designating part of Dalton-le-Dale as a Conservation Area. In particular, this should include the older part of the village around the church extending as far as Dalton Bridge (both St Andrew's Church and Dalton Bridge being listed as buildings of special architectural or historic interest) and probably including some of the attractive woodland surrounding the village. In the interim, the village could be improved through developing suitable infill sites and landscaping. Removal of overhead wires would be particularly beneficial but this is unlikely to take place during the Plan period because priority for undergrounding is in existing Conservation Areas, and schemes undertaken as part of settlement renewal projects (paragraph 3.138, Environment Chapter).

Land South of Dene Road including St Andrew's Church

- 11.3 This area, 1.15 hectares in total, comprises St Andrew's Church and its grounds, an attractive area of open space, and an equipped children's play area. It contains and is bordered by areas of mature woodland and is a key element in the western approach into the older part of the village. The area is crossed by a public footpath and is therefore also an important resource for informal recreation. It is therefore essential that this area is protected from development which would detract from its character.

Policy D1

~~Development which would detract from the open nature or the visual, amenity or recreational value of the area around and to the south of Saint Andrew's church will not be approved.~~

Land Opposite Dalton Bridge

- 11.4 The land opposite Dalton Bridge, now occupied only by an old hall, is a prominent feature of the village on a sharp bend in the main road. It contains a large number of both mature and younger trees and breaks up the otherwise continuous ribbon of housing along the north side of the road. In view of the restricted size of the site, much of which is steeply sloping, and its visual importance, it is considered that no further development should take place on it and that landscaping improvements be carried out at its western end.

Policy D2

~~The development of the land opposite Dalton Bridge other than for appropriate landscaping, will not be approved~~

Implementation

1. *The District Council will approach the landowner to secure the improvement of the site.*

- 11.5 In order to retain the attractive rural character of Dalton-le-Dale, in particular the open space on the south side of the road and the other smaller areas of open space in the village, it is considered that development other than that specified in other policies should not normally be approved.

Policy D3

~~With the exception of the development specified in other policies further development of open space in Dalton-le-Dale will not be approved.~~

Public Utilities

- 11.6 Dalton-le-Dale has adequate capacity with regards to gas, electricity and sewage to accommodate the amount of development likely to occur over the Plan period.

Housing

- 11.7 The attractive appearance of Dalton-le-Dale has led to a significant demand for new private housing in the village over the past 15 years and several infill sites have been developed. Although the demand is expected to continue over the Plan period, large scale development would be inappropriate. Further development should, therefore, be restricted to the infill site specified below.

Policy D4

The land east of South Farm is allocated for housing.

Transport

- 11.9** The major traffic problem in Dalton-le-Dale was the undesirable effect of heavy traffic. This has now been eased by the construction of Graham Way and the imposition of weight restriction orders on Dawdon Dene Road. Times Bank is still, however, used by heavy traffic and the adjacent dwellings suffer from the resultant noise and vibrations. The Highway Authority is currently constructing a new road link between the former Dawdon Colliery and Cold Hesledon to relieve the current problem of heavy traffic passing through Seaham en route to the harbour and to assist economic regeneration in the town. This is programmed for completion in late 1997. The construction of the road should ameliorate the existing problems of heavy traffic. Thereafter the Highway Authority will monitor traffic levels at Times Bank and assess whether further traffic management measures need to be implemented.
- 11.10** Vehicular access from the Overdene Estate onto Times Bank has been improved by a realignment of the junction.

Recreation and Community Facilities

- 11.11** For its size, Dalton-le-Dale is well provided with recreation facilities having a children's playground adjacent to the church, several allotments and an area of amenity open space on the south side of the road.
- 11.12** Dalton-le-Dale has a small village hall but otherwise is dependent on Seaham for most other facilities.

Shopping

- 11.13** Although unlikely, the change of use of an existing building to provide a local shop would be consistent with Policy 103 (Shopping Chapter) which allows the development of small shops.



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Easington & Littlethorpe

Summary of policies

Environment

- E1 ~~Village Green~~ - This policy has lapsed
- E2 ~~Other landscaping proposals in the village~~ - This policy has lapsed
- E3 ~~Easington Colliery reclamation scheme~~ - This policy has lapsed
- E4 Uses for the Easington Colliery site
- E5 ~~Upgrading of the shopping centre~~ - This policy has lapsed
- E6 ~~Small scale improvements on Council owned land~~ - This policy has lapsed
- E7 ~~Small scale improvements on non-Council owned land~~ - This policy has lapsed

Employment

- E8 Land west of the Council Offices

Housing

- E9 ~~Housing Renewal Initiative~~ - This policy has lapsed
- Housing Land
- E10 ~~Land south of Seaside Lane~~ - This policy has lapsed
 - E11 Uses for former Easington Colliery Junior and Infant School
 - E12 ~~Land east of Wordsworth Road~~ - This policy has lapsed

Transport

- E13 Rail halt

Recreation and Community Facilities and Tourism

- E14 ~~Formal recreation facilities~~ - This policy has lapsed
- E15 ~~Children's play space/informal play space~~ - This policy has lapsed

Shopping

- E16 Local shopping centre

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Introduction

- 12.1** Two distinct parts of Easington can be identified, each reflecting their different origins. Easington Village developed from an agricultural hamlet around The Green, whilst Easington Colliery grew up around the mine, which was sunk in 1910. Now, although still retaining the distinctive characteristics resulting from their separate development, Easington is treated as one settlement in the District Local Plan.
- 12.2** The recent development and current planning problems of Easington continue to reflect the contrasting history of its development. The Village, now an attractive dormitory settlement, has grown considerably in the past twentyfive years through the development of several housing schemes and continues to attract interest from private builders. The major planning issue is how to address the demand for private housing whilst retaining the unique character and appearance of the Village. In contrast, Easington Colliery, in common with the other former colliery villages in the District, has experienced recent population decline and has a less attractive environment, dominated by early twentieth century terraced housing and few areas of open space. The major planning issue here is how to regenerate this part of the settlement following the closure of the colliery.
- 12.3** In recognition of its deep rooted problems Easington Colliery has been selected for a Settlement Renewal Initiative. As part of this Initiative, a Regeneration Strategy has been prepared for the village. The Strategy seeks to improve the environment in the context of the economic and social revitalisation of the village, utilising a range of measures backed by significant levels of investment from a number of public sector sources. The Local Plan and Regeneration Strategy are therefore complementary and mutually supportive, and the Strategy is expected to facilitate the implementation of a number of key schemes.
- 12.4** The overall population of Easington has declined from 9,300 in 1971 to 7,900 in 1991. This overall decline, however, conceals two different trends which have operated in the settlement. As a result of housing development during this period the population in the village has been stable. In contrast, the population of the Colliery has declined due to housing clearance and the resultant out-migration. It is envisaged that as a result of the Settlement Renewal Initiative the population of Easington will stabilise during the Plan period.

Environment

Easington Village Conservation Area

- 12.5** In 1974 most of Easington Village was designated as a Conservation Area. Consequently policies 22 and 23 will be applied to proposals within the Area. Subsequently, the Village has been considerably improved through traffic management measures, a wide range of environmental improvement schemes coupled with sensitive housing developments on sites fronting onto the Village Green. Although it is important to retain the open character of the Village Green, selected landscaping schemes should be carried out to enhance its appearance.

~~Policy E1~~

~~The District Council will improve the village green through appropriate landscaping.~~

Implementation

- Funding will be sought from the Council's Capital or revenue budgets to implement the scheme.*

- 12.6** The presence of two partially developed housing sites to the east of Claypool Farm and east of the Half Moon Public House detracts from the appearance and setting of the Village Green. Appropriate landscaping work should be undertaken to these sites pending their redevelopment.

~~Policy E2~~

~~Landscaping works are proposed on the following sites:~~

- (i) ~~east of Claypool Farm~~
- (ii) ~~north of the Half Moon public house~~

Implementation

1. *The District Council will approach the landowners to secure the implementation of these schemes.*

Strategic Gap between Easington Village and Peterlee

- 12.7** At the present time the settlements of Easington village and Peterlee are separated by an area of countryside, predominantly in agricultural use approximately 1000 metres wide. The need to maintain a physical and visual separation between the settlements has been recognised in the Durham County Structure Plan Review and planning appeal decisions relating to the Thorpe Hospital and Thorpe

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Nursery site. A formal green wedge policy is proposed to prevent further development of this area. Details are contained in paragraphs 3.27-3.29 and Policy 6 (Environment Chapter).

Easington Colliery

- 12.8** Easington Colliery has an industrial appearance typical of the other former colliery villages in the District. A wide range of environmental projects is to be undertaken to improve the appearance of these areas as part of the Settlement Renewal Initiative, including the reclamation of the former Colliery site (para 12.12, Policies E3, E4), a comprehensive housing/environmental scheme to the former colliery houses (para 12.21, Policy E9), the improvement of the local shopping centre (para 12.13, Policy E5). Easington Colliery will also benefit from the major environmental initiatives being undertaken as part of the Turning the Tide Initiative, notably the reclamation of the former Easington Cliff Heaps (para 3.116, Policy 30 Environment Chapter).

Easington Colliery Reclamation Scheme

- 12.9** The site of the former colliery, located in the eastern periphery of the settlement overlooking the coast has been acquired by the Council from the Church Commissioners. It covers about 27ha. The former colliery buildings have been demolished, the coal stocking area de-commissioned and stockpiles removed. The site is bounded to the south-west by terraces of former colliery housing, and to the south and west by allotment gardens, with agricultural land to the north. The site abuts the Durham Coast which is to be improved as part of the Turning The Tide Initiative. It is, therefore, essential the reclamation works and any subsequent proposals for the re-use of the site complement the projects being undertaken as part of this Initiative. The former Easington Cliff Heaps (Policy 30 Environment Chapter) to the east of the railway line are to be reclaimed in association with the reclamation of the colliery site. Material from the Cliff Heaps is to be transferred from the former colliery site to achieve a more appropriate landform.
- 12.10** Following the completion of the colliery reclamation scheme the site has potential for a range of possible uses. The most appropriate uses, in view of its location abutting the undeveloped coast would be for leisure uses/a coastal park. This would include a visitor centre, landscaped areas, open space, and playing fields with changing facilities, footpath network, nature conservation area, rail halt, (see Policy E13) parking area, and a community based 'Eco-Technology Centre', exploring ecologically-friendly renewable-energy sources and demonstrating how these can be utilised.
- 12.11** The site could also be redeveloped for a mixed uses in a more commercially orientated

manner, with an emphasis on food retailing, offices, housing, pub/leisure as well as a community care and community college facilities. However, the scale of these proposals needs to be carefully weighed. Planning policy for shopping generally in the District follows Government and Structure Plan guidance related to maintaining the vitality and viability of existing, established town centres. Current proposals for the regeneration of Easington Colliery focus upon the upgrading of the existing Welfare Hall, revitalisation of the existing shopping centre at Seaside Lane and the development of the land on the south side of Seaside Lane for housing. Any retail development in the site would, therefore, have to accord with the shopping policies contained in the Plan, which maintain and enhance the viability of the existing Town and local shopping centre. Any housing development on the site would have to be limited to a scale which did not prejudice the development of other sites in Easington Colliery.

12.12 Any mixed development on the site will need to incorporate the following measures :

- (a) Improved vehicular access The former colliery was previously accessed from two points, at the junction of Seaside Lane/Station Road along Office Street and via a private road located to the east of the 'C' streets. A detailed traffic impact assessment will need to be undertaken and any resultant proposal will need to accord with Policy 36 of the Environment Chapter.
- (b) Remediation Measures In accordance with Policy 45 (Environment Chapter) a number of detailed measures would need to be undertaken prior to development to remove any contaminants and to safeguard against any potential problems of mine gas.
- (c) Bus provision The access roads should be designed to facilitate and encourage bus penetration into the site (Policy 36 Environment Chapter).
- (d) Form of development In visual terms the site occupies a sensitive location adjacent to the undeveloped coast. In accordance with Policy 35 (Environment Chapter) any development should be designed to respect its location and to incorporate appropriate landscaping features.

- (e) Allotments: The former colliery site abuts the Eastside allotments. Any redevelopment proposals will need either to screen the allotments or to relocate them to an alternative site.
- (f) Amenity considerations: The site abuts the Eastside housing area. Any uses on the site should not adversely affect the amenity of residents living in the vicinity (Policy 35 Environment Chapter).

Policy E3

~~The Easington Colliery site will be reclaimed to facilitate its reuse as indicated in policy E4.~~

Policy E4

The former colliery site is allocated for recreational uses or a mixed development comprising retailing, housing, offices, business use (class B1), education, community, a rail halt (policy E13). Any mixed development will be undertaken in accordance with the following conditions:

- (i) an access being installed in accordance with policy 36
- (ii) remediation/reclamation measures being implemented in accordance with policy 45
- (iii) roads being designed in accordance with policy 36 to facilitate bus access onto the site
- (iv) the development being designed in accordance with policy 35
- (v) any retail proposals should accord with provisions of policy 104.

Implementation

1. *The site will be reclaimed utilising a Derelict Land Grant provided by English Partnerships.*

Upgrading of the Shopping Centre

- 12.13** Seaside Lane acts as the local shopping centre (see paragraph 12.42) and also carries significant amounts of traffic in its capacity as the B1283. The shopping area thus suffers from problems typical of many "High Street" locations - poor conditions for pedestrians; the run-down nature of many of the properties, long-term vacant premises, a poor standard of design of shop-fronts, difficulties of car parking.
- 12.14** These problems require a comprehensive, integrated approach, and the Settlement Renewal Initiative proposes to undertake a rolling programme of works to improve the economic prospects and environmental features of the village, and in particular, the Seaside Lane shopping area. The Action Plan is complementary to the Local Plan's policies and will be a means of ensuring implementation of works to alleviate the problem.

Policy E5

~~Buildings in Seaside Lane shopping area are identified for appropriate improvement. Where necessary, traffic calming and streetworks will be carried out to improve the appearance and public enjoyment of the area.~~

Implementation

1. The works will be carried out and funded by the the Settlement Renewal Initiative.

Other Environmental Improvements

Small scale improvements

- 12.15** Elsewhere in Easington Colliery a number of small sites requires landscaping and planting schemes.

Policy E6

~~The District Council will improve the following areas through appropriate landscaping:~~

- (i) ~~Hazel Crescent~~
- (ii) ~~Oak Road~~

Implementation

1. *Finance will be sought from the District Council's Capital Programme or revenue budgets to implement these schemes.*

Policy E7

~~Landscaping works are proposed in the following areas:~~

- (i) ~~garage site north of Cavell Square~~
- (ii) ~~north of the pumping station, Seaside Lane~~
- (iii) ~~Eastside allotments~~

Implementation

1. *The District Council will approach the landowners, the Parish Council and the Groundwork East Durham, as appropriate, to secure the improvement of the sites.*

Public Utilities

- 12.16** Easington has adequate water, sewerage, electricity and gas supplies to cater for the development envisaged during the Plan period.

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Employment

- 12.17** The closure of the colliery in 1993 with the loss of 1400 jobs removed the main source of employment from the settlement. Alternative job opportunities are now limited to those provided by the District Council, which is a major employer; local shops; services; and those businesses on the nearby Peterlee industrial estates. New job opportunities are to be created in the proposals for the former colliery site as part of the Settlement Renewal Initiative.

Land to the West of the Council Offices

- 12.18** The Council owned land to the west of the Council Offices may be required for further offices and associated car parking and will, therefore, be retained for this purpose for the foreseeable future.

Policy E8

The land to the west of the district council offices is allocated for future offices and car parking.

Housing

Existing Stock

- 12.19** There are approximately 3380 dwellings in Easington of which 565 are Council owned. The remainder are in private ownership although a significant proportion in Easington Colliery is owned by Northumberland and Durham Property Trust /Bradford and Northern Housing Association. British Coal previously owned the former colliery houses to the east of Station Road known as 'Eastside', but these have been sold to Bradford and Northern Housing Association. Similarly one third of the houses to the west of Station Road and to the north of Seaside Lane, known as 'Southside' and 'Northside', have been sold to Northumberland and Durham Property Trust.

Housing Conditions

- 12.20** Most of the Council properties in Easington are in a good state of repair having been the subject of full improvement schemes. The houses in 'Eastside' are currently the subject of an on-going comprehensive housing revitalisation/environmental improvement scheme, being undertaken by Bradford and Northern. A significant number of the former colliery houses in 'Southside' and 'Northside' are vacant and have been vandalised and are to be the subject of a housing renewal initiative.

Housing Renewal Initiative

- 12.21** The colliery housing environment confers a typically harsh visual appearance, with little relief by way of amenity or planted areas. There are large numbers of dwellings in the 'A' and 'B' streets which are unfit, and which will be the subject of improvement or conversion. It is proposed to undertake some clearance with a view to releasing part of the cleared and reclaimed land for a scheme to provide elderly persons' bungalows for rent. An important need has been identified to provide elderly persons' bungalows. Within these streets there are significant areas of space between the front elevations of facing

terraces which are not heavily trafficked. This provides considerable scope to implement elements of hard and soft landscaping, car parking treatment and amenity space. Elsewhere, cleared sites will provide opportunities to implement environmental improvements. In this context, it is appropriate to target resources from whatever source, so that the end result is as far-reaching and comprehensive as possible. The Local Plan therefore supports this approach.

Policy E9

~~The Eastside, Northside and Southside housing areas are designated as housing renewal areas. A comprehensive revitalisation/ improvement scheme will be undertaken in this area including the following measures:~~

- ~~(i) refurbishment of properties~~
- ~~(ii) selective demolition~~
- ~~(iii) environmental works incorporating landscaping, and improvements to access, traffic circulation and car parking~~
- ~~(iv) the construction of 29 bungalows~~

Implementation

1. *The Renewal Initiative will be undertaken in a partnership involving the District Council, housing associations and the private sector. Funding will be sought from the partners plus the Government's Capital Challenge Initiative.*

New Council Housing

- 12.22** There is likely to be little need for general Council house building in Easington during the Plan period. There is, however, a significant demand for aged person/special purpose accommodation. 29 bungalows are to be provided on a site of cleared houses, as part of the housing renewal initiative (para 12.21).

New Private Housing in Easington Village

- 12.23** Although there has been a significant demand for private housing in Easington Village, the Colliery with its less attractive environment, has received considerably less interest from the private sector. The Village has expanded to the extent that further development beyond its physical framework would seriously affect its attractive and historic character. In 1996 outline planning permission was granted for the redevelopment of the Cadwell Lane Depot site for housing. In 1997 detailed planning permission was granted by the Secretary of State for the Environment for the redevelopment of the Thorpe Nursery site for housing. Further housing development should be restricted to the development of infill sites.

Private Housing in Easington Colliery

- 12.24** Private housing development is likely to play an important role in the regeneration of Easington Colliery by providing new dwellings for existing inhabitants and attracting residents who have emigrated to other villages. The private housing market in Easington Colliery has been very weak in the past 10 years during which time only about 10 dwellings have been completed. Although it is envisaged that private housing activity will increase during the Plan period it is important to focus new development on several key sites to ensure that demand is not dissipated.

Land South of Seaside Lane

- 12.25** This site lies between Seaside Lane and the Welfare Ground and comprises 6.22 hectares of land, partly in agricultural use and the remainder landscaped open space. It is flat, immediately adjacent to Seaside Lane, but rises quite steeply to form a plateau to the south. The site has previously had outline planning permission for housing, but the development has not proceeded due to low demand and its various physical constraints. Durham Aged Miners Homes Association have recently been granted detailed planning permission to develop a sheltered housing complex on 0.7 hectares of the site immediately adjacent to Seaside Lane. The remainder of the site is considered suitable for further residential development, particularly in view of its location close to the shops and facilities in Easington Colliery and has a capacity to accommodate around 110 dwellings. Vehicular access to the site should be obtained from the road which has been developed to serve the sheltered persons complex. In view of the likely low demand for private housing development in the area it is considered a phased development of the site would be acceptable.

Policy E10

6.22 hectares of land between Seaside Lane and the Welfare Ground is allocated for housing.

Easington Colliery Junior and Infant School, Seaside Lane

- 12.26** Construction of a replacement Junior and Infant School at Whickham Street, due to be completed in March 1998, will mean that the existing school on Seaside Lane will no longer be required. The school site is of a regular, rectangular shape, covering about 1ha. The site is flat. To the north and west are residential streets which form the periphery of the site; the eastern boundary is the rear of properties fronting onto Memorial Avenue. The main frontage overlooks Seaside Lane. The school buildings themselves are typical of late nineteenth century design being of two storeys with rooms having high ceilings. They consist of two principal blocks set in yard areas. The school lies at the heart of the village, immediately west of the local shopping area.
- 12.27** Seaside Lane itself has been identified for a variety of improvements both to the carriageway and footpaths, and to the properties which abut the street. It is a principal element in the regeneration proposals for Easington Colliery. Elsewhere, the emphasis is on upgrading nearby houses and making the housing environment as attractive as possible.
- 12.28** Given this background, it is evident that the school site occupies a key location. Any redevelopment proposals should therefore be framed to maximise this advantage. The buildings themselves are an attractive, prominent element in the street scene and their sensitive conversion would be welcomed. It is recognised, however, that it may be a difficult matter to find a use which is compatible with retention of the buildings.
- 12.29** In the event of the site being cleared it would lend itself to a variety of alternative uses, some of which could be combined to give a small 'mixed use' scheme, including Residential, (Use Class C3 - particularly aged persons' accommodation); Retailing (Use Class A1); Local Offices (A2); Health, Recreation and Community facilities.

- 12.30** Other proposals will be considered on their merits. Important considerations will be the need to maintain quiet conditions for people living in surrounding streets; adequate access and parking arrangements; the introduction of landscaping; and in particular the appearance of the development as an element in the views up and down Seaside Lane.

Policy E11

The site of the former Easington Colliery junior and infant school is allocated for the following uses: residential, retailing, local offices, health and community facilities. Other uses will be considered on their merits. A principal requirement of any development will be the need to maintain quiet conditions for people living nearby, and to present an attractive appearance to seaside lane. Planning permission will be granted for other uses

provided the proposal conforms with the following policies:

- (i) policy 35 (design and layout)
- (ii) policy 36 (access)
- (iii) policy 37 (parking)

Land East of Wordsworth Road

- 12.31** This is an area of rough ground (1.5 hectares in area) used by nearby residents as an informal recreation area. Part of this area was previously an old sand and gravel pit which has now been filled. The south eastern part of the site is occupied by a coal business. Although the business operates at a relatively low level and does not create excessive noise/nuisance, it does detract from the appearance of the area. An opportunity would seem to exist to release part of the site for residential purposes linked to the removal of the coal business and the formalisation of the remainder of the site as open space.
- 12.32** Potential exists to allocate the western part of the site (0.66 hectares in area) for housing for up to 15 dwellings. This part of the site is bounded on western and southern sides by houses, the north side by Holmehill Lane and the east by the remainder of the informal recreation area. In land use terms, the development of this part of the site would reinforce the settlement form. In visual terms the development would tie in with the adjacent houses.
- 12.33** Vehicular access would be gained from Holmehill Lane, though a footpath would need to be installed along the western edge of the site. Minor improvements may also be required to the junction of Holmehill/Seaside Lanes. The eastern part of the site and the land north of Holmehill Lane has previously been used for landfill and as such a developer would need to satisfy the Local Planning Authority that a problem of landfill gas does not exist, in accordance with Policy 44 (Environment Chapter).

Policy E12

~~1.5 ha of land east of Wordsworth Road is allocated for housing and open space. Residential development is dependent on the submission of a scheme, which the council will encourage, involving a package of measures to:~~

- ~~(i) relocate the coal depot;~~
- ~~(ii) secure the provision of open space on land to the north of the Tyne Terrace allotments;~~
- ~~(iii) provide a footpath along the western edge of the site and ensure that the junction between Seaside Lane and Holmehill Road can safely accommodate the additional traffic to and from the development;~~
- ~~(iv) demonstrate satisfactory measures to protect residential properties from landfill gas.~~

Implementation

1. *The District Council will seek to enter into a planning obligation with the developer to encourage and secure the relocation of the coal depot, the provision of open space, footpath and junction improvements, and the installation (if necessary) of satisfactory measures to protect residential properties from landfill gas.*

Transport

- 12.34** A range of measures was introduced in the late 1980's and early 1990's to overcome localised traffic problems in Easington. These included weight restriction orders placed on Seaside Lane to relieve problems of heavy traffic and a junction improvement at the junction of Seaside Lane/Hospital Lane to overcome problems of congestion. Increased off-street parking has been provided on the south side of Seaside Lane to serve the local shopping centre.

Rail Halt

- 12.35** It is considered that redevelopment of the former colliery site will provide an excellent opportunity to introduce a rail halt, which would be utilised by visitors attracted to the coast and the facilities available on the reclaimed land. As a 'gateway' to the coastline, it

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Policy E13

Development proposals for land in the vicinity of the railway line adjacent to the former Easington Colliery reclamation site which would prejudice the construction and operation of a railway halt will not be approved.

Recreation Community Facilities and Tourism

Formal Recreation Facilities

- 12.36** Formal provision is located at the welfare ground, incorporating a wide range of facilities. There are also football pitches on land east of Thorpe Road in Easington Village. The provision is also supplemented by playing fields at the Easington Comprehensive School and the Whickham Street School which are available outside educational hours. There is a sizeable shortage compared with national standards, of nearly 2.25 hectares. In accordance with Policy 90 (Recreation Chapter) the existing provision is safeguarded from new development. Additional provision is proposed as part of the reclamation of the colliery.

Policy E14

~~With the exception of the circumstances set out within policy 90 of the plan the development of the following sites other than for sport or informal recreation will not be approved:-~~

- ~~(i) Easington Colliery Welfare Ground~~
- ~~(ii) east of Thorpe Road~~
- ~~(iii) west of Station Road~~

Children's Play Space/Informal Play Space

- 12.37** There is a range of children's play space and informal play space throughout Easington. These are located at the Welfare Ground, on the Trust site on Station Road, on Easington Village Green, adjacent to Rosemary Lane and on cleared sites within the former colliery housing area. In terms of NPFA standards and definitions there is a sizeable shortage of children's play space and informal play space in both settlements. The provision is supplemented by a range of informal recreation areas in the two settlements and easy access to the coastline and walks. In accordance with Policy 91 and 92 (Recreation Chapter) these areas are safeguarded from development. The greatest opportunity for additional provision seems to exist where former colliery houses are demolished as part of the Housing Renewal Project (policy E9) and in association with the development of the land east of Wordsworth Road (policy E12).

Policy E15

~~With the exception of the circumstances laid down in policies 91 and 92 the development of the following sites will only be approved for the purposes of play space/informal open space:-~~

- ~~(i) The Trust, Station Road~~
- ~~(ii) Rosemary Lane~~
- ~~(iii) 'C' Streets~~

- (iv) ~~Andrew Street~~
- (v) ~~Sand Pits Site, South Of Comet Hill~~
- (vi) ~~West Of Glenhill School~~

Education

- 12.38** Easington has a full range of educational provision including an infant school, three primary schools, a comprehensive school and a special school. The Education Authority is reorganising the provision to eliminate split site operations. As from September 1997 the comprehensive school will operate from premises on Stockton Road, primary provision will be available in schools at Whickham Street and Hall Walks. The existing primary school on Seaside Lane will close and become surplus to requirements. Alternative uses for the sites are considered in para 12.26-12.30, Policy E11.
- 12.39** As a result of the housing developments proposed in Easington, Peterlee and Murton there will be an increased number of children using the schools in Easington. Sufficient places exist in the primary schools to accommodate the increase in numbers arising from these developments. The Education Authority is investigating how to accommodate the increased numbers in the comprehensive school.

Community Facilities

- 12.40** Community facilities in Easington Village area focused on Seaton Holme which provides a range of functions including a meeting place for the Parish Council, a heritage/visitors centre and a local library. In Easington Colliery the Welfare Hall provides facilities such as a bar, dance hall and space for meetings and community events.
- 12.41** As indicated in paragraph 12.10, the provision of a 'Visitor Centre' is a main element in the proposals for the Colliery Site.

Shopping

- 12.42** Outside the major centres of Peterlee and Seaham, Easington has the second largest shopping provision in the District both in terms of the number of units and overall shopping floorspace. The majority of the shops are concentrated on Seaside Lane in Easington Colliery. In order to maintain the viability of the existing centre the development of new shops and supermarkets should normally be located in this area, in accordance with Policy 102 (Shopping Chapter). The District Council will, however, encourage other uses in the centre including local offices (Policy 114) and the conversion of first floor premises into residential flats will be supported. Elsewhere in the settlement, Policy 103, which allows small shops, will be applied.

Policy E16

The local shopping centre for Easington will consist of the north side of Seaside Lane between Vincent Street and Bede Street, Seaside Lane south, east of the Church of the Ascension and the west side of Bede Street.

Little Thorpe

Introduction

- 12.43** Little Thorpe comprises a small, sporadic group of dwellings situated in open countryside between Easington and Peterlee. The hamlet is agricultural in origin and there are two farms within the boundaries of the settlement. There are also a number of non-agricultural dwellings within the hamlet that serve a dormitory function.

Housing

- 12.44** There has been little residential development in Little Thorpe which is principally due to the fact that it has been subject in the past to strict control. The basis of this policy was one of consolidation of development into those settlements with the greatest range of services and facilities, to maintain the level of service provision and to effect regeneration in a period of population decline.
- 12.45** It is now considered, however, that infilling or minor extensions to groups of rural housing may be acceptable, depending on the character of the surroundings. In the case of Little Thorpe, a limited amount of housing development may be acceptable, provided it accords with the requirements of Policy 67 (Housing Chapter).



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Haswell

Summary of policies

Environment

- Ha1 ~~Land adjacent to Front Street~~ - This policy has lapsed
- Ha2 ~~Land north of the Abattoir~~ - This policy has lapsed
- Ha3 ~~Land south of Durham Lane, Haswell Plough~~
- Ha4 ~~South side of Church Street~~ - This policy has lapsed
- Ha5 ~~Other environmental improvements~~ - This policy has lapsed
- Ha6 ~~South side of Chapel Lane~~ - This policy has lapsed
- Ha7 ~~Former Railway Cottages~~ - This policy has lapsed

Employment and Industry

- Ha8 ~~Infill plots on Front Street~~ - This policy has lapsed

Housing

Housing Land

- Ha9 ~~West of Blossomfield Estate~~ - This policy has lapsed
- Ha10 ~~East of George Street~~ - This policy has lapsed
- Ha11 ~~West of Plough Farm, Haswell Plough~~ - This policy has lapsed
- Ha12 ~~North of Chapel Lane~~ - This policy has lapsed

Recreation and Community Facilities and Tourism

- Ha13 ~~Children's play space/amenity open space~~ - This policy has lapsed

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Introduction

- 13.1** Haswell was originally a mining village but with the colliery having closed nearly one hundred years ago, it now performs the role of a dormitory settlement. The clearance and reclamation of the colliery in the early 1970's effectively divided the settlement into two parts, Haswell (for the sake of clarity referred to as Haswell Village) and Haswell Plough. Nevertheless, Haswell Plough still depends on the Village for shops and facilities

and the two parts are, therefore, considered together in the District Local Plan.

- 13.2** The population of Haswell has declined to the current (1991) estimated level of 1,530 and is expected to remain at this level over the Plan period.

Environment

- 13.3** Over the past twenty years, substantial environmental improvements have been carried out in Haswell including in particular, the reclamation of the colliery as well as tree and shrub planting. Further improvements could be achieved by the redevelopment of vacant sites along Front Street, additional tree and shrub planting and the improvement of the allotment area on the south side of Durham Lane, Haswell Plough.

Land Adjacent to Front Street

- 13.4** In addition to protecting open areas within towns and villages which are of recreational value, it is also important to protect those areas which enhance the character and appearance of settlements (see Policy 92). Within Haswell the areas of land adjacent to Front Street north and south of the junction with Church Street fulfil this role and provide pleasant open grassed areas at a key location close to the village's main shopping area.

Policy Ha1

~~Development which would detract from the visual or amenity value of the open spaces north and south of the junction between Church Street and Front Street will not be approved.~~

Land North of the Abattoir

- 13.5** As a result of clearance, this site is now occupied only by a former abattoir which has been converted into a butcher's shop, the former co-op building and two houses. The comprehensive redevelopment of this area would have the advantage of defining the northern edge of the village but this is unlikely to take place due to the mixed and unknown ownerships of the land. Development could, therefore, only take place in a piecemeal and fragmented manner which would adversely affect the appearance of this part of the village and the amenity of residents living in the nearby dwellings. Further development of this area should, therefore, be limited to minor extensions or alterations to existing buildings.

Policy Ha2

~~Development on the land west of Front Street and north of High Lane will only be approved for minor extensions or alterations to the abattoir, the former co-op building or the existing dwellings.~~

Land South of Durham Lane, Haswell Plough

- 13.6** The land south of Durham Lane, formerly occupied by housing, is now in mixed use, containing several houses, a club, small business uses and a large area of allotments, garages and overgrown fields. Although the land immediately adjacent to the road is grassed, the area as a whole presents an untidy, run-down appearance when approached from the east and west and should be reclaimed. Any reclamation scheme should include the relocation of the business uses, rationalisation and the screening of allotments and garages, an area for informal recreation and appropriate landscaping. A limited amount of private housing development with a capacity for about 10 dwellings could also be included in the scheme. The acquisition of the land and reclamation works will proceed once appropriate sources of finance have been secured. In view of these reclamation and redevelopment proposals, in the interim the development of permanent structures in the area will not be allowed. Demountable temporary structures would, however, be acceptable.

Policy Ha3

In order to facilitate its redevelopment for informal recreation, open space, allotments and housing, the district council will reclaim the land south of Durham lane. In the interim the development of any permanent structures will not be approved.

Implementation

1. *The District Council has prepared a detailed brief to guide the redevelopment of the site. Finance will be sought from the District Council's Capital Programme or revenue budgets to implement this scheme with contributions from other agencies. Further details are contained in paragraph 3.9 (Implementation Chapter).*

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South Side of Church Street

- 13.7** This is an open area of land, which includes the sites of the former Miners Hall and Methodist Chapel, between existing development to the south and St.Paul's Church to the north. The land has an untidy appearance which detracts from the setting of the Church and the neighbouring school buildings. In addition Church Street at this point is rather narrow and suffers from problems associated with on-street parking. The development of the site for a small car park with associated landscaping would resolve these problems and greatly enhance the area's appearance.

Policy Ha4

~~Land on the south side of Church Street will be improved through landscaping and the provision of a small car park.~~

Implementation

1. *Finance will be sought from the District Council's Capital Programme or revenue budgets. Further details are contained in paragraph 3.9 (Implementation Chapter).*

Other Environmental Improvements

- 13.8** In addition to these sites, there are a number of other areas which would benefit from landscaping.

Policy Ha5

~~The district council will improve the following areas through appropriate landscaping:~~

- ~~(i) south of Barnet Square~~
- ~~(ii) north of the former employment exchange~~
- ~~(iii) council housing estate west of Front Street (3 sites)~~
- ~~(iv) south of Durham Lane~~
- ~~(v) Kingston Crescent garage site~~
- ~~(vi) adjacent to community centre~~

Implementation

1. *Finance will be sought from the District Council's Capital Programme or revenue budgets. Further details are contained in paragraph 3.9 (Implementation Chapter).*

Policy Ha6

Landscaping/improvement works are proposed to the buildings on the south side of chapel lane.

Implementation

1. *The District Council will approach the landowner to secure the improvement of the site*

Policy Ha7

The county council will reclaim the site of the former railway cottages in Salters Lane to public open space.

Implementation

1. *The District Council will request that the County Council include this scheme in its reclamation programme for implementation.*

Public Utilities

- 13.9** Haswell has adequate water and electricity capacity to cater for the amount of development anticipated during the Plan period, though it has no gas. The absence of a gas supply acts as a disincentive to new investment in the village. The sewerage system may require some upgrading works to be carried out.

Employment

- 13.10** With the exception of the abattoir and local services, Haswell is dependent on outside sources of employment, in particular, industrial estates in Shotton and Peterlee. Although there are a relatively wide range of employment opportunities within commuting distance of the settlement, the promotion of local business on suitable small sites or in redundant buildings would help to reduce the heavy dependence on outside sources of employment.

Front Street - Eastern Frontage

- 13.11** The east side of Front Street is characterised by a mixture of shops and houses. The frontage is broken by one grassed vacant plot which is owned by the District Council, one similar plot which is privately owned and a site north of the Oddfellows Arms which is partly in private ownership. The sites would be suitable for business (Class B1), housing, shopping or office development.

Policy Ha8

The development of the infill sites on front street for other than housing, business (Class B1), offices (Class A2), or shopping uses will not be approved.

Implementation

1. *The District Council will re-advertise the site in its ownership for private development.*

Housing

Existing Stock

- 13.12** There are approximately 720 dwellings in Haswell. In Haswell Village, the ownership of houses is fairly evenly split between the District Council, Home Housing (HH) and private owners. Virtually all the houses in Haswell Plough are owned by the District Council.

Housing Conditions

- 13.13** Over half of the Council houses in Haswell Plough have been improved. The remainder have been identified as being in need of modernisation and the environment of the Council estate would benefit from further improvement. In contrast, with the recent modernisation of the HH dwellings, all the housing in Haswell Village is in a reasonably satisfactory condition although again the environment in the housing area could be improved by tree and shrub planting.

New Council Housing

- 13.14** There is no recognised need for new Council housing in Haswell.

New Private Housing

- 13.15** During the past fifteen years most of the demand for private housing in Haswell has been met by the development of the Blossomfield housing estate, which is nearing completion. Further land should be identified to cater for anticipated demand during the Plan period and to provide adequate choice. In view of the fact that the shops, schools and community facilities are concentrated in Haswell Village, any large scale housing development should take place there. New housing in Haswell Plough should, therefore, be on a small scale commensurate with its size and character.

Land South of Station Street and West of the Blossomfield Housing Estate

- 13.16** This site, 3.1 hectares in area, contains the land currently occupied by Haswell Mart, the adjoining car park in the ownership of the District Council, and the agricultural land between the Blossomfield housing estate and George Street. The site is well located in relation to the village facilities and its redevelopment will provide a further link between the Blossomfield Estate and the rest of the village through the extension of landscaping and footpath links from the latter development to Front Street. The condition of the land and buildings contained within the Mart have steadily deteriorated in recent years and the buildings themselves are now in a considerable state of disrepair. The Mart now detracts considerably from the environment of the area and causes amenity problems for neighbouring residential areas. Its redevelopment for housing would resolve these problems and greatly improve the appearance of the area.
- 13.17** Access to the site should be taken from Station Street. Development proposals should incorporate tree planting along the southern boundary of the site to reinforce the edge to the settlement at this point. It is estimated that the site could accommodate 70 dwellings.

Policy Ha9

~~3.1 hectares of land south of station street and west of the blossomfield estate is allocated for housing. Development proposals should incorporate tree planting along the southern boundary of the site.~~

Implementation

1. *The District Council will prepare a design brief to guide the redevelopment of the site.*

East of George Street

- 13.18** The area east of George Street, north of Church Lane, Haswell Village has in the past contained a number of small businesses and industrial premises. Commercial and industrial activity has, however, steadily declined in recent years to the point where the area now contains only one part-time business. The area now has a run-down appearance. With the proposed development of the West of Blossomfield/Haswell Mart

site for housing, most of the adjoining land uses will be residential rather than industrial. In land use and environmental terms it is now therefore considered that this area should be redeveloped for housing. Access to the site should be taken from George Street. The area contains a number of small infill plots between existing buildings and it is therefore estimated that the site could accommodate seven dwellings.

Policy Ha10

~~0.32 hectares of land east of George Street is allocated for housing.~~

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Land West of Plough Farm, Haswell Plough

- 13.19** This site is a paddock approximately 0.2 hectares in area. The site is bounded to the east by farm buildings, to the north by a maturing belt of trees planted as part of a small reclamation scheme, to the west by an unclassified road abutting a further group of trees and a former chapel and to the south by the B1283.
- 13.20** In physical terms the site appears to be detached from the existing limit to residential development on the north side of the B1283. In visual terms, however, the large and prominent grouping of buildings at Plough Farm defines the eastern limit to the village. Housing development on the site would therefore be well related to the form and character of the settlement. The site would not be particularly obtrusive, as it is hidden from the west and east by existing development. The site does, however, occupy a ridge when viewed from the north. It is therefore proposed that any development should be limited to a single storey.
- 13.21** Vehicular access to the site should be gained from the unadopted road leading to Mazine Terrace. The site is crossed by an overhead electricity cable and a sewer which would require diversion to facilitate its development.

Policy Ha11

~~0.2 hectares of land west of Plough Farm is allocated for up to three bungalows.~~

Infill Site

- 13.22** There is one vacant site north of Chapel Lane, which would be suitable for housing.

Policy Ha12

~~The site north of Chapel Lane is allocated for housing.~~

- 13.23** Three further sites have been identified as being suitable for housing (see Paragraph 13.1, Policy Ha8).

Transport

- 13.24** The problems of indiscriminate car parking in the village on Mart days have become so serious that the District Council carried out a comprehensive study. As a result a number of measures aimed at providing car parking facilities close to the Mart and restricting indiscriminate parking elsewhere have been implemented. These include the provision of an additional car park on Council-owned land south of Station Street and the enclosure of grassed areas affected by indiscriminate car parking to protect them from damage and to encourage the use of existing car parks. These problems will, however, be eliminated once the Mart site is redeveloped for housing.

Recreation and Community Facilities

Outdoor Sport and Recreation Facilities

- 13.25** For its size Haswell Village is adequately served with outdoor recreational facilities in the form of a recreation area and a playing field. These are valuable facilities which will be safeguarded from development under the terms of Policy 90 (see Recreation Chapter). There is an absence of formal facilities in Haswell Plough and an opportunity exists to develop a suitable site on the land south of Durham Lane.

Children's Play Space/Amenity Open Space

- 13.26** Haswell is adequately provided with both open space and children's play provision comprising sites south of Barnet Square, and in the housing estate west of Front Street and in Hessewelle Crescent. In accordance with Policies 91 and 92 (Recreation Chapter) these spaces should be safeguarded from development.

Policy Ha13

~~The development of the following areas of land will only be approved for informal recreation and other appropriate improvements:~~

- ~~(i) south of Barnet Square~~
- ~~(ii) north of housing estate west of Front Street~~
- ~~(iii) Hessewelle Crescent~~

Education

- 13.27** There is one primary school in Haswell, with all the secondary school pupils from the village travelling to Peterlee. With falling numbers in the primary school there would appear to be adequate capacity to cater for the limited amount of housing development which would be expected to take place in Haswell over the Plan period.

Health/Community Facilities

- 13.28** For its size, Haswell is adequately served with community and health facilities having a doctor's surgery and a community centre which was opened in 1979.

Improved health facilities are required and would be consistent with Policy 95 (Recreation Chapter).

Shopping

- 13.29** Shopping provision in Haswell is concentrated on Front Street. Surveys indicate that, over the past fifteen years, there has been a significant decline in the number of shops, including the closure of the bank. Haswell is not classified as a local shopping centre and Policy 103 (Shopping Chapter) which allows small shop units in the village will be applied. The District Council will seek to maintain the shopping areas through the marketing of infill plots on Front Street and encouraging other uses including local offices (Policy Ha8) and the conversion of first floor premises into residential flats (paragraph 5.48).

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Hawthorn

Summary of policies

Environment

~~Hw1~~ ~~Protection of undeveloped areas~~ - This policy has lapsed

~~Hw2~~ ~~Landscaping works~~ - This policy has lapsed

Housing

Housing Land

~~Hw3~~ ~~Conversion of buildings at West Farm~~ - This policy has lapsed

~~Hw4~~ ~~Land adjacent to West farm~~ - This policy has lapsed

~~Hw5~~ ~~Former RAF camp~~ - This policy has lapsed

~~Hw6~~ ~~Infill site~~ - This policy has lapsed

Recreation and Community Facilities and Tourism

~~Ha7~~ ~~Informal recreation areas~~ - This policy has lapsed

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Introduction

14.1 Hawthorn is an attractive rural village which, although agricultural in origin, is now essentially a dormitory settlement, largely dependent on adjacent towns and villages for employment. It is well situated to take advantage of alternative sources of employment, being located mid-way between Seaham and Peterlee.

14.2 The population of the village is estimated to be 340 (1991 census) having declined only slightly in the past thirty years with a significantly larger population of elderly people than the average for the District.

Environment

14.3 In 1974 the old village of Hawthorn was designated a Conservation Area and Policies 22 and 23 (Environment Chapter) will be applied. Although the development of several infill sites has improved its appearance, the Conservation Area would be further enhanced by certain landscape works and the removal of overhead wires. The existence of overhead wires in the Conservation Area detracts from its otherwise attractive appearance. Whilst

the District Council gives Conservation Areas priority in the selection of schemes for undergrounding of overhead wires, funds for such improvements are severely limited. The District Council will therefore approach the County Council, British Telecom and Northern Electric with a view to establishing Hawthorn Conservation Area as a high priority in the undergrounding of overhead wires.

- 14.4 Within the older part of the village the Conservation Area boundary reflects the fact that there are a number of undeveloped areas which make a significant contribution to its character and setting. It is important that any development in these areas does not erode their open nature or detract from the rural and agricultural character of the village and of the wider Conservation Area. In practice this will mean that only agricultural development or informal recreation will be normally appropriate.

Policy Hw1

~~Development which would detract from the open nature of the following areas or from their contribution to the character and setting of Hawthorn village will not be approved:~~

- ~~(i) south of the churchyard~~
- ~~(ii) Rectory Garden~~
- ~~(iii) south of South Farm~~
- ~~(iv) west of the churchyard~~

- 14.5 Three other areas would benefit from landscaping.

Policy Hw2

~~Landscaping works are proposed in the following areas:~~

- ~~(i) junction of Sunderland Road and West Lane~~
- ~~(ii) south side of West Lane~~
- ~~(iii) south of Rectory Garden.~~

Implementation

1. *The District Council will approach the landowners, the Parish Council, and the Groundwork East Durham, as appropriate, to secure the improvement of these sites.*

Public Utilities

- 14.6 There is adequate capacity for gas, electricity and water to cope with the anticipated levels of development within the village during the Plan period. A minor upgrade of the sewerage system may however be required.

Housing

- 14.7 In recent years the majority of infill sites in Hawthorn have been developed for housing and this has improved the appearance of the village. It is expected that the demand for housing sites will continue over the Plan period. Any new development should be sensitively located and designed to retain or enhance the character of the village, the majority of which is a designated Conservation Area.
- 14.8 The provision of low density sites for incoming industrialists is seen as playing an important role in the regeneration of the District.
- 14.9 The District is currently under-represented by people in the managerial and professional sectors. The Council is aware of a perceived shortage of suitable sites for high quality, low density (approximately 10 dwellings/hectare) executive housing in the District.
- 14.10 A number of sites have therefore been identified as part of the preparation of the Plan including a site in Hawthorn west of West Farm.

Land Adjacent to West Farm

- 14.11** This area contains two sites in the older part of the village and within the existing Conservation Area.

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The first comprises farm outbuildings which abut West Farm which is a grade 2 Listed Building. The outbuildings form an attractive group around a central courtyard but are in a dilapidated state. Their conversion for residential units would significantly improve the appearance of the area and the setting of the listed building.

- 14.12** The second site lies adjacent to the first and west of West Farm. The land is in agricultural use and is bounded by a bungalow, the farm outbuildings and West Farm to the east, St Michael's Churchyard to the south east and agricultural fields to the west. The development would round off the western edge of the village. It would also have the advantage of removing two large and prominent modern farm outbuildings. The site is however in a sensitive location within the Conservation Area and its over development could result in altering the character and setting of the area. A limited development comprising around three dwellings is therefore proposed. A joint access to both sites from West View would be suitable.

Policy Hw3

~~Proposals for the conversion of the farm buildings adjacent to West Farm for housing will be approved provided the details of the scheme respect the character of the existing building, West Farm and the wider conservation area.~~

Policy Hw4

~~0.47 hectares of land adjacent to West Farm is allocated for housing development. Development proposals will only be approved where they respect the character and setting of the conservation area and the adjoining listed building.~~

Former RAF Camp

- 14.12A** The former RAF Camp is located on the south western edge of the village and covers an area of approximately 4.66 hectares. The site has, however, lain in a semi-derelict state for nearly 35 years and its condition detracts from the appearance of the area. Due to the presence of the foundations of the former Camp buildings and roads, which underlay the site, the site is of little agricultural value. In addition it is incapable of recreational use without substantial funding to reclaim the site.
- 14.12B** It is considered that the redevelopment of a small part of the site for housing coupled with the reclamation and improvement of the remainder of the site would have a number of benefits for the area. It would resolve a long-standing environmental problem and improve the appearance of this part of the village. It would bring a previously developed site back into productive use in accordance with Central Government advice contained in 'Planning for Communities'. It would provide a quality low density housing scheme which would assist the regeneration of the District.
- 14.12C** Although Hawthorn is a small village with limited facilities it lies only three miles from a major development area on the southern outskirts of Seaham where significant employment opportunities are being created. These developments in the Seaham area are likely to generate significant demand for quality housing and thus could increase the pressure for housing development on greenfield sites, in particular, in Hawthorn. The allocation of part of the RAF Camp site would provide for this need whilst taking pressure off other greenfield sites. It would also take pressure off more sensitive sites located in/adjacent to the Conservation Area and the Area of High Landscape Value.
- 14.12D** Hawthorn is located close to Seaham, which is a major centre with a wide range of services and facilities and where major growth of employment opportunities are planned. Despite the relative absence of services and facilities in Hawthorn, the length of car journeys generated by the development could therefore potentially be short. The site abuts Stockton/Sunderland Road which is a public transport route which provides

regular bus services to the larger settlements. In view of this, prospective residents will have ample opportunity to utilise bus services as a mode of transport.

14.12E The following conditions are proposed to ensure a sustainable form of development and to minimise any adverse impact on the environment:

- a) form of development: in order to ensure that the proposed housing is well related to the built form of the village it is proposed that the new development should be located on 2.25 hectares of land, on the eastern part of the site. In addition, in order to maintain the semi-rural nature of this part of the village, it is considered that low density/executive housing would be the most appropriate form of development.
- b) landscaping: the western part of the site is prominent from the A19(T) and any development would, therefore, represent an intrusion into the countryside. In view of this it is proposed that this part of the site is planted with woodland. The eastern part of the site, identified for housing is

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visible from the stretch of the B1432 running down the south side of Eagle Hall Bank. A tree planting belt, approximately 20 metres wide, would be required along the southern and eastern parts of the site (reinforcing the existing hedge) to minimise the intrusion into the countryside.

- c) access to public transport: in order to maximise the use of the bus service passing along the B1432 road it is proposed to upgrade the existing footpath link from the eastern part of the site through Glencot Grove to the bus stops on Stockton Road.
- d) discharge: a sewerage pumping station would be required to discharge foul flows into the existing system, whilst surface water flows would be discharged into the Dene to the south of the site.

Policy Hw5

~~2.25 hectares on the eastern part of the former RAF camp is allocated for 30 dwellings. The development will be approved subject to the following conditions and requirements:~~

- ~~(i) the remaining 2.35 hectares of the site including the southern and eastern edges being reclaimed and planted as woodland in accordance with a scheme to be approved by the local planning authority;~~
- ~~(ii) the footway from the eastern part of the site to Glencot Grove being upgraded;~~
- ~~(iii) appropriate drainage works being installed, in accordance with the requirements of policy 26.~~

Implementation

1. *A detailed brief will be prepared to guide the redevelopment of the site.*

Infill Site, South of High West Lane

14.13 This site, located between the small Council housing development and a private dwelling, is in private ownership and is under-used. Its development for housing would be appropriate.

Policy Hw6

~~The infill site on the south side of High West Lane is allocated for housing.~~

Recreation And Community Facilities

Sport and Recreation Open Space/Children's Play Space

- 14.14** In relation to minimum NPFA standards Hawthorn is deficient in recreational space, particularly formal space for youth and adult use. However it does have a recreation area to the east of Belmont Avenue which has previously been improved, and a play area south of Glencot Grove. In accordance with Policies 91 and 92 (Recreation Chapter) both areas should be safeguarded from development.

~~Policy Hw7~~

~~The development of the following areas will only be approved for recreational purposes:~~

- ~~(i) south of Glencot Grove;~~
- ~~(ii) east of Belmont Avenue.~~

Health and Community Facilities

- 14.15** Hawthorn is largely dependent on adjacent villages, particularly Easington, for these facilities, although it does have its own community centre in the former primary school.

Shopping

- 14.16** The only shop in Hawthorn has closed in 1992. Although unlikely, the establishment of an additional shop would be consistent with Policy 103(Shopping Chapter) which allows small shops.

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Hesleden

Summary of policies

Environment

~~He1 Landscaping Works~~ - This policy has lapsed

Housing

Housing Land

~~He2 Land east of Station Road~~ - This policy has lapsed

~~He3 Safeguarding land west of Station Road for informal recreation~~ - This policy has lapsed

~~He4 Land east of Gray Avenue~~ - This policy has lapsed

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Introduction

15.1 Hesleden is the smallest of the former colliery villages in the District with an estimated population of 560 (1991 census). Whilst improved by reclamation and redevelopment, the complete absence of job opportunities in the village and its isolated location suggest that Hesleden is unlikely to attract much private investment over the Plan period, although it is considered suitable for general housing development. Without this investment it is likely that the population will continue to decline slowly.

Environment

15.2 Although the appearance of Hesleden has been improved through the demolition of older housing followed by redevelopment or grassing of the sites, several areas of open space could be improved by appropriate landscaping. Hesleden is considered to be a village suitable for general housing development, and any new development will be expected to enhance the character and form of the settlement.

Policy He1

The District Council will improve the following areas through appropriate landscaping

- (i) ~~junction of Church Street and Hesleden Road~~
- (ii) ~~south side of Harold Wilson Drive~~

- (iii) north of Front Street
- (iv) ~~Eden Cottages (two sites)~~
- (v) ~~south of Church Street~~
- (vi) ~~Hillcrest place~~

Implementation

1. *Finance will be sought from the District Council's Capital Programme or revenue budgets to implement these schemes. Further details are contained in paragraph 3.9 (Implementation Chapter).*

Public Utilities

- 15.3** The village has adequate water, electricity and sewerage capacity to accommodate the scale of development expected over the Plan period. The absence of a gas supply does, however, act as a disincentive to new investment in the village.

Housing

Existing Stock

- 15.4** With the exception of two terraces in the east of the village which are now privately owned, all the colliery housing in Hesleden has been cleared. As a result of clearance and rebuilding no Council houses are in need of any exceptional modifications or improvement measures.

New Council Housing

- 15.5** There is unlikely to be a need for any new Council housing in Hesleden over the Plan period due to the level of provision existing and the likely decline in population.

New Private Housing

- 15.6** In recognition of the low demand for private housing in Hesleden, the District Council has previously operated a policy of diverting new development to sites which consolidate the existing village framework rather than expand it. The former Gray Street site has been redeveloped with 26 dwellings. The areas of open space, on either side of Station Road have been identified as being suitable for housing development after the completion of the Gray Street site. An assessment has, therefore, been undertaken of the merits of the sites, in order that one can be allocated to meet anticipated demand for private housing during the Plan period.

Land East and West of Station Road

- 15.7** Both sites, predominantly in Council ownership, cover an area of approximately 1.56 hectares and could each accommodate up to 45 dwellings. The western site is used as an informal recreation area/football pitch whilst the eastern site is in an area of open space extensively planted along its periphery.
- 15.8** In land use terms there are merits in allocating either of the sites. The development of the western site would have the effect of enclosing the other site, whilst the development of the eastern site would consolidate the settlement framework to greater effect. In visual terms, both sites can be viewed at a distance from the A19(T) north of Sheraton. In view of the distance of the views it would not, however, be possible to distinguish between the existing and new development. The eastern site does provide

the greatest opportunity for a visually acceptable scheme, which could be designed and implemented within the landscaping areas. There is already a sizeable surplus of open space in the village, compared with national standards. The development of either site would, therefore, not result in a shortage of provision. It would, however, be preferable to retain the existing informal recreation area which contains football pitches on the west side of Station Road.

Policy He2

~~1.56 hectares of land east of Station Road is allocated for housing. Additional tree planting will be provided along the southern edge of the site, in accordance with policy 35.~~

Policy He3

~~The development of the land west of Station Road will only be approved for purposes of informal recreation.~~

Implementation

1. The District Council will acquire the outstanding plots of land on the site allocated for housing not in its ownership and then market it for private housing development.
2. *The District Council will prepare a detailed design brief to guide the development of the housing site.*

Land East of Gray Avenue

- 15.8A** This is a rectangular piece of overgrown land, 0.3 hectares in size, whose condition detracts from the appearance of the area. The development of part of this area as hardstanding/garages would resolve an absence of off-street parking for the residents of Gray Avenue. The remainder of the site could be developed for housing.

Policy He4

~~0.3 hectares of land east of Gray Avenue is allocated for off-street parking/garages and housing.~~

Implementation

1. The District Council will prepare a design brief to guide the development of the site.

Recreation and Community Facilities

- 15.9** Hesleden is well provided with recreation facilities considering its size and ageing population. The village has a playing field on land west of Station Road, a play area to the north of Front Street and allotments on the outskirts of the settlement. In addition, the residents have easy access to the Haswell to Hart Walkway which runs along the southern edge of the village. The playing field west of Station Road should be safeguarded from development (see Policy He3).
- 15.10** Hesleden is well provided with basic facilities. The land to the north of White Crescent is being used as an extension to the cemetery.

Shopping

- 15.11** There are only three shops in Hesleden as two of those originally provided by the Council have been converted back to houses due to lack of demand. Although unlikely, the establishment of an additional local shop would be consistent with Policy 103 (Shopping Chapter).

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High Hesleden

Summary of policies

Housing

Housing Land

~~Hi1 East of South View~~ - This policy has lapsed

Recreation and Community Facilities and Tourism

~~Hi2 Safeguarding land south of Dene View~~ - This policy has lapsed

~~Hi3 Landscaping land south of Dene View~~ - This policy has lapsed

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Introduction

16.1 High Hesleden is the most remote of the rural villages in the District which, although retaining some agricultural employment, is now essentially a dormitory settlement dependent on outside sources of employment. The population of the village is estimated to be 190 (1991 census).

Environment

16.2 High Hesleden is a compact village centred on a village green which has recently been improved by landscaping. Development of the housing sites opposite The Bungalows and identified in Policy Hi1 will do much to consolidate the village and improve its appearance.

Public Utilities

16.3 High Hesleden has adequate water, electricity and sewerage capacity to cater for the limited development expected over the Plan period.

Housing

16.4 There has been a small demand for private housing in the village, in recent years, which has been met by the development of infill plots. In 1991 detailed planning permission

was granted for the development of five dwellings on a 0.4 hectare site opposite The Bungalows. The site is now being developed.

- 16.5** Following the development of this site, the village will have reached its natural limit for development. Any further development beyond its existing physical framework would seriously damage its character. In these circumstances, it is considered that any additional housing development in the village should, therefore, be restricted to infill plots.
- 16.6** There is one infill site east of South View which would be suitable for the development of a single dwelling.

Policy Hi1

~~0.14 Hectares of land east of South View is allocated for a single dwelling.~~

Recreation

Land South of Dene View

- 16.7** To the south of the post-war local authority housing is a play area and recreation ground. Although this would be suitable for housing development, in view of the limited amount of playspace in the village it should be retained in its existing use and improved through appropriate landscaping.

Policy Hi2

~~The development of the land south of Dene View is allocated for recreation purposes.~~

Policy Hi3

~~The district council will improve the land south of Dene View through appropriate landscaping.~~

Implementation

1. *Finance will be sought from the District Council's Capital Programme or revenue budgets to implement this scheme.*

Shopping, Education, Health, Social and Community Facilities

- 16.8** High Hesleden has a small village hall but otherwise is dependent on adjacent villages for all facilities. Development of a small shop in the village would be consistent with Policy 103 (Shopping Chapter).

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Horden

Summary of policies

Environment

- ~~Ho1~~ [Priority areas for environmental improvement](#) - This policy has lapsed
- ~~Ho2~~ [Former Blackhills Road school site](#) - This policy has lapsed
- ~~Ho3~~ [Landscaping works on Council owned land](#) - This policy has lapsed
- ~~Ho4~~ [Landscaping works on non-Council owned land](#) - This policy has lapsed

Employment

- Ho5 [Extension to Sea View Industrial Estate](#)

Housing

Housing Land

- Ho6 [Use of land south of former colliery pumping station for recreation/housing](#)

Transport

- Ho7 [Rail halt](#)
- ~~Ho8~~ [Off-street parking](#) - This policy has lapsed

Recreation and Community Facilities and Tourism

- ~~Ho9~~ [Sites for sport and recreation](#) - This policy has lapsed
- ~~Ho10~~ [Site for children's play space/amenity open space](#) - This policy has lapsed

Shopping

- Ho11 [Local shopping centre](#)

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Introduction

17.1 Although physically comprising one built-up area, Peterlee and Horden are clearly

separate identifiable settlements, with Horden being more akin in character and problems to the other former colliery villages in the District than to the New Town. The settlements are, therefore, considered separately in the District Local Plan.

- 17.2** In 1982, Horden Colliery employed over 2000 people and its long-term future seemed to be assured. However, the colliery closed in February 1986. The District Council has subsequently undertaken a comprehensive reclamation/ redevelopment scheme on the former colliery site to create new job opportunities in order to counter the decline which has followed pit closures in other settlements in the District.
- 17.3** A substantial part of the cleared housing land in the centre of the village has been successfully redeveloped, particularly the Grant Street area. Declining population has, however, reduced demand and some remaining areas have been landscaped. New housing development would nevertheless help consolidate the framework of the settlement and would provide support for the existing shops and services in the vicinity and, therefore, ought to be encouraged.
- 17.4** In recognition of its deep-rooted problems, Horden has been selected for a Settlement Renewal Initiative. As part of this Initiative, a Regeneration Strategy has been prepared for the village. The Strategy seeks to strengthen the community through measures to promote employment and training, improve facilities, especially for young people, and rejuvenate housing and the environment. The Local Plan and the Regeneration Strategy are therefore complementary and mutually supportive, and the Strategy is expected to facilitate the implementation of a number of key schemes.
- 17.5** The population of the village has fallen from 15,000 in 1951 to an estimated 8,090 in 1991. With falling household size, it is likely that the decline will continue unless new investment can be encouraged. The decline in overall numbers is likely to be accompanied by an increase in the proportion of elderly people.

Environment

- 17.6** The clearance of sub-standard housing, followed by rebuilding or landscaping works, has considerably improved the appearance of the centre of the village. The improvements have been carried out in tandem with the reclamation of the colliery site and the former pit heaps, and the screening of the former British Coal allotments on the periphery of the pit site, and the improvement of a large number of small sites. In addition, several prominent sites have been improved by high quality redevelopment schemes, notably the construction of nursing homes and bungalows on the former Third Street and on the former school site on Sunderland Road. There are a number of other sites which remain to be improved.
- 17.7** Improvement of the environment still remains a key consideration in the overall strategy of the Local Plan, in particular treatment of urban centres like Horden. Provision is made in the Horden Regeneration Strategy for a series of measures to improve the village centre and environs, which is in accordance with the Local Plan's approach and relates well to other initiatives to rejuvenate the centre.

Policy Ho1

Horden village centre will be the focus of a comprehensive improvement scheme incorporating the following elements:

- (i) A townscape scheme with better facilities for pedestrians in Blackhills Road/Eden Street
- (ii) The refurbishment and redesign of open space at Church Green
- (iii) A neighbourhood park at Dene Street

Implementation

1. *The District Council will seek financial assistance to carry out the necessary works through the Horden Settlement Renewal Initiative.*

Former Blackhills Road Junior and Infants School

- 17.8** The former Blackhills Road Junior and Infants School has been surplus to the requirements of the Local Education Authority for a number of years and was the subject of a planning application in 1995 for redevelopment to provide a 10,000 sq ft food store with associated car parking and landscaping, an extension to the community centre and 18 terraced houses. The application was approved but the developers have not implemented the scheme. Since that time the community uses have been consolidated in the adjacent Community Centre, and the former school buildings are being demolished. The planning permission remains valid, and the District Council would welcome further interest in the site either for mixed use along the lines of the original application, or as

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- 17.9** Since the site is located on the edge of both the local shopping centre and residential areas, it may therefore be appropriate for a number of uses such as housing, retailing (Class A1), offices and services for local needs (Class A2), business (Class B1) and community facilities (Class D1). Any development on the site will need to ensure the provision of a satisfactory form of access in accordance with Policy 36 (Environment Chapter) and respect the residential amenity of the locality as deemed necessary by Policy 35 (Environment Chapter).

Policy Ho2

~~The district council will seek the redevelopment of the former Blackhills Road Junior and Infant School. The following uses will be considered appropriate: Housing, Retailing (class A1), Offices and services for local needs (class A2), business (class B1) and community facilities.~~

Implementation

1. *The Council will liaise with the County Council to market the site for these uses.*

Policy Ho3

~~The district council will improve the land in the following areas through appropriate landscaping:~~

- (i) ~~north-west of Cresswell Avenue~~
- (ii) ~~east of Roseby Road~~
- (iii) ~~south of Dene Villas~~
- (iv) ~~Gonyers/Beaumont Crescent~~
- (v) ~~Wilkinson Road~~

Implementation

1. *These schemes will be funded through the Settlement Renewal Initiative.*

Policy Ho4

~~Landscaping/improvement works are proposed on the following sites:~~

- (i) ~~east end of Newcastle Avenue~~
- (ii) ~~adjacent to health clinic, Blackhills Road~~
- (iii) ~~south of the catholic school~~
- (iv) ~~former picture house, Sunderland Road~~

Implementation

1. *The District Council will seek the implementation of these schemes through the Settlement Renewal Initiative.*

Public Utilities

- 17.10** The water, sewerage, electricity and gas supplies have been upgraded in conjunction with the development of the Sea View Industrial Estate. The village has, therefore, adequate infrastructure to cater for development envisaged during the Plan period.

Employment

- 17.11** The run down and closure of the colliery resulted in the loss of over 2000 jobs. Employment opportunities are now limited to those provided by local services, the firms who occupy the former colliery buildings and the factories on the Sea View Industrial Estate, together with the various sources of employment outside the village, for example, at Peterlee.

Horden Colliery

- 17.12** Horden Colliery initially developed on the west side of the coastal railway line. Subsequently, the land to the east of the railway line was used for coal-stocking. As a result of its closure most of the colliery land and buildings became surplus to requirements. The former coal stocking area has been purchased by the County Council and reclaimed to agriculture and open space. The colliery site (some 35 hectares in area) and associated buildings have been purchased by the District Council. Six of the former colliery buildings have been successfully marketed and are occupied by small businesses, employing approximately 50 people. The remaining buildings have been cleared and the former colliery site reclaimed at a total cost of £1.5 million. 7.3 hectares of the site has been laid out as a fully serviced industrial estate. Vehicular access has been provided by a new road constructed from the estate to the roundabout at the junction of the A1086/B1283. The rest of the site has been laid out as rugby pitches, agricultural land and woodland.
- 17.13** Following the completion of the reclamation scheme, the District Council has commenced a programme of constructing factory units in order to create further job opportunities. Four 15,000 square foot factories have been constructed at a cost of £1.2 million three of which are currently occupied. A further phase of factories has been built by the former British Coal Enterprise. In accordance with Policy 51 (Industry and Business Chapter), the industrial estate is designated for uses in Class B1, B2 and B8 of the Use Classes Order 1987 and retail uses permitted by Policy 105. The estate is also identified for an industrial estate enhancement scheme in accordance with Policy 61.

- 17.14** 3.5 hectares of industrial land remains to be developed on the estate. Although take up of land and industrial units has been slow, in the event of the estate being fully developed during the Plan period, the District Council will consider releasing 11 hectares of land, located to the north of the valley which crosses the site. The site would be served from the existing industrial estate access road and serviced by the existing infrastructure. The site may require levelling prior to being developed and buildings may require special foundations, in accordance with Policy 45 (Environment Chapter) and some landscaping and planting treatment to delineate and soften the edge of the site will also be required.

Policy Ho5

11 hectares of land, north of the valley on the former Horden Colliery site, is allocated for an extension to the Sea View Industrial Estate.

Implementation

1. *It is anticipated that this scheme will be undertaken as part of the Horden Settlement Renewal Initiative.*

Housing

Existing Stock

- 17.15** There are approximately 3,510 dwellings in Horden, 72% in private ownership, with most of the remainder owned by the District Council, and pockets owned by the Bradford and Northern and Durham Aged Mineworkers Housing Associations.

Housing Conditions

- 17.16** Many of the former British Coal properties have been modernised but their surrounding environment would benefit from improvement. As a result of the completion of the revitalisation scheme carried out in the estate west of Thorpe Road, most of the Council houses are in a good state of repair. Improvements to the Cotsford Estate are also envisaged.

New Council Housing

- 17.17** Most of the land east of Fourth Street has been redeveloped for 42 housing association bungalows and an aged person 'care' home also owned by a housing association. There is likely to be little need for general Council house building over the Plan period, although demand for certain types of accommodation, such as single-person units, remains high. Any need may be met by converting vacant properties, though this is unlikely due to limitations on available finance.

New Private Housing

- 17.18** Although there has been very little private housing development in Horden in recent years, there are indications of an increasing demand, as evidenced by the redevelopment of the site of the former colliery offices for 25 dwellings. The former school site on Blackhills Road has been identified for a number of uses including housing (see paras 17.8/17.9). In the absence of any suitable large site, new private housing development should be considered on small sites, in accordance with Policy 67 of the Housing Chapter.

Land south of former Colliery Pumping Station

- 17.19** As part of the colliery reclamation scheme the District Council laid out three hectares of land south of the former pumping station as rugby pitches. Use of the pitches has been precluded because of the condition of the ground. Further investigative work is likely to be required to ascertain whether a suitable surface can be provided at reasonable cost. This will require the co-operation of the Council and the local rugby club, as well as other sports bodies. In the event that it proves to be impossible to utilise the ground for the primary purpose of rugby pitches, the Council will consider its development for housing purposes. The site is centrally located in the village having easy access to shops and facilities and employment on the nearby Sea View Industrial Estate and would be suitable for housing. Access would be gained from Thompson Street. In view of the previous use of the site and its location the development will need to incorporate the following measures:

- (a) Remedial measures Although the site has already been reclaimed it may be necessary to undertake a number of detailed measures (in accordance with Policy 45 - Environment Chapter) prior to development to remove any contaminants and to safeguard against any potential problems of mine gas.
- (b) Amenity considerations The site is located in close proximity to the Sea View Industrial Estate and the Coastal Railway line and may be affected by noise from both these uses. In accordance with Policy 35 - Environment Chapter, the development may need to incorporate measures to safeguard residential amenity.

Policy Ho6

3 hectares south of the former colliery pumping station is designated for recreational or housing purposes. The development will be undertaken in accordance with the following conditions:

- (i) remedial/reclamation measures being implemented in accordance with policy 45.
- (ii) any residential development being designed in accordance with policy 35.

Implementation

1. *The District Council will approach the Coal Authority to seek the removal of the covenant restricting the use of the site for recreational purposes.*
2. The District Council will prepare a detailed design brief to guide the redevelopment of the site.
3. The District Council will market the site to a developer.

Transport

- 17.20** Recent studies have pointed to the benefits to Horden which would result from the reintroduction of passenger rail services, and the improvement to services generally along the Coastal Railway is under active consideration by local authorities and other agencies. To enable the proposals to be implemented, it is important to ensure that increased use of the line is not prejudiced by inappropriate adjacent development which might prevent the construction of a rail halt to serve the village. It is also important to avoid the creation of any disturbance to established residential areas. A site will therefore be allocated for the provision of a halt close to the centre of the village, which would enable the majority of the population to be served and would also encourage the development of bus/rail interchange arrangements.

Policy Ho7

Development proposals for land in the vicinity of the railway line at the east end of Dene Street which would prejudice the construction and operation of a railway halt will not be approved. A site in this location, identified on the proposals map, is allocated for the construction of the halt.

Implementation

1. *The District Council will scrutinise very carefully development proposals for land in the immediate vicinity of the railway line at the east end of Dene Street to ensure that the construction of and access to a railway halt remains a possibility. Additionally, provision for a bid to construct a halt will be considered for inclusion in the Horden Settlement Renewal Initiative.*

- 17.21** During the past decade the Highway Authority has undertaken a number of minor highway improvements, including the development of pedestrian refuges and a pelican crossing, along Sunderland Road together with the closure of Shotton Road. In addition, the District Council has constructed a temporary car park on the site of the former Empress Theatre. Although the County Council had intended to construct a new library on this site, this proposal is unlikely to go ahead and the site is expected to remain a car park for the foreseeable future.

- 17.22** On-street parking throughout the village in Council housing estates causes congestion and leads to damaged verges. Where appropriate, the District Council will alleviate the problem through the provision of appropriate off-street parking facilities.

Policy Ho8

The district council will provide appropriate off-street parking facilities in the following areas:-

- (i) Hawthorn Crescent
- (ii) Beech/Elm Terraces

Implementation

1. The District Council will seek financial assistance to carry out the necessary works through the Horden Settlement Renewal Initiative.

Recreation and Community Facilities and Tourism

Outdoor Sport and Recreation Facilities

- 17.23** Horden is well provided with formal recreation facilities having a welfare ground in the centre of the village and playing fields to the west of Sunderland Road which are managed by the Parish Council. In accordance with Policy 90 (Recreation Chapter), the existing facilities should be safeguarded from development.

Policy Ho9

The development of the following sites will only be approved for sport or informal recreation:-

- (i) Horden Colliery Welfare Park
- (ii) Playing Fields west of Sunderland Road

Children's Play Space/Amenity Open Space

- 17.24** There is a sizeable shortage of informal open space and children's play provision in Horden. Facilities are limited to the park south of Blackhills Road. In accordance with Policies 91 and 92 (Recreation Chapter) the park south of Blackhills Road should be safeguarded from development. Parts of the village are fortunate in having easy access to Castle Eden Dene and the coastal footpath which partially offsets the shortage. The greatest opportunity for additional provision would seem to exist if former colliery houses are demolished or as part of new development. An opportunity may also exist to utilise surplus playingfields at the Horden Dene View Special School, after it has closed in 1998.

Policy Ho10

The development of the park south of Blackhills Road will only be approved for purposes of the provision of amenity open space.

Education

- 17.25** The settlement has primary and secondary school facilities and a special school. The latter is, however, programmed to close in July 1998, whereupon pupils will be transferred to the Glenhill Special School in Easington Colliery. Pupils of secondary school age largely travel to nearby Peterlee. With falling numbers there would appear to be adequate capacity to cater for any increase in the number of school-age children likely to result from housing development over the Plan period.

Health

- 17.26** Horden is well provided with these facilities having several doctors' surgeries, a dental surgery and a health clinic.

Community Facilities

- 17.27** The County Council proposes to construct a new library on the site of the former Empress Theatre, which the District Council has developed as a temporary car park. This proposal is, however, unlikely to go ahead since the County Council's library building programme is currently in abeyance. Otherwise, Horden has adequate community facilities.

Shopping

- 17.28** Outside the major centres of Seaham and Peterlee, Horden has the largest number of shops of any settlement in the District. The shopping area has declined since the colliery closed, as evidenced by a number of vacant premises, and has been subject to a locational change. Two shopping 'clusters' have now developed, one near the old centre of the village, at Blackhills Road/Fifth Street, and one in the vicinity of Cotsford Lane/Coast Road. Both provide a limited range of goods and services consistent with a local centre. In order to maximise their viability, development of new shops and supermarkets will be expected to locate in these areas, in accordance with Policy 102 (Shopping Chapter). The vibrancy of these centres is also dependent upon maintaining and increasing pedestrian flows and the Council will therefore encourage other appropriate uses to locate in these areas, including local offices (Policy 114) and the conversion of first floor premises into residential flats. Elsewhere in the village, Policy 103 (Shopping Chapter), which allows the development of small shops, will be applied.

Policy Ho11

The local shopping centre for Horden will consist of:

- (i) both sides of Blackhills Road and the east side of Fifth Street, between Thorpe Street and Dene Street, and
- (ii) the north side of Cotsford Lane East of the Co- operative building, and both sides of the Coast Road between Hawthorn Crescent and Sunderland Road.



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Hutton Henry

Summary of policies

Housing

Housing Land

- Hu1 ~~South side of Hutton Crescent~~ - This policy has lapsed
- Hu2 ~~Land between Hill View and Church Hall~~ - This policy has lapsed
- Hu3 ~~Protection of land east of Bow Cottage from development~~ - This policy has lapsed

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Introduction

- 18.1** Hutton Henry is an attractive linear, rural village, agricultural in origin but now a dormitory settlement. It is ideally situated for its new role, being located less than one mile from the A19(T) and within easy commuting distance of Peterlee and Hartlepool. The population of the village is estimated to be 410 (1991 Census) with a significantly larger proportion of elderly people than the District average.

Housing

- 18.2** There has been a significant demand for private housing in Hutton Henry in recent years. An estate has been developed at the eastern end of the village, several smaller sites have been infilled and older buildings rehabilitated and converted. Since 1983, the site adjacent to the former windmill has been redeveloped for 10 dwellings and a house built on the land west of the church hall. In addition, a housing development (comprising 17 dwellings) on a site south west of the primary school has been completed.
- 18.3** Although the current demand for private housing is likely to persist over the Plan period it is felt that the village has now reached its natural limit of development. Additional development beyond the existing physical framework of the village would inevitably seriously damage its character. In these circumstances, it is considered that any further housing development should be limited to infill plots.

Infill Sites

- 18.4** There is one vacant site in the village which would be suitable for the development of a single dwelling/pair of semi detached houses. This site has previously had outline planning permission for housing but the consent has lapsed. A renewal of the consent would, however, be appropriate.

Policy Hu1

~~The infill site on the south side of Hutton Crescent is allocated for housing.~~

Land Between Hill View and the Church Hall

- 18.5** The properties between Hill View and the church hall front directly onto Front Street with long rear gardens extending south east. Although one house has been built to the rear of these properties, further similar development will not be permitted unless Hutton Crescent is extended and improved to adoptable standards to provide suitable access. In order to ensure that this requirement is undertaken, the Council will expect a developer to enter into an agreement under S106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) to undertake construction of the road to the required standard as laid down by the Highway Authority. Any proposal for development must also not conflict with other policies of the plan.

Policy Hu2

~~Further development to the rear of the properties between Hill View and the church hall will not be approved unless suitable access is provided through the extension and improvement to adoptable standards of Hutton Crescent and the proposal does not conflict with other policies in the plan.~~

- 18.6** Between Bow Cottages and Summerhill Kennels is an area of private agricultural land. Although in land use terms it would be suitable for housing, the site is subject to an unacceptably high noise level from the adjacent kennels and should, therefore, be retained in its existing use.

Policy Hu3

~~The undeveloped land east of Bow Cottages is allocated for agricultural and other related uses.~~

Environment

- 18.7** The housing development undertaken in recent years and the renovation of a number of properties on Front Street have improved the appearance of Hutton Henry. The village would benefit considerably from the removal of overhead wires but, as priority for undergrounding is in existing Conservation Areas or schemes undertaken as part of settlement renewal projects, this is unlikely to be feasible during the Plan period. Hutton Henry has a large amount of common land, mostly adjacent to the main street which contributes significantly to its rural character.

Public Utilities

- 18.8** Hutton Henry has adequate water, electricity and sewerage capacity to accommodate the scale of the development expected over the Plan period.

Recreation and Community Facilities

Outdoor Sport and Recreation Facilities

- 18.9** For formal outdoor sport facilities, Hutton Henry relies upon provision made in other nearby larger communities. However, for its size, the village is well provided with recreation facilities having large areas of common land and allotments to the north of the settlement.

Children's Play Space/Amenity Open Space

- 18.10** The Parish Council has provided additional children's play facilities on the common land to the north of the village. Scope exists for the introduction of other facilities.

Health and Community Facilities

- 18.11** Health facilities are available in the nearby villages, particularly Wingate and Station Town.

Education

- 18.12** Apart from a primary school, Hutton Henry is dependent on adjacent villages for these facilities, especially Wingate and Station Town.

Shopping

- 18.13** There are two shops in the village, one of which performs a dual purpose as a general store/post office and one at the kennels. The development of further small shops would be consistent with Policy 103 (Shopping Chapter).



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Murton

Summary of policies

Environment

- ~~M1~~ ~~Landscaping works on Council-owned land~~ - This policy has lapsed
- ~~M2~~ ~~Landscaping works on non-Council-owned land~~ - This policy has lapsed
- ~~M3~~ ~~Safeguarding land around war memorial~~ - This policy has lapsed

Employment

- ~~M4~~ ~~Allocation of Dalton Flatts site for industrial use~~ - This policy has lapsed

Housing

Housing Land

- ~~M5~~ ~~Former Rex Cinema site~~ - This policy has lapsed
- ~~M6~~ ~~Former Bus Depot site~~ - This policy has lapsed
- ~~M7~~ ~~West of the Avenue~~
- ~~M8~~ ~~Thomas Brothers site~~ - This policy has lapsed

Transport

- ~~M9~~ ~~Off-street parking schemes~~ - This policy has lapsed

Recreation and Community Facilities and Tourism

- ~~M10~~ ~~Safeguarding recreational fields~~ - This policy has lapsed
- ~~M11~~ ~~Safeguarding children's play space/amenity open space~~ - This policy has lapsed

Shopping

- ~~M12~~ ~~Local shopping centre~~

Introduction

- 19.1** When the original Local Plan was prepared in 1982 Murton was considered to be one of the more prosperous villages in Easington District with employment available at the colliery and Hawthorn Coke Works. Since then there has been a run-down in mining employment leading to the closure of Murton Colliery in November 1991 and the closure of the Hawthorn Coke Works. The effects of these closures on the village's economy, its centre and the environment have been considerable. The East Durham Task Force is bringing forward a series of initiatives, particularly in the South of Seaham corridor, which will

provide new employment opportunities for Murton's residents and improve the prospects for future investment.

- 19.2** In recognition of the severe problems facing the village, the Council has selected Murton for a Settlement Renewal Initiative (SRI). As part of this Initiative a Regeneration Strategy and Action Plan has been prepared for the village. The Action Plan puts forward a series of schemes aimed at environmental improvement, housing and economic development, community development and training. The Local Plan and SRI are therefore complementary and mutually supportive and the SRI Action Plan is expected to facilitate a number of proposals within the Local Plan.
- 19.3** The population of Murton is estimated to be 7,370 (1991 Census) having declined by some 3,000 since 1951. It is hoped that the various regeneration initiatives being undertaken in Murton and the north of the District will result in the stabilisation of population levels in the village over the period of the Plan.

Environment

- 19.4** In recent years Murton has benefited from the improvement of a number of derelict sites, most notably the reclamation of the former Murton Colliery site in 1995. The reclamation of the Dalton Flatts site, which will occur once the coal-washing activities have been completed, will result in a further significant improvement to the environment of the village. The proposal to create a community woodland to the north, east and south of Murton (Policy 32(i) and 32(ii)) is likely to improve the setting of the village within the surrounding countryside.
- 19.5** Despite these improvements Murton contains a significant number of sites and properties requiring environmental improvement. In 1995 the Council launched a Settlement Renewal Initiative (SRI) in Murton. One of the principal aims of the SRI is to secure environmental improvements within the village. The SRI Action Plan identifies two areas where priority should be given to improvement:
- (i) The Woods Terrace Shopping Area - the closure of the remaining local collieries has had a severe adverse effect on the environment and the vitality of the local shopping centre. Declining incomes have contributed to the closure of shops and an increase in environmentally unattractive non-conforming uses.
 - (ii) The B1285 Road Corridor - The main east-west route through Murton provides visitors with their first impression of the village and will provide the main approach to key development sites. It is therefore important that priority is given to the improvement of the environment along the route. The environment of the eastern approach into Murton is at present dominated by the unattractive Dalton Flatts and Thomas Brothers sites. The redevelopment of these sites (Policies M4 and M8) incorporating substantial planting along their frontages with the B1285 should result in a considerable improvement in this area. A number of other sites, mainly along the eastern section of the corridor also require improvement schemes.

Policy M1

The district council will improve the following areas through appropriate landscaping:

- (i) south of Western Terrace South
- (ii) Welfare Hall
- (iii) north of Dalton Terrace
- (iv) Woods Terrace toilets
- (v) west of The Avenue
- (vi) Murton Welfare Ground entrance
- (vii) Sea View Estate
- (viii) Station Estate
- (ix) Cornwall Estate
- (x) Cornwall Court
- (xi) Station Estate garages

Implementation

1. Some improvements will be implemented through the Council's SRI. Others will be achieved by approaching the appropriate private land owners.

2. Finance for schemes outside the SRI priority action areas will be sought from the District Council's Capital Programme or revenue budgets.

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Policy M2

~~Landscaping or improvement works are proposed in the following areas:~~

- ~~(i) Woods Terrace local shopping centre~~
- ~~(ii) south of James Street South~~
- ~~(iii) south of Church Street~~
- ~~(iv) adjacent to the Salvation Army Hall~~
- ~~(v) adjacent to The Victoria public house~~
- ~~(vi) east of The Avenue and north of Murton Street~~
- ~~(vii) East Moor housing estate~~

Implementation

1. *These sites are not in the ownership of the District Council. Their improvement will therefore be secured either through the SRI if funds permit, by approaching the relevant land owner or through the Durham County Council, Groundwork Trust or the Parish Council.*

- 19.6 The land around the the war memorial provides an attractive open area which should be safeguarded and protected from development.

Policy M3

~~Development which would detract from the visual or amenity value of the open space in the area around the war memorial will not be approved.~~

Public Utilities

- 19.7 Murton has adequate water, electricity and gas supplies to cater for the development envisaged over the Plan period. The sewage system is now nearing capacity and Northumbrian Water intend to carry out upgrading works in the near future.

Employment

- 19.8 In 1982 the major sources of employment in the village were the colliery which employed 1,800 persons and Hawthorn Coke Works which employed 250 persons. A steady decline in employment in this sector thereafter led to various employment initiatives such as the development by the District Council and British Coal Enterprise Ltd of the Cold Hesledon industrial estate, which employs approximately 300 people. In accordance with Policy 54 (Industry and Business Chapter), the estate is designated for Class B1, B2 and B8 of the Use Classes Order 1987 and retail use permitted by Policy 105. The estate has also been identified for an industrial estate enhancement scheme, in accordance with Policy 61.
- 19.9 In 1991 Murton Colliery closed with the loss of 1000 jobs. The situation has been further exacerbated by the closure of the remaining local collieries at Seaham. In recognition of the serious employment situation in the northern part of the District the East Durham Task

Force is implementing a package of proposals which will provide new sources of employment on two new industrial estates south of Seaham, both of which have Enterprise Zone status. The former Hawthorn Coke Works is identified just south of the village as a site for a new prestige industrial estate (see paragraphs 4.21-4.28/Policy 50, Industry and Business Chapter). However, with the Cold Hesledon estate now virtually complete, additional serviced industrial land is required to provide more local employment opportunities within or adjacent to the village.

Dalton Flatts

- 19.10** This is a former stone heap/coal stocking area located between the A19(T) and Dalton Terrace. The site is covered by a number of spoil heaps and divided by a valley running in a north east-south west direction occupied by the Murton Trunk Sewer.
- 19.11** In June and July 1994 two planning applications relating to Dalton Flatts were approved by Durham County and Easington District Councils respectively. The first, for the phased recovery of coal and site reclamation is currently being implemented. The second was outline consent for industrial development and landscaping on the reclaimed site. The development of the site is expected to play a major role in securing the regeneration of the village. However, since the implementation of the proposal is dependent on the completion of the coal recovery and reclamation, it is possible that the outline permission for industrial development will lapse during the Plan period. The site is therefore allocated for industrial development. In line with the existing permission any future development proposals would need to incorporate appropriate screening, along the site's boundaries and access should be taken from the B1285. The site covers an area of 16.75 hectares although the net area developable as industrial units will be somewhat less due to the nature of the reclamation scheme and the need to incorporate substantial planting/landscaping within the development scheme.

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Policy M4

15.5 hectares of land at Dalton Flatts is allocated for industry use classes B1 (business) B2 (general industry) and B8 (storage and distribution). Development proposals will be required to include landscaping or tree planting along the site's boundaries.

Housing

Existing Stock

- 19.12** There are approximately 3,310 dwellings in Murton, of which 57% are in private ownership. Most of the remainder are Council owned.

Housing Conditions

- 19.13** All those dwellings owned by Home Housing have been modernised, together with the majority of the Council houses. Although most of the private housing is generally in good condition and in attractive surroundings some of the older stock may be eligible for renovation grants, subject to the availability of finance. Since 1983 two of the former 'Inventor Streets' - Faraday and Stephenson Streets - have been demolished and the sites landscaped.

New Council Housing

- 19.14** There is likely to be little need for general Council house building in Murton over the Plan period but there is a small outstanding demand for aged and disabled persons' housing.

Site of Former Rex Cinema, Knaresborough Road

- 19.15 The site of the former Rex Cinema, approximately 0.3 hectares in area, is predominantly in Council ownership. Its location, close to the main facilities of the village along Woods Terrace and in a residential area, makes it particularly suitable for aged persons' housing. It is, therefore considered that the land should be retained in Council ownership for a future housing development, or disposed of to a housing association for the same purpose. In the interim, however, the site should be improved by peripheral tree planting.

Policy M5

~~0.3 hectares of land at the former Rex Cinema site on Knaresborough Road is allocated for aged persons'/special purpose housing. In the interim the district council will improve the area through appropriate landscaping.~~

New Private Housing

- 19.16 There has been a moderate demand for private housing in recent years as evidenced by the development of the Meadowdale housing estate of 77 dwellings. Private housing development is likely to play an important role in the regeneration of the village. A significant part of the need for new housing in Murton over the Plan period is likely to be met by the development of the northern part of the Murton Colliery site which has the benefit of outline planning consent and which has a capacity to provide around 100 new dwellings. Additional smaller sites are also likely to be required, however.

Former Bus Depot, North View

- 19.17 This site lies on the southern edge of the settlement and is the location of the former Go-Ahead Northern Coach Depot. Outline planning consent for housing on the northern part of the site was granted in January 1993 but has now lapsed. Although now cleared, the site is in an unsightly and derelict condition and its redevelopment for housing would secure a significant improvement to the environment and the amenity of the area. The site is well related to the form of development in the area being bounded by terraced housing to the north and east and by a football pitch to the west. Because of the layout of terraced streets adjoining the northern edge of the site and the inadequate nature of the junctions of most of them with the B1285 the safest means of access to the site from the road would be via Grasmere Terrace and Ada Street. Development proposals would therefore need to incorporate minor improvements to the junction between Ada Street and the B1285. In addition the South Murton Marsh County Wildlife Site lies adjacent to the south of the site. Development proposals would need to ensure that this area would not be adversely affected either by alterations to the water drainage pattern or by contaminated run-off. The site has capacity for approximately 40 dwellings.

Policy M6

~~1.42 hectares of land at North View is allocated for housing. In order to achieve a safe access, development proposals will need to incorporate off-site improvements to the junction between the B1285 and Ada Street.~~

Implementation

1. *The junction improvements will be secured, if necessary, through the use of a Section 106 agreement.*

Land West of The Avenue

- 19.18** This is a key site whose redevelopment will play an essential role in revitalising the local shopping centre. The eastern and northern part of the site is currently open space. The rest comprises a variety of uses along Woods Terrace and at the junction of Woods Terrace and the B1285, including vacant shops, workshops, a yard and a car body repair shop. This area is characterised by buildings in a state of disrepair, poor road surfaces and uncontrolled parking and as a result provides a depressing and unsightly entrance to the southern part of the shopping centre. The SRI Action Plan for Murton has therefore identified this area as a major priority for improvement and redevelopment.
- 19.19** As part of the SRI the District Council intends to construct a car park on the north western part of the site close to Woods Terrace. This is a key element in a package of proposals designed to improve the pedestrian environment of Woods Terrace. The rest of the site would be suitable for housing, shopping or open space, any of which would enhance the vitality of the local shopping centre. The site is crossed by a number of sewers, which may need diversion to facilitate development.

Policy M7

1.5 hectares of land west of The Avenue is allocated for a car park and housing, shopping or open space.

Implementation

- The site is in a variety of ownerships. The Council will therefore approach private land owners to secure the assembly of the site. In view of the importance of the site's redevelopment to the SRI's proposals for the regeneration and improvement of the shopping centre, the Council will, where necessary, use Compulsory Purchase Orders to assemble the site. The car park will be implemented through the SRI programme.*

Thomas Brothers Site

- 19.20** The site lies in a prominent location at the eastern entry to the village and the haulage depot and associated buildings, which are now largely unused, detract considerably from the environment of the area. The SRI Action Plan has highlighted the importance of improving the environment of the B1285 and of the eastern entry to the village. The comprehensive redevelopment of the site would help to achieve this aim and will complement the improvements which will be secured through the reclamation of the Dalton Flatts site.
- 19.21** The site would in principle be suited for a variety of urban uses including housing and leisure and industry. Because of the potential levels of noise generated from traffic using the B1285 and the proposed Dalton Flatts development, only the northern half of the site would be suitable for housing. In such circumstances the southern half of the site should be developed as open space or landscaped.
- 19.22** Retail development could also be appropriate given the site's relative proximity to the shopping centre and its location on the B1285. However, the existing local shopping centre along Woods Terrace has suffered a period of decline and is the focus of considerable efforts aimed at its environmental and commercial regeneration. Only proposals which would not undermine these efforts and which would accord with Policy 104 of the Plan (Shopping chapter) would be appropriate. The Woods Terrace shopping centre is currently anchored by a number of food retailers and it is therefore not considered that the site would be suitable for food retailing.
- 19.23** Access to the site should be taken from the B1285. The most suitable arrangement would be to utilise the new roundabout proposed to service the industrial estate to be developed at Dalton Flatts. Landscaping and tree planting along the site's frontage with the B1285 and along its eastern and northern boundary would help to meet the SRI's aims of improving the eastern entrance to the village, would help integrate the development with the area of open space to the north and would help define the eastern limit of the settlement.
- 19.24** Due to its current state the site will require the implementation of a reclamation scheme either as part of or in advance of its redevelopment. This scheme will need to address the issue of any residual contaminants found on the site. Due to the potential for nuisance caused by noise, dust or the operation of the coal-washing plant near to the site, housing development would be best implemented following the completion of the Dalton Flatts reclamation scheme.

Policy M8

4.3 hectares of land north of Murton Street is allocated for leisure, industry (use classes B1, B2 and B8) or non-food retailing. Housing development on the northern half of the site would also be appropriate. Retail development will only be approved where it would not prejudice the council's aims of improving the local shopping centre and where it would meet the terms of policy 104 of the plan. Development proposals will be required to incorporate landscaping and tree planting along the site's frontage with the B1285 and along its northern and eastern boundaries.

Implementation

1. The District Council will prepare a brief to guide the development of the site.

Transport

- 19.25** Murton has easy access to the A19(T) at the Cold Hesledon junction, which has been improved through the provision of two additional slip-roads. The Highway Authority proposes to construct a new east-west road link from Dawdon to the A690 via the A19(T) at Cold Hesledon to improve road links to the centre of the County and to make the Seaham area more attractive to industrial development (further details are contained in paragraphs 6.25 and 6.26, Transport Chapter). Work on the first phase of the scheme is likely to be completed by the end of 1997. The line of the second phase of the road from Cold Hesledon to the A182 west of South Hetton at Snippersgate is likely to pass just south of the village and will secure access to the Hawthorn Coke Works site. In addition to improving prospects for investment in Murton the new road will result in the removal of heavy traffic which passes through the village en-route to the A690 at Houghton-le-Spring.
- 19.26** Woods Terrace has suffered from long-standing problems of traffic congestion and a generally poor pedestrian environment. The construction and re-alignment of The Avenue as part of the Colliery reclamation scheme has relieved some of the congestion from Woods Terrace and will allow the Council to undertake further traffic calming measures as part of the overall improvement scheme for the shopping centre. As part of this comprehensive approach the District Council is also proposing to construct a car park on land between Woods Terrace and The Avenue.
- 19.27** On-street parking causes congestion in a number of the Council housing estates in Murton and is particularly severe in Metcalf Crescent and parts of the Station Estate North. It is a general problem throughout the village. The problem would be alleviated through the provision of appropriate off-street parking facilities.

Policy M9

The district council will provide appropriate off-street parking facilities in the following areas:

- (i) Metcalf Crescent
- (ii) Station Estate North
- (iii) Luke Crescent
- (iv) Burnip Road
- (v) Toft Crescent

Implementation

1. Finance will be sought from the District Council's Capital Programme or revenue budgets to implement these schemes. Further details are contained in paragraph 3.9 (Implementation Chapter).

- 19.28** Access from the village to both the countryside and to certain proposed employment sites will be improved by two new recreational and cycle routes to be implemented by Durham County Council (see Transport Chapter, Policy 76). The first is the former mineral railway line from Tuthill Quarry to Ryhope just to the west of the village. The second is the former mineral line from Seaham Harbour to Hawthorn Coke Works, part of which between Seaham and Cold Hesledon has already been implemented. In addition to these proposals the development of the Hawthorn Coke Works industrial site will also be required to incorporate a footpath and cycle link along the existing road from the south of the village to the site (see Policy 50, Industry and Business chapter).

Recreation and Community Facilities

Outdoor Sport and Recreation Facilities

- 19.29** In overall terms Murton is well provided with formal outdoor sport and recreation facilities, though existing provision is concentrated in only two locations - at Murton Welfare Ground south of Church Street and at Murton Jubilee School. In accordance with Policy 90 (Recreation Chapter) in order to protect these valuable facilities, only sport and recreational development will be approved on the Welfare Ground site.

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Policy M10

~~The development of the welfare ground will only be approved for sport and recreational purposes.~~

- 19.30** In the past, swimming pool provision existed at an open air pool at Murton Colliery. Following the closure of the colliery, however, the open air pool was also closed and the site has been cleared. The loss of this valued facility has been exacerbated in the northern part of the District by the similar closure of the open air pool at Dawdon Colliery. There is, therefore, a need for an indoor swimming pool to serve the north of the District. The location of such a facility has still to be chosen and doubts exist as to whether finance will be available to implement such a proposal during the Plan period.

Children's Play Space/Amenity Open Space

- 19.31** In overall terms Murton is reasonably well provided with informal open spaces with sites north of the Community Centre, on the Sea View Estate, Luke Crescent, Burnip Road, Metcalf Crescent, Lansbury Drive, south of Western Terrace South and south of James Street South. In addition to these existing sites two further significant areas of recreational open space will be created during the Plan period on the southern half of the Murton Colliery reclamation site once tree planting areas have matured and on the Dalton Flatts site in conjunction with the coal washing and reclamation there. There is, however, a shortage of informal open space in the Station Road North Estate but no opportunities exist to improve provision. There is also a shortage in Murton of children's play areas with provision being limited to the Welfare Ground, adjacent to the Community Centre, Short Grove and the Sea View Estate. Further provision could be made on existing areas of open space. In accordance with Policies 91 and 92 of the Plan (Recreation Chapter) all of these children's play areas and informal open spaces will be safeguarded from development.

Policy M11

~~The development of the following areas will only be approved for recreational purposes -~~

- (i) ~~former Murton Colliery site (south)~~

- (ii) land at Dalton Flatts
- (iii) north of Murton Community Centre
- (iv) west of Murton Sea View school
- (v) Luke Crescent
- (vi) Burnip Road
- (vii) Metcalf Crescent
- (viii) Lansbury Drive
- (ix) south of Western Terrace South
- (x) south of James Street South
- (xi) Short Grove
- (xii) Sea View Estate
- (xiii) south of Burnip Road
- (xiv) east of East Moor Estate

Health and Community Facilities

19.32 Murton is relatively well provided with health and community facilities which include a community centre, a doctors surgery and a dentist. In addition the District Council has acquired the properties 16/17 Woods Terrace for the development and provision of a community resource centre as part of the SRI. The SRI has also secured the refurbishment of the existing Welfare Hall on Murton Street.

Education

19.33 Primary schools within Murton are nearing capacity. Secondary school pupils are currently bussed to Easington Comprehensive where there are already accommodation problems. Durham County Council is, however, currently assessing options to increase capacity in the area and relieve these problems.

Shopping

19.34 The local shopping centre in Murton, centred on Woods Terrace, has suffered considerable decline in recent years following the closure of the colliery and other local sources of employment. It is now characterised by vacant properties, poorly maintained buildings and unsightly non conforming uses. The centre, however, still plays a vital role in providing for local shopping and community services. It is essential that the role of the local centre is maintained and its environment is improved so that it becomes a more attractive location within which to both shop and invest.

19.35 As part of the SRI a comprehensive enhancement scheme is being undertaken in Woods Terrace including floorscape treatment works, undergrounding of overhead cables, tree and shrub planting, new street lighting and street furniture (see Policy M2). Traffic calming measures together with the provision of a new shoppers' car park adjacent to Woods Terrace should further improve the pedestrian environment. Finally, a commercial buildings improvement scheme is being operated to provide money for the improvement of retail and commercial frontages.

19.36 In order to maintain the viability of the existing centre, the development of new shops and supermarkets should normally be located within the local centre, in accordance with Policy 102 (Shopping). The District Council will, however, encourage other uses in this area,

including local offices (Policy 114) and the conversion of First floor premises into residential flats (paragraph 5.48). In accordance with Policies 35 and 109 of the Plan, the design of new development should, where appropriate, reflect the character and vernacular styles of the centre. Elsewhere in the village outside the designated local centre, Policy 103 allows for the development of smaller retail units.

Policy M12

The local shopping centre for Murton will consist of the whole of the west side of Woods Terrace and the east side, south of Woods Terrace East, together with the land west of The Avenue.

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Peterlee

Summary of policies

Environment

- ~~P1 Safeguarding of open areas from development~~ - This policy has lapsed
- ~~P2 Environmental improvements in housing areas~~ - This policy has lapsed
- ~~P3 Landscaping works on Council owned land~~ - This policy has lapsed
- ~~P4 Landscaping works on non-Council owned land~~ - This policy has lapsed

Housing

Housing Land

- ~~P5 Sites for Council housing~~ - This policy has lapsed
- ~~P6 Former Thorpe Hospital site~~
- ~~P7 Former Eden Lane County School site~~
- ~~P8 Former ITEC site~~ - This policy has lapsed
- ~~P9 Land south of Yoden Way~~
- ~~P10 Cleared housing sites~~ - This policy has lapsed

Transport

- ~~P11 Off-street parking schemes~~ - This policy has lapsed

Recreation and Community Facilities and Tourism

- ~~P12 North side of Lowhills Road~~ - This policy has lapsed
- ~~P13 Open space/play areas~~ - This policy has lapsed
- ~~P14 East side of Eden Lane~~

Shopping

- ~~P15 Peterlee Town Centre~~
- ~~P16 Land south of St. Cuthbert's Road~~ - This policy has lapsed

Introduction

- 20.1** The New Town of Peterlee was founded in the late 1940's with two primary aims. Firstly, to provide improved housing and environmental conditions for the miners then living in poor industrialised housing in the mining villages usually in close proximity to despoiled

colliery land. Secondly, to create a centre offering social, cultural and commercial facilities for the population of the predominantly rural District. In addition, it was hoped to provide suitable employment opportunities to absorb female labour available in the District and any male labour not employed in the coal mining industry.

- 20.2** Following its designation in 1948, the New Town grew through phased immigration from neighbouring colliery and former colliery villages. The decline of the coal industry has stimulated a major and lasting campaign for new employment including, most recently, the designation of Enterprise Zones. The Peterlee Development Corporation were extremely successful in attracting jobs to the town, but its demise in March 1988 removed a major job creating agency and source of investment from the town. The responsibility for marketing/managing the industrial estates now rests with Aycliffe and Peterlee Investment Company, who purchased the Corporation's assets, and who are now responsible for the Enterprise Zone sites as agents for One NorthEast.
- 20.3** The provision of large areas of open space for both formal and informal recreational use was an important feature of the original plan. Many of these have since been landscaped and as an integral part of the settlement, will remain undeveloped.
- 20.4** Peterlee's continued success as a major centre serving the southern part of the District will be dependent upon the identification of additional housing land to allow expansion of the town - matching the industrial opportunities which the Enterprise Zones have created. Sufficient industrial land now exists to meet the anticipated demand for sites over the Plan period; but identifying suitable residential land is more difficult. Along with the critical need for housing, Government policy is now firmly aimed at promoting the vitality and viability of town centres, and an important consideration will be to ensure that opportunities exist for Peterlee Town Centre to thrive by highlighting necessary improvements and where possible, identifying scope for expansion and consolidation.
- 20.5** The population of Peterlee is now about 22,600, compared to 22,800 in 1981, and a target population of 30,000. Whilst household size has declined, the number of new households has increased markedly, making it critically necessary to find additional residential development sites to complement Peterlee's role as a major centre.

Environment

- 20.6** Peterlee was developed in an attractive location on a plateau north of Castle Eden Dene. The town itself has a pleasant open appearance with playing fields and large landscaped open spaces well distributed throughout the built-up area. This openness is further emphasised in housing areas by the presence of numerous small landscaped open spaces. The overall appearance of the settlement has been particularly enhanced in recent years as landscaping has matured and this attractive open character should be retained. It is now evident, however, that insufficient land is available in the Town as currently defined to accommodate development requirements over the Plan period. This problem has been tackled by a careful consideration of development possibilities. Other sites have been identified elsewhere in adjacent villages to allow for the necessary population and household growth in the District during the Plan period. In this way, the landscaped open spaces and playing fields which form the important aspect of the town can be safeguarded.
- 20.7** Such an approach does not of course preclude development on cleared sites, i.e. on the "footprint" of existing buildings; nor the extension of school buildings, Policy 94 (Recreation, Community Facilities and Tourism Chapter) or modifications to layout and siting where an equivalent area of playing field or open space is provided (see Policy P1).

Policy P1

~~With the exception of the circumstances set out within other policies, development of areas of open space in Peterlee will only be approved for purposes of recreation provision. This requirement may be waived where the applicant provides an equivalent or additional area of open space of a similar or better quality in a convenient location in the vicinity.~~

Environmental Improvements in Housing Areas

- 20.8 In 1978 when all the New Town's housing assets were transferred to the District Council, the responsibility for the environment in Council housing areas in Peterlee also became the responsibility of the District Council. Most of the housing areas would benefit from some environmental work. Consideration will therefore be given in the Capital Programme to include the housing areas in Peterlee as a priority; but these areas will have to be assessed against other competing areas. Generally, schemes will be supported in those areas where, in conjunction with other initiatives, their impact is likely to be greatest and "value for money" can best be achieved.

Policy P2

~~Priority for environmental improvements in council housing estates in Peterlee will be given to those areas where their impact is likely to be greatest and where, in conjunction with other initiatives, "value for money" can best be achieved.~~

Other Environmental Improvements

- 20.9 Outside housing and industrial areas, the main landscaping works required are on the major traffic routes of Burnhope Way, Passfield Way and the north side of Lowhills Road.

Policy P3

~~The district council will improve Burnhope Way through an appropriate landscaping scheme.~~

Implementation

1. *Finance will be sought from the District Council's Capital or revenue budgets to implement the scheme. Further details are contained in paragraph 3.9 (Implementation Chapter).*

Policy P4

~~Landscaping works are proposed in the following areas:-~~

- ~~(i) on the edge of the St Bede's Comprehensive and North Blunts Junior School playing fields~~
- ~~(ii) Passfield Way~~
- ~~(iii) the north side of Lowhills Road~~

Implementation

1. *The District Council will approach the landowners, the Town Council and the Groundwork East Durham, as appropriate, to secure the improvements to the sites.*

Public Utilities

- 20.10 Peterlee has adequate water, electricity and gas supplies to cater for development envisaged over the Plan period. Peterlee has a separate system for foul and surface water drainage and this is generally adequate.

Employment

- 20.11 The decline of the mining industry saw efforts to diversify employment especially in industry and manufacturing. The three industrial estates now contain the major employers, with a significant number also working in the services section in Peterlee Town Centre.
- 20.12 272 hectares (gross) of land is allocated for industrial development on the Town's three industrial estates. In April 1997 approximately 46.5 hectares (gross) of land remained available on the North-West, North-East and South-West Industrial Estates. Given the current rate at which land is being developed it is considered that there is sufficient land on the industrial estates to meet demand for sites over the Plan period. The development of the Brackenhill Business Park, with Enterprise Zone status, has brought forward a

further 14.47ha with planning permission for Class B1 (Business) Use - offices, research and development facilities and light industry.

North-East, South-West and North-West Industrial Estates

20.13 Aycliffe and Peterlee Development Corporation had certain powers under Section 7(1) of the New Towns Act to develop or use land and buildings for general or light industry or warehousing on their three industrial estates without the need to apply for planning permission.

(a) Vacant land and existing factories previously unlet:

the Development Corporation or successor may develop, or authorise the development of any vacant land (formerly held by the Development Corporation) or let any previously unlet factories for the purpose of Class B1 (Business), general industry or warehousing use.

(b) Existing factories below 235 square metres:

any building may change its use from Class B1 (Business) to warehousing use and vice versa or from general industry to Class B1 (Business) use without the need for planning permission.

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(c) Existing factories over 235 square metres presently or previously tenanted:

the authorised use is established by the first tenant. Any subsequent change of use other than from general industry to Class B1 (Business) use requires planning permission.

20.14 Following the demise of the Development Corporation, planning permission is required from the District Council for any development which had not already commenced when the Corporation was in existence, unless the Development Corporation entered into a binding contract with a developer. The District Council would normally grant permission for business use, general industry or warehousing (Classes B1, B2 and B8, Use Classes Order). In the case of warehousing, the District Council will pay due regard to the need to ensure that satisfactory job densities are achieved, prime manufacturing sites are not prejudiced and that a shortage of industrial land is not created.

Brackenhill Business Park

20.15 The evident need to accelerate the diversification of the local economy following the pit closures has stimulated the development of the Brackenhill Business Park, located on Shotton Lane immediately west of the A19 Trunk Road. The Business Park site was designated an Enterprise Zone in December 1995. This is a development of major significance and means that the District can now offer a business location of a very high standard adjacent to the major north-south link. The Business Park has been laid out for and will be wholly devoted to office and high technology units (Class B1 uses). About half of the site is serviced at the moment and plots are now available. Because of the existing B1 permission, in accordance with the Enterprise Zone Designation Order, the area is not the subject of any policies in the Local Plan. Currently, 14.47ha are available, with a further 2.37 held under option.

North East Industrial Estate

20.16 The north east industrial estate covers a gross area of 36.8ha. As one of the earlier sites to be developed, the estate has proved popular, attracting a wide variety of firms. Only 2.36ha is unoccupied. In accordance with Policy 53 (Industry and Business Chapter) this area is designated for Class B1 (Business), B2 (General Industry) and B8 (Warehousing); and retail uses are permitted by Policy 105 of the Shopping Chapter.

North West Industrial Estate

- 20.17** This estate is one of the largest in the District at 140.3ha gross site area. It is located very conveniently adjacent to the A19 Trunk Road with good access arrangements, and is bounded to the south by Shotton Road, which has been upgraded. The estate has provided sites for a number of major employers such as the Caterpillar Co Ltd, Dewhirst Corporate Wear, Neyr Plastiques, and many others. 25.95ha is still available, of which 14.42ha has Enterprise Zone status. This location has also been defined as a prestige industrial estate, as explained in paragraph 4.45 of the Industry and Business Chapter. Within the Enterprise Zone, permission is granted for Class B1 (Business), B2 (General Industry) and B8 (Wholesale warehouse) uses in accordance with the policies in the Local Plan. Elsewhere on the estate, the same use classes will be allowed, in accordance with Policy 53 together with those retail uses identified in Policy 105.

South West Industrial Estate

- 20.18** The south west industrial estate covers 95.5ha gross, of which 17.9 are available for development. The estate lies immediately west of the A19 Trunk Road with Shotton Road forming its northern boundary. To the south is the Brackenhill Business Park with a narrow sliver of countryside on either side. As in the case of the other industrial estates, access is good, attracting a variety of firms. 16.40ha of the land remaining undeveloped, now designated an Enterprise Zone, is being acquired by English Partnerships to facilitate early development. Land is available for immediate development subject to infrastructure provision, and the range of uses considered appropriate is as for the Enterprise Zone section of the North West Estate described previously.

Housing

- 20.19** There are approximately 8,700 dwellings in Peterlee of which 42% are owned by the District Council, whilst the remaining 58% are privately owned. The tenure imbalance, which existed in 1978 when the Development Corporation transferred dwellings to the District Council, has been redressed through the sale of Council houses and extensive private housing development at Oakerside and elsewhere in the Town.

Housing Conditions

- 20.20** From 1980 to 1996 the District Council received additional funding from the Government to rectify design faults in housing built for the New Town. Around 3,500 dwellings were repaired as part of the programme at a cost of £42 million. The special funding ceased in 1996. Almost 1000 properties have not been repaired but these are generally the traditionally built housing and therefore require less extensive repair work. A number of houses sold through the 'Right to Buy' legislation prior to being repaired, still remain in their original condition.

New Council Housing

- 20.21** Although there is no recognised need for general Council housebuilding in Peterlee over the Plan period, there is a significant demand for elderly and disabled persons' accommodation. There are two cleared housing sites, in close proximity to the town centre, which could potentially be developed for this type of development. These sites should be retained for this purpose. In the event of the Council requiring additional land for this purpose, consideration will be given to the redevelopment of cleared housing sites.

Policy P5

The following cleared sites are allocated for aged persons/special purpose housing:

- (i) former 63-73 Edenhill Road (odd)
- (ii) former 11-21 Edenhill Road (odd)

New Private Housing

- 20.22** During the past decade there has been a substantial amount of private housing development in Peterlee, principally at Oakerside Park though smaller schemes have been undertaken at Dene Park, Cotsford Hall and Dart Road. Work is underway on development at Beverley Rise and Acrefields. Both sites are nearing completion. A limited number of small sites are identified as being suitable for residential development in the subsequent sections of this Chapter.
- 20.23** A key aspect of planning policy in respect of Peterlee is to enable the town's role as a major centre for the southern part of the District to be sustained and consolidated. This means ensuring that a range of industrial and housing sites is available. To that end, it is essential that sufficient land is allocated for housing development over the Plan period. Peterlee, as a New Town, is well endowed with open spaces which form an essential part of the town's character, and which the Plan is anxious to retain. However, expansion of the town beyond its existing physical framework is also problematic because of well-defined limits which make such expansion difficult to achieve. Up until now, the shortfall problem has been reduced by the allocation of additional development land in adjacent villages, notably Shotton. It is considered that development beyond the existing framework may represent a visual intrusion in the countryside and could lead to the coalescence of Peterlee with nearby villages. Housing sites allocated in nearby villages should help to support the role of Peterlee as a major centre. However, the consideration of alternative strategies for the future form, structure and extent of the town will be considered in the context of reviewing and updating this plan.

Former Thorpe Hospital Site

- 20.24** The former hospital site, covering an area of approximately 2.4 hectares is currently located in the countryside between Easington Village and Peterlee. The site is rectangular in shape with an elongated strip extending in a northerly direction towards the Little Thorpe roundabout. It is bounded on the eastern and western sides by mature belts of trees (to be subject of Tree Preservation Orders) and on the southern edge by agricultural land. It is considered that the redevelopment could provide an opportunity for suitable business, leisure or recreation uses, especially those capable of taking advantage of the attractive landscaping and accessible location.
- 20.25** The site is located in the strategic gap between Easington Village and Peterlee and its redevelopment would reduce the physical and visual separations between the two settlements. Any redevelopment would need to maintain this separation. The site is in two distinct parts.
- 20.26** The southern part, which previously accommodated the majority of the brick buildings, 1.28 hectares in area and rectangular in shape could accommodate appropriate land uses as indicated by this policy. The prominence of the site, and the sensitivity of the gap between Easington and Peterlee, requires that any building must be designed to a high standard; there may also be a need for additional landscaping. It is important to avoid detracting from the openness of the Green Wedge any more than the permanent buildings of the old maternity hospital.

Hence, new buildings must not, in general, exceed the height of the old permanent structures and the 'footprint' created by new buildings should not exceed the cumulative extent of the 'footprint' covered by the old permanent buildings.

- 20.27** The northern part is a narrow strip of land which previously accommodated prefabricated buildings and the access road. It is considered that the redevelopment of this area would represent unsatisfactory development which would significantly reduce the gap between the two settlements. It is, therefore, proposed to include this area in the proposed Green

Wedge (see para 3.27 - 3.29 and Policy 6 Environment Chapter).

20.28 The redevelopment of the southern part of the site would, however, be the subject of the following conditions:

- (a) vehicular access to the site should be gained through the northern part of the site leading to the Little Thorpe Roundabout.
- (b) the western, eastern and southern edges of the site should be reinforced with further tree planting and other landscaping works.
- (c) cycleway/walkways should be provided to link the site with Andrew's Lane and bus stops at Thorpe Road.

Policy P6

1.28ha is allocated at the former Thorpe Hospital site for business, leisure or recreation uses provided that:

- (i) the development does not detract from the openness of the green wedge any more than the permanent buildings of the old maternity hospital. New buildings must not, in general, exceed the height of the old permanent structures and the 'footprint' created by new buildings should not exceed the cumulative extent of the 'footprint' covered by the old permanent buildings.
- (ii) the scheme should be designed and landscaped to a high standard, in accordance with policy 35.
- (iii) vehicular access shall be from the metalled part of Andrew's Lane and all access arrangements must accord with policy 36.
- (iv) before permission is granted, developers will need to demonstrate that their proposals satisfactorily protect the archaeological remains close to the northern boundary of the site, in accordance with policy 21

Implementation

1. *A detailed design brief will be prepared to guide the redevelopment of the site.*
2. *The Council will enter into a Section 106 agreement with the Health Authority to safeguard of the northern part of site, from development.*

Site of Former Eden Lane County School

20.29 The former school site, 3.1 hectares in area, is located on the eastern edge of the built up framework of Peterlee. It is situated on the east side of Eden Lane and surrounded by community /recreational uses which provide a buffer between the housing estates to the west and the open space abutting the western boundary of Horden. The site occupies two levels; the site of the former school (1.8 hectares in area) occupies the same level as the adjacent road and; the former playing field lies several metres below the adjacent area and occupies an extremely prominent position on the eastern edge of the town and is, therefore, not considered suitable for development. Whilst not being ideal it is considered that the site of the former school could be redeveloped for residential purposes. As the development would be prominent on the skyline it is important, in design terms, to ensure that individual buildings are grouped to provide a simple silhouette. The site would, therefore, be suitable for a group of houses, maisonettes, a hotel or a community building. It is estimated that the site could accommodate 15 dwellings. Eden Lane, which provides vehicular access adjacent to the site, is substandard in width and would need to be widened to an adoptable standard, to its junction with Ellison Road. The necessary highway improvements would be secured through the use of appropriate planning conditions or a planning obligation.

Policy P7

1.8 hectares of land on the site of the former Eden Lane County Junior School is allocated for housing, a hotel or community facilities (use class D1). Planning permission will only be granted subject to the widening of Eden Lane to adoptable standards between the site and its junction with Ellison Road and the replacement of any trees lost by the development, in accordance with policy 10.

Former ITEC Site, Neville Road

- 20.30** The former ITEC building has been cleared and the site has been grassed. The site, including the former car park and associated grounds covering an area of 1.3 hectares, could be re-used for a range of uses including housing, community purposes or a public house/restaurant. The site does contain a number of existing trees along its northern and eastern edge which should be retained. Access would be gained from Neville Road. The site is considered to be unsuitable for retail purposes because alternative sites exist within/adjacent to Peterlee Town Centre.

Policy P8

~~1.3 hectares at the former Itec site, Neville Road is allocated for housing, community use (class D1), hotel or public house, subject to:~~

- ~~(i) the trees along the northern boundary of the site being retained and, where that is not possible, replaced with suitable species; and;~~
- ~~(ii) access being provided from Neville Road.~~

~~The use of the site for retail purposes (class A1) will not be approved.~~

Land South of Yoden Way, Peterlee

- 20.31** The County Council intend to demolish the former Denehouse Primary School and construct replacement premises, planning permission for which was approved in October 1996. Representations have been made by the County Land and Property Committee to have the site of the existing primary school plus the playing fields in front of it (amounting to a total of 3.57ha) allocated for housing. To compensate for the loss of the playing field, 2ha of land at Cresswell Crescent would be made available for community use. A new road would be constructed from Manor Way to serve both the schools and the new housing development. A car park would be specifically provided for parents dropping off/picking up their children from school, which is intended to alleviate the current problem of on-street parking which occurs on this part of Manor Way.
- 20.32** In visual terms the playing fields to the north of the primary school and the comprehensive school contribute to the separation of Peterlee and Horden. Without the maintenance of the area the two settlements would coalesce. In these circumstances the allocation of the entire area would be undesirable. It would, however, be feasible to allocate a more limited area (of approximately 2.6 hectares) to the west of the comprehensive school, whilst maintaining the physical break between the two settlements. Any development would, however, need to be sited an appropriate distance from the school to avoid possible overshadowing and loss of amenity for the prospective residents. The development would also need to be set back from Yoden Way to maintain the open nature of the land on either side of the road. Traffic calming measures would need to be incorporated into the access road to overcome potential road safety problems caused by the large volume of pupils walking adjacent to the access road. A design brief would need to be prepared to guide the form of development.

Policy P9

2.6ha of land south of Yoden Way are allocated for housing, subject to:

- (i) 2ha of land being made available for recreational use at Cresswell Crescent
- (ii) construction of a new road from Manor Way to serve both schools and the housing development
- (iii) a car park being provided within the curtilage of the site to alleviate on-street parking problems
- (iv) the development being set back from Yoden Way
- (v) the inclusion of traffic calming measures on the access road
- (vi) a design brief to guide the development being agreed by the district council

- 20.33** In addition, there is a cleared housing site (former 104-116 Helford Road (Even)) in the town, in Council ownership, which could be redeveloped for residential purposes.

Policy P10

The site of the former 104-116 Helford Road (evens) is allocated for housing.

Implementation

1. The District Council will dispose of the site.

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Transport

- 20.34** The road system in Peterlee is generally adequate, with good links between residential and industrial areas and the town centre and north and southbound access to the A19(T) at the Burnhope Way roundabout. There are, however, problems of traffic congestion during peak periods at the junction of Yoden Way with the coast road, Bede Way with Burnhope Way and Burnhope Way with Pennine Drive. The problem of access from Burnhope Way onto the A19(T) has been relieved by the recent construction of the flyover and grade separated junction. The other points of congestion have been investigated by the Highway Authority, but the implementation of any solutions will be dependent on the necessary finance being made available.
- 20.35** In order to alleviate problems experienced along Lowhills Road, caused by HGV's travelling between Hartlepool, the North East Industrial Estate and the A19(T), the possibility of implementing a traffic management scheme for Lowhills Road will be explored

Bus Station

- 20.36** The proposal to construct a bus station is considered in paragraph 20.47(d), whilst the issue of parking provision in the Town Centre is considered in paragraph 20.49.
- 20.37** An additional 168 car parking spaces have been developed in Peterlee Town Centre as part of the Broadclose development. Although current Highway Authority projections indicate that there should be sufficient parking space throughout the Plan period there is inadequate provision at peak periods. To protect current provision development involving the loss of existing car parking space should, therefore, not normally be approved (see Policy 37 Environment Chapter).
- 20.38** On-street parking causes congestion in a number of Council housing estates in Peterlee. Where appropriate, the District Council will alleviate the problem through the provision of off-street parking facilities.

Policy P11

The district council will provide off-street parking facilities in the following areas:

- (i) York Road
- (ii) Manor Way
- (iii) Thorntree Gitt
- (iv) Thorns/Delavale Closes and Leazes Rise
- (v) Eden Lane

- (vi) Eden Hill Road and Robson Avenue
- ~~(vii) Keswick Road and Ellison Road~~
- ~~(viii) Bailey Rise~~
- ~~(ix) Elliot Road~~
- ~~(x) Dunelm Walk~~
- ~~(xi) Yoden Road~~
- ~~(xii) Fairbairn Road~~
- ~~(xiii) Jarvis Road~~
- ~~(xiv) Bowness Close~~
- ~~(xv) Hawes Road~~
- ~~(xvi) Howletch Lane~~
- ~~(xvii) Howletch Lane - cul de sac (nos. 14-18 & 28-31)~~

Implementation

1. *Finance will be sought from the District Council's Capital or revenue budgets to implement the scheme. Further details are contained in paragraph 3.9 (Implementation Chapter).*

Recreation and Community Facilities

Formal Recreational Facilities

- 20.39** Peterlee is well provided with formal outdoor recreation facilities with playing fields having been provided on a scale of four acres per thousand people including tennis courts, an athletics track at Howletch Comprehensive, which the school proposes to upgrade, and a cricket, football and hockey club. The existing facilities should be safeguarded from development by Policy P1. In addition, the golf course at Castle Eden is within easy reach of Peterlee. The principal formal recreation facilities are provided at Lowhills Road and Helford Drive playing fields, together with the Eden Lane Recreation Ground. In total, the level of provision falls slightly short of the NPFA minimum standard. However, the dual use of the school playing fields within the town makes a significant contribution to the overall level of provision, which is well above the National Playing Field Association's recommended requirement. A replacement leisure facility is to be provided as part of the redevelopment of the existing site and adjoining land (see paragraphs 20.47(c), 20.52 and Policy P16).

North Side of Lowhills Road

- 20.40** The west side of Essington Way and the north side of Lowhills Road have been developed for recreational and community uses. The one remaining site with potential for development, east of the former sports centre changing rooms should also be used for recreation or community purposes.

Policy P12

~~The development of the land east of the former sports centre changing rooms will only be approved for recreation or community purposes.~~

Open Space/Play Areas

- 20.41** Although Peterlee is a planned New Town, there is some evidence that informal play space for children which meets the National Playing Field Association requirements is lacking. This apparent anomaly can be explained by the difficulty in measuring and quantifying the amount of play space available within the open plan aspect of the housing areas and secondly, the strict NPFA definition. In the latter case this excludes large open areas throughout Peterlee which are multi-purpose, allowing for passive /informal adult recreation as well as opportunities for children's play adjacent to residential areas. The existing spaces should be safeguarded from development by Policy P1. In addition, parts of the town have easy access to Castle Eden Dene which provides a further open space facility. The Town Council owns and manages a range of children's play areas located at the Eden Lane playing fields, Hampshire Place, Howletch, Dene House, Helford Road, Thorntree Gill, Manor Way and Pennine Drive.

Policy P13

Development of the following areas will only be approved for purposes of recreational and children's play space:-

- (i) Eden Lane recreation ground
- (ii) Lowhills Road (7.17ha)
- (iii) Helford Road
- (iv) Manor Way
- (v) Pennine Drive
- (vi) Hampshire Place
- (vii) Thorntree Gill

Education

- 20.42** Peterlee has a full range of educational facilities including a tertiary college which was established in 1984. Whilst a shortage of school places is evident at Shotton Hall Comprehensive, sufficient spare capacity exists at Denehouse and St Bede's Schools to accommodate any increase in children of school age which may be caused by housing development which takes place over the Plan period.

Health

- 20.43** Peterlee has a health centre in the town centre accommodating both doctors' and dentists' surgeries. A nursing/residential home has been developed at North Blunts on a joint venture basis involving the Hartlepool Health Authority and Westminster Homes. This does not, however, have emergency or operating facilities. (See paragraph 7.56 of the Recreation, Community Facilities and Tourism Chapter).

Social and Community Facilities

- 20.44** In 1985 the County Council supplemented the existing social and community facilities in the town through the opening of a day centre for the elderly on Essington Way.

Eden Lane

- 20.45** On the east side of Eden Lane, adjacent to the site of the medieval village, is a small plateau previously occupied by two community uses. The development of this site for these uses would be appropriate.

Policy P14

The east side of Eden Lane is allocated for community facilities (use class D1).

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Shopping and Offices

Peterlee Town Centre

- 20.46** Shopping provision in Peterlee comprises a main centre and several smaller neighbouring centres. The main centre, bounded by Surtees Road, Bede Way and St Cuthbert's Way consists of a split-level pedestrianised precinct centred on Yoden Way and incorporates rear servicing to all units. It provides a relatively pleasant, if somewhat dated, shopping environment with pedestrian access available to the college, library, health centre, magistrates' court, local offices and car parks. The centre, with about 200,000 square feet of shopping floorspace, provides the residents of both Peterlee and the neighbouring villages with a reasonable range of comparison and convenience goods. A large Asda superstore (85,251 sq ft) provides the main convenience "anchor" store, whilst a Sainsbury supermarket on the south eastern edge of the precinct, built in 1987, with adjoining surface level free car parking is also an important feature. Other multiple stores present are Woolworths and Boots. The mix of shopping and services includes regional, local and independent retailers, as well as a number of service uses and professional offices.
- 20.47** During the past decade Peterlee Town Centre Ltd and Teeland (Peterlee Ltd) have constructed additional retail units within the Broadclose area of the Centre. In 1997 Modus properties purchased the Town Centre and has prepared a comprehensive strategy to revitalise it and transform it into a vibrant centre comprising retail, leisure and other related uses. The proposals involve the following elements:
- (a) the redevelopment of the site of the Magistrates Court, Fire Station and Police Station as an 85,000 square foot food store;
 - (b) the redevelopment of the Asda store to provide additional retail units, plus a 30,000 sq ft Bingo Hall;
 - (c) the redevelopment of the existing leisure centre site and adjoining land to accommodate the displaced civic uses mentioned in (a) (apart from the Fire Station) and to provide a replacement leisure centre, plus a multiplex cinema, restaurants and additional retail units; the provision of an alternative site for the fire station on the south west industrial estate;
 - (d) the construction of an eight bay bus station to facilitate improved public transport access to the Town Centre;
 - (e) a comprehensive programme of environmental improvements to the other parts of the Town Centre.
- 20.48** Elements (a), (b), (d) and (e) of these proposals would be located within the main shopping centre and would accord with Policy 101 (Shopping Chapter). Peterlee Town Centre is also considered to be an appropriate location for major office development (see Policy 114 (Shopping Chapter)).
- 20.49** At the present time, there are 1030 off-street parking spaces within the Town Centre. The level of provision is inadequate to meet demand from shoppers and other visitors with the result that the ring road and adjacent residential streets are frequently congested with parked cars. As part of the Town Centre redevelopment proposals Modus intends to provide an additional 480 spaces within the Town Centre, plus a further 540 spaces as part of the redevelopment of the leisure centre. The improved provision, intended to relieve the current shortage and serve the increased retail floorspace, is in accordance with car parking standards stated in Appendix 5. In addition, to ensure that maximum use is made of the provision Modus proposes to introduce restrictions on the duration of parking.
- 20.50** Hence any large scale new shopping development should be located within/adjacent to the main shopping centre in accordance with Policy 101 (Shopping Chapter). Peterlee town centre would also be an appropriate location for major office development (see Policy 114 Shopping Chapter).

Policy P15

The main shopping centre in Peterlee will be bounded by Surtees Road, Bede Way and St Cuthbert's Way but including the Peterlee Lodge Hotel and adjacent car park.

Town Centre Expansion

- 20.51** PPG6 requires that a sequential approach is taken to identifying and releasing land for new retail/town centre development first looking at town centre locations and only subsequently at edge of centre sites. The District Council has assessed the opportunities for providing new retail development within the existing Town Centre. The Town Centre is physically constrained by a ring road, comprising Surtees Road, Bede Way and St Cuthbert's Way. Insufficient space exists within the Town Centre to accommodate all the proposals in the revitalisation strategy.

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- 20.52** Having regard to the sequential approach, the only potential edge of centre site is the leisure centre and adjoining undeveloped land. This site, covering an area of 4.6 hectares, is well related to the Town Centre and has good pedestrian links to the existing facilities contained therein. In accordance with PPG1 and PPG6, a mixed use scheme incorporating retailing, new leisure facilities to replace the existing leisure centre, a cinema, bowling centre plus a replacement police station and Magistrates Court would be appropriate on the site. Retail development will be encouraged provided it meets the terms of Policies 101 and 104 of the Plan.
- 20.53** Vehicular access to the site should be gained from St Cuthbert's Road. Development on the eastern edge should be carefully sited and designed to ensure that it does not adversely affect the amenity of residents in the adjacent housing estate. In addition, the western and southern boundaries of the site should be sensitively landscaped to ensure that the proposed development does not adversely affect the adjacent dene which is both an Area of High Landscape Value and a National Nature Reserve.

Policy P16

~~4.6 hectares of land south of St Cuthbert's Road including the Peterlee Leisure Centre is allocated for a mixed use development. Acceptable uses within such a scheme would include retailing, a replacement leisure centre, a cinema, bowling centre, police station and magistrates court.~~

Other Shopping Centres in Peterlee

- 20.55** Outside Peterlee town centre, small shops serving local needs will be permitted (in accordance with Policy 103, Shopping Chapter). Any larger shops which are considered to be necessary outside the main shopping centre should be located in the neighbouring shopping centres at York Road, Acre Rigg, Edenhill Road, Yoden Road and Grampian Drive in accordance with the criteria contained within Policy 102 (Shopping Chapter).

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Seaham

Summary of policies

Employment

- S1 ~~Relocation of land based activities of the Port~~ - This policy has lapsed
- S2 ~~Reinstatement of George Street - Dawdon Colliery Railway Line~~ - This policy has lapsed
- S3 ~~Coastal defences~~ - This policy has lapsed

Housing

Housing Improvement Initiative

- S4 ~~Dawdon housing improvements~~ - This policy has lapsed
- S5 ~~Deneside Estate Action Initiative~~ - This policy has lapsed
- S6 ~~Parkside Estate Improvement Initiative~~ - This policy has lapsed

Housing Land

- S7 ~~Land at Lawnside~~
- S8 ~~Vane Tempest colliery site~~ - This policy has lapsed
- S9 ~~Seaham colliery site~~
- S10 ~~West of Foundry Road~~ - This policy has lapsed
- S11 ~~Former St Mary Magdalenes School site~~ - This policy has lapsed
- S12 ~~South of Robert Square~~ - This policy has lapsed
- S13 ~~Ropery Walk~~ - This policy has lapsed

Transport

- S14 ~~Dawdon-Seaham Town Centre Link Road~~ - This policy has lapsed
- S15 ~~Off-street parking schemes~~ - This policy has lapsed
- S16 ~~Seaham Railway Station~~
- S17 ~~Cycleways~~
- S18 ~~Traffic management and bus services~~ - This policy has lapsed

Environment

- S19 ~~Seaham Conservation Area~~ - This policy has lapsed
- S20 ~~Small landscaping schemes~~ - This policy has lapsed
- S21 ~~Safeguarding the denes~~ - This policy has lapsed
- S22 ~~Seaham Hall and Grounds~~ - This policy has lapsed
- S23 ~~Land east of Seaham Hall~~ - This policy has lapsed

Recreation and Community Facilities and Tourism

- S24 [Safeguarding formal recreation facilities](#) - This policy has lapsed
- ~~S25 [Safeguarding open space/play areas](#) - This policy has lapsed~~
- S26 [Recreational footpaths](#) - This policy has lapsed
- S27 [Promenade scheme](#) - This policy has lapsed
- S28 [North Dock area](#)
- ~~S29 [Land north west of New Strangford Road roundabout](#) - This policy has lapsed~~
- ~~S30 [Uses for former Londonderry Offices](#) - This policy has lapsed~~

Shopping

- S31 [Town Centre expansion](#)
 - S32 [Main shopping centre](#)
 - S33 [Environmental improvements initiative in Town Centre](#)
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Introduction

- 21.1** Seaham developed initially around the port which was founded in the 1820's and the town was subsequently expanded as Seaham, Dawdon and Vane Tempest Collieries were established in the mid-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Extensive Council housebuilding in the 1960's and more recent private development have further extended the settlement.
- 21.2** The main issue which now needs to be addressed within the Plan is how to secure the comprehensive regeneration of the town following the run-down and closure of its collieries. The District Council, in conjunction with various partners on the East Durham Task Force, is now implementing a wide-ranging strategy to achieve this aim.
- 21.3** If Seaham is to be successfully regenerated and is to continue its role as a major centre serving the northern part of the District a range of problems need to be overcome. The town's economy needs to be diversified in the light of the closure of the collieries. The former colliery sites need to be reclaimed and a range of complementary environmental improvements need to be undertaken. A range of new housing sites needs to be provided to support the regeneration initiatives. The town centre needs to be revitalised and expanded. The land based activities of the Port need to be relocated to consolidate the activities of the Dock Company and enable environmental improvements to be undertaken in the area within which the Port currently operates.
- 21.4** In accordance with the principles of sustainability, the District Council is seeking to accommodate much of the town's development needs on the former colliery sites. However in order to provide attractive employment land capable of competing for inward investment at the regional and national levels, additional development land on the southern edge of the settlement has had to be identified. A limited extension of the town has now been agreed by the designation of Fox Cover as an Enterprise Zone and the commencement of construction of the Dawdon-A19(T) link road.
- 21.5** The population of Seaham has declined rapidly since the 1950's to reach a 1981 level of 22,030. Despite extensive housing development within the past decade the population has declined further to the current (1991) estimated level of 21,740. Planning policies therefore aim to stabilise the population at its current level to maintain the viability of shops and services and thus maintain its role as a major centre.

Employment

- 21.6** Following the closure of the collieries job opportunities within Seaham are now limited to a number of manufacturing firms and local service industries and the docks. A significant number of the town's residents travel out of the District to work, principally to Sunderland. In an effort to widen the employment base of the town and to compensate for job losses a range of industrial estates is being developed in the Seaham and the surrounding area:

Seaham Grange

- 21.7** The County Council has developed a 28 hectare prestige industrial estate at Seaham Grange which currently employs approximately 700 persons. In December 1996, 15 hectares of the estate was designated as an Enterprise Zone. In accordance with the Designation Order planning permission has been granted for Use Classes B1 (business), B2 (General Industry) and B8 (Warehousing) of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987. This area is, therefore, not the subject of any policies in the Local Plan.
- 21.8** The remaining 13 hectares of the estate, most of which has already been developed with factory units, is designated as a prestige estate. In accordance with Policy 52 (Employment Chapter), this area is designated for Class B1, B2 or B8 uses.

Dawdon Colliery

- 21.9** Following the closure of the colliery in 1991 the 30 hectare site has been cleared and has subsequently been transferred to English Partnerships. 14 hectares of the land is being reclaimed and serviced as a prestige industrial estate. Reclamation works are currently underway and the site is expected to be serviced and available for development by February 1998. A new road linking the estate with the A19(T) at Cold Hesledon is expected to be completed by December 1997 (see para 6.25 Transport Chapter). A further road is to be built linking the estate with Seaham Town Centre (see para 6.26). The remaining 16 hectares of site is being reclaimed to provide open space/agricultural land plus a car park/picnic site providing improved access to the coast and the coastal footpath.

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- 22.10** In December 1995 the proposed industrial estate was designated as an Enterprise Zone. In accordance with the Designation Order planning permission has been granted for uses in Classes B1, B2 and B8 in the Use Classes Order 1987. This area is, therefore, not the subject of any policies in the Local Plan.

Fox Cover

- 21.11** English Partnerships has purchased 18 hectares of agricultural land, south west of the Dawdon Welfare Ground, from the former British Coal and proposes to develop the land as a fully serviced prestige industrial estate. The estate will be accessed from the new link road to the A19(T) at Cold Hesledon and will also have road access into Seaham. In December 1995 the proposed estate was designated as an Enterprise Zone. In accordance with the Designation Order, planning permission has been granted for uses in Class B1, B2 and B8 in the Use Classes Order 1987. The area is, therefore, not the subject of any policies in the Local Plan. The take up of industrial land on the estate will be monitored throughout the Plan period and, if deemed necessary, an extension will be considered in a future review of the Plan

Strategic Reserve Industrial Site

- 21.11A** Following a recent revision in the expected capacity of the Hawthorn Coke Works industrial development site because of contamination difficulties, it is no longer appropriate for consideration as a strategic industrial site, and a replacement is required. A 68ha site has therefore been identified south of the A19(T) - Dawdon link road, broadly rectangular in shape with good access potential, allowing the development of approximately 40 ha for large scale inward investment. The availability of a strategic employment reserve site is an important element in maximising the economic attractiveness of the District, and has the potential to provide considerable employment opportunities in the District. (see paragraphs 4.20A, 4.20I and Policy 49)

Other Major Industrial Estates

- 21.12** Three further major industrial estates are to be developed in the vicinity of Seaham. A 33

hectare estate is to be developed at the former Hawthorn Coke Works as a prestige industrial estate (see paras 4.21.-4.28 Policy 50, Industry and Business Chapter.) A 15.5 hectare general industrial estate is to be developed at Dalton Flatts (see paras 19.10-19.11 Policy M4, Murton Chapter). A 15 hectare prestige industrial estate is to be developed south of Ryhope by Sunderland City Council.

Small Industrial Estates

- 21.13** Three small industrial estates have been developed by the District Council within/in the vicinity of the Town. A 9 hectare estate has been developed at Cold Hesledon, employing over 300 people. Two estates each of approximately 0.7 hectares have been developed at George Street and Seaham Kingfisher. In accordance with Policy 54, these estates are designated for uses in Class B1, B2 and B8 of the Use Classes Order 1987 and retail uses permitted by Policy 105. Kingfisher has also been identified for an industrial estate enhancement in accordance with Policy 61.

Seaham Harbour/Port of Seaham

- 21.14** Easington District and County Durham as a whole is served by the port of Seaham and by the larger seaports on the rivers Tyne, Wear and Tees. The port of Seaham was established in 1831. It is now a modern transport and distribution centre and plays a significant role in the County's economy. The main cargoes transported include steel, timber, chemicals and minerals.
- 21.15** The port comprises 5 hectares of enclosed water with 900 metres of quay and associated warehousing which enables it to specialise in the handling of short sea bulk, semi bulk, unitised and containerised and project cargoes. There are 25,000 square metres of warehousing located on both sides of Foundry Road. A small warehouse also exists to the east of South Terrace and South Crescent. As the warehousing east of Foundry Road and east of the Town Centre is located on operational port land, planning permission was not required. Consequently their operations are not subject to planning controls. The location of the warehousing in close proximity to residential properties in the Foundry Road area causes a range of amenity problems for residents living in the vicinity. The problems are exacerbated by the fact that the tidal nature of the port results in operations being undertaken during unsocial hours.

- 21.16** The port is an important element in the County's transport infrastructure with its position on the east coast of the United Kingdom providing a natural gateway for trade with western Europe, Scandinavia and the Baltic States. Both the Durham County Structure Plan - Review and the Seaham Regeneration Strategy recognise that the further development of the port should be encouraged as part of the aim of regenerating the Town and East Durham as a whole. Additional warehousing is required to assist the operations of the Port. The existing operational area adjacent to Foundry Road is, however, nearly fully developed. Although there is limited scope for expansion in this area it could result in a further loss of amenity for neighbouring residents
- 21.17** It is, therefore, proposed to relocate the land based operations of the Port onto a new site to the south of the Foundry Road housing area. The relocation would have a range of benefits. The provision of a single site would enable the Dock Company to function more efficiently and the development of additional warehousing to meet its future needs. The removal of the existing warehouses, particularly adjacent to Foundry Road, would have considerable environmental benefits for the residents living in the vicinity and enable the vacated area to be developed for more appropriate uses. The release of the land east of South Terrace and South Crescent and east of Foundry Road would provide an opportunity for a mixed use development potentially providing new commercial, leisure or residential facilities as part of an expansion to the town centre (see paras 21.85-21.87, policy S31). Similarly the release of the existing offices and adjacent land would provide opportunities for recreational/tourism developments in the North Dock area (see para 21.77/Policy S28). Finally the release of the land occupied by the warehouse west of Foundry Road would provide land for new housing and playing fields to replace those east of Gasworks Road.

Land South of Robert Square/Fenwick Row

21.18 This land covers an area of 8.9 hectares and comprises the following uses:

- (a) the former Gas Works site, which is vacant and overgrown;
- (b) playing fields on the east side of Gas Works Road, currently used by the Ropery Walk Junior School and local residents;
- (c) a scrapyard south of the playing fields;
- (d) an area of former colliery land, east of Hill Crescent, which has been reclaimed to grassland.

The area is bisected by Gas Works Road, which provides access from Hill Crescent into the Foundry Road area. Seaham Harbour Dock Company in association with English Partnerships propose to acquire this land. It would then be levelled and serviced to accommodate the Port offices and warehousing. In order to safeguard the amenity of nearby residents:

- (i) vehicular access to the site should be gained from a new access on Hill Crescent, close to the roundabout at the eastern end of the Dawdon-Link Road. This would obviate the need for traffic to pass through the adjacent residential area;
- (ii) a substantial landscaping belt should be developed to the south of Fenwick Row, south of Robert Square and to the east of Hill Crescent.

The redevelopment would also be the subject of a number of other detailed conditions. The stretch of Gas Works Road between its junction with Hill Crescent and Fenwick Row should be stopped up to facilitate a comprehensive development of the area. A comprehensive reclamation scheme should be undertaken to the former Gas Works site, the scrapyard and the land east of Hill Crescent to treat any contaminants. New playing fields will need to be provided to replace the facility lost east of Gas Works Road (see para 21.18b).

Policy S1

~~8.9 hectares of land south of Robert Square/Fenwick Row is allocated for port related warehousing and office use (class B1). Planning permission for this development will be granted subject to the following conditions:~~

- ~~(i) all vehicular traffic from the development would utilise a new access on hill crescent, constructed close to the roundabout at the eastern end of the Dawdon link road.~~
- ~~(ii) landscaping belts to be provided south of Fenwick Row, south of Robert Square, east of Hill Crescent.~~
- ~~(iii) the land east of Hill Crescent, scrapyard and former gas works site to be the subject of an appropriate reclamation scheme;~~
- ~~(iv) replacement playing fields to be provided in accordance with policy 90.~~

Implementation

1. *Seaham Harbour Dock Company and One Northeast will jointly undertake the development. Funding for the proposal will be sought from a range of sources including English Partnerships, Single Regeneration Budget, European Regional Development Fund and the private sector.*
2. *A detailed development brief will be prepared to guide the redevelopment of the site.*

Former George Street Junction - Dawdon Colliery Mineral Railway Line

- 21.20** This mineral railway line became redundant following the closure of Dawdon Colliery and the track has subsequently been removed. The route, owned by Railtrack does, however, abut the western boundary of the proposed warehousing development for the Port (see paras 21.18 & 21.19/Policy S1). An opportunity exists to reinstate the track which would provide rail access from the new warehousing to the Durham Coastal Railway line and thus provide an alternative mode of transport to road. The route is, therefore, safeguarded for this purpose.

Policy S2

~~The route of the George Street junction - Dawdon colliery railway line is safeguarded. Any development which would prejudice the reinstatement of the railway line will not be approved.~~

Proposed Coastal Defences south of Seaham Harbour

- 21.21** The land adjacent to the coast between South Pier and Noses Point has previously been used as operational land by the Dock Company and British Coal. Following the cessation of tipping of Colliery waste at Bankside, this stretch of coastline has been the subject of extensive coastal erosion. As part of the regeneration of the Town the area south of Robert Square is to be redeveloped for Port-related warehousing (see Para 21.18 & 21.19/Policy S1). The proposed Dawdon - Town Centre link road is to be constructed near the cliff tops (see para 21.45/Policy S14). The issue of the need for coastal protection has been assessed in the River Tyne - Saltburn Shoreline Management Plan, which has confirmed that new coastal defences are both required and justified, between South Pier and Seaham Fleet Rock, to safeguard these developments.

Policy S3

~~Coastal defences are proposed between South Pier and Seaham Fleet Rock.~~

Implementation

1. *The District Council will implement the proposal utilising grant aid from the European Regional Development Fund and financial assistance from the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food.*

Housing

Existing Stock

- 21.22** There are approximately 9300 dwellings in Seaham, 33% of which are in Council ownership and most of the remainder in private ownership. The majority of Council stock is concentrated in the estates: Westlea, Northlea, Eastlea, Deneside and Parkside.

Housing Conditions

- 21.23** Most of the District Council's housing stock has previously been modernised. The District Council is undertaking an Estate Action Initiative to regenerate the Deneside housing estate, in association with private developers and housing associations. A similar initiative is being undertaken (albeit due to financial constraints on a more limited scale) on the Parkside housing estate. Most of the post-war private housing stock is in good condition but some of the older terraced properties would benefit from improvement and may be eligible for renovation grants. The former colliery housing stock in Dawdon suffers from a range of problems including substandard housing stock, a significant number of vacant properties together with a poor physical environment. The Council has been successful in obtaining funding under the fifth round of the Government's Single Regeneration Budget, to commence a comprehensive housing revitalisation /environmental improvement scheme in this area. The Council has undertaken a Neighbourhood Renewal Assessment to establish the views of the community. The results of this exercise will be used to develop a strategy for improvement, which will fully take into account the needs and aspirations of residents.

Policy S4

~~A comprehensive housing revitalisation and environmental improvement scheme will be undertaken in Dawdon, as shown on the proposals map.~~

Denese Estates Action Initiative

- 21.24** The District Council is currently undertaking an Estate Action Initiative to comprehensively improve the part of the Denese housing estate located to the north of the Avenue. The works have involved the revitalisation of Council houses, environmental improvements, demolition of selected properties undertaken in partnership with housing associations and private developers. In October 1996 the Council approved a planning application to develop 128 dwellings comprising bungalows for the elderly and family houses within the Estate, but the scheme was shelved. The Council is examining other opportunities to implement the scheme with the developer.

Policy S5

~~The district council will improve the houses and the environment of the Denese housing estate, north of the avenue.~~

Parkside Estate Improvement Initiative

- 21.25** The District Council, in partnership with residents and local agencies, is currently implementing a comprehensive improvement strategy involving environmental, housing, recreational and social schemes. A new community centre was opened in 1996 and 56 new bungalows have been developed by DAMHA. Proposals for further housing improvements and the provision of new community facilities are being pursued.

Policy S6

~~The district council will improve the houses and the environment of the Parkside housing estate.~~

Council Housing

- 21.26** There is an adequate supply of general Council housing in Seaham but a significant demand exists for elderly, single and disabled persons accommodation. 16 aged persons' flats have been provided by DAMHA in the conversion of the Londonderry Institute. A further 20 bungalows have been constructed by DAMHA in Parkside and a further 36 are to be developed over the next two years. Planning permission has also been granted for the construction of 128 dwellings in the Denese housing estate. The District Council has a long-standing proposal to construct aged persons' housing at Lawnside but the implementation is uncertain due to shortage of finance. The site should not, therefore, be disposed of for any other purpose.

Policy S7

0.2 hectares of land at Lawnside is allocated for aged persons' housing.

Implementation

1. *The District Council will dispose of the site to a housing association or develop it itself.*

Private Housing

21.27 During the past fifteen years 800 private houses have been built in Seaham on a range of sites : Dalton Heights (200 dwellings), Dalton Grange (225 dwellings), Manor Park (110 dwellings), North Dene Park (80 dwellings) and Cheviot Gardens (80 dwellings).

21.28 In accordance with Policy 3 of the Structure Plan Review and Objective D1 of the Development Strategy and S1 of the Spatial Strategy sufficient land should be made available to cater for housing demand in Seaham. An additional 800 dwellings need to be built in the Town during the next decade to maintain a stable population to meet the different sectors of the housing market. Since April 1997, planning permission has been granted for 52 dwellings on land north of Dalton Grange and 8 dwellings at the former Dene House Miners Centre. The remaining demand for private housing development in the Town will be accommodated on sites within the existing physical framework of Seaham, particularly on the former Colliery site at Seaham and Vane Tempest which are expected to be fully redeveloped within the Plan period.

Vane Tempest Colliery Site

21.29 Following the closure of the colliery in 1992 the site has been cleared and been the subject of a basic reclamation works. In 1996 the site was transferred from British Coal to English Partnerships who are bringing forward proposals for its reclamation, servicing and redevelopment as part of the regeneration strategy for the Town.

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21.30 The site (comprising 32.7 hectares of land) is bounded by Council and private housing abutting Dene House Road to the south, an unmade track/public right of way called New Drive adjoining playing fields/Cricket Ground to the west, Seaham Dene to the north and the B1287 road (North Road) to the east. The site comprises three distinct areas:

- (a) 26.3 hectare of formerly operational colliery land;
- (b) 4.9 hectares of agricultural land abutting North Road, Dalden Grove;
- (c) 1.5 hectare field, abutting Derwent Close.

Areas (a) and (b) are owned by English Partnerships, whilst area (c) is owned by the Catholic Church.

21.31 As stated in paragraph 3.7 there is a need for a strategic housing site in Seaham to support the initiatives undertaken to regenerate the Town and to meet the housing needs. In land-use terms the Vane Tempest site is ideally suited for this purpose and would provide land for 500 dwellings supplemented by a small centre comprising community facilities and a neighbourhood shopping centre to serve prospective residents. The site has easy access to the shops, services and other facilities available in the Town Centre and abuts major recreational facilities available on the New Drive Playingfield. It has the potential for easy access to existing public transport facilities at the nearby railway station and the bus services running near the site. In environmental terms the redevelopment would remove one of the major eyesores in the Town whilst providing a strategic housing site on brownfield land without the loss of high grade agricultural land.

21.32 A detailed development brief is to be prepared to guide the redevelopment of the site. In view of the scale of the proposals the proposed development will need to incorporate the following measures:

- (a) A new vehicular access Vehicular access to the proposed development would be primarily gained from North Road. A secondary access may be developed from Dene House Road.
- (b) Pedestrian/cycleway links New Drive is substandard in its width and condition and is incapable of being upgraded to an adoptable standard. It should, however, be upgraded and resurfaced to provide pedestrian/cycleway links from the site to the railway station/Town Centre and Seaham Hall. Further pedestrian/ cycleways should be provided to link the site with Dene House Road, North Road and the Vane Tempest Car Park.

- (c) Traffic calming In accordance with Policy 36 (Environment Chapter) a range of traffic calming measures should be provided within the site. Additional traffic calming measures/junction improvements will be required in the vicinity to accommodate traffic generated by the housing development. This will include improvements to junctions at North Road/Tempest Road, Dene House Road/North Road and Tempest Road/Harbour Walk. These measures should be secured by means of a Section 106 agreement.
- (d) Recreation/open space provision: The construction of 500 dwellings will place greater demand on the New Drive Playingfield and Cricket Club. In accordance with Policies 66 and 90 (Recreation Chapter) the development should provide a range of sport and recreation facilities.
- (e) Remedial measures: In accordance with Policy 45 (Environment Chapter) a number of detailed measures would need to be undertaken prior to development to remove any contaminants and to safeguard against any potential problems of mine gas.
- (f) Form of development: In visual terms the site occupies a unique position in the District overlooking the beach and the promenade to the east and the attractive unspoilt Seaham Dene and Seaham Hall to the north. In accordance with Policy 35 (Environment Chapter), the design and form of the housing development shall respect these features.
- (g) Range and mix of housing: The redevelopment of the site provides an opportunity for a range and mix of new housing, in accordance with paragraphs 5.21B, Housing Chapter. There is a need to provide low density executive houses in the District to provide sites for incoming industrialists and to provide accommodation for the managerial and professional sectors, which are currently under-represented in the District. The northern part of the site, facing onto Seaham Dene provides the best opportunity for this type of development. It is envisaged that approximately 50 executive dwellings would be provided on the site.

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Policy S8

~~The former Vane Tempest colliery site will be reclaimed and redeveloped for a mixed development comprising approximately 500 dwellings and a neighbourhood centre comprising community facilities and a shopping provision in accordance with policy 103. The redevelopment will be undertaken in accordance with the following criteria:~~

- ~~(i) a primary vehicular access being constructed onto North Road~~
- ~~(ii) a secondary access being constructed onto Dene House Road.~~
- ~~(iii) pedestrian/cycleway links being installed along new drive and linking the site to North Road and Dene House Road.~~
- ~~(iv) recreation/open space being provided in accordance with policies 66 & 90.~~
- ~~(v) remedial/reclamation measures being implemented in accordance with policy 45.~~
- ~~(vi) roads being designed in accordance with policy 36 by facilitating bus access onto the site.~~
- ~~(vii) a detailed landscaping/planting scheme in accordance with policy 35.~~

Implementation

1. *A detailed development brief will be prepared, incorporating the conditions listed above, to guide the redevelopment of the site.*
2. *Following the completion of reclamation work English Partnerships will dispose of the site to private developers who will be responsible for servicing and redeveloping for the uses specified in the policy.*

Seaham Colliery

- 21.33** Following the closure of Vane Tempest Colliery in 1992, the Seaham Colliery site has been cleared and been the subject of a basic reclamation works. In 1996 the site was transferred from British Coal to English Partnerships who intend to bring forward proposals for its reclamation/servicing and redevelopment as part of the regeneration strategy for the Town.
- 21.34** The former Colliery site (an area of 13.44 hectares) would lend itself to a range of uses. During the past five years two housing schemes have been developed on land adjoining the northern edge of the site. A self build development has been implemented on land adjacent to the entrance of the colliery. Beezer Homes have constructed 80 dwellings adjacent to the former Bank Head Street (now Cheviot Gardens). An opportunity exists to release additional land in the northern part of the site to expand the housing development which has recently been undertaken.
- 21.35** The existing colliery entrance would provide the main means of vehicular access to the site. A number of detailed measures would need to be undertaken prior to development to remove any contaminant and to safeguard against any potential problems of mine gas, in accordance with Policy 45 (Environment Chapter). The remainder of the site adjoining the southern boundary should be reclaimed as public open space/playing fields. This would tie in with the open space to the north of Malvern Crescent and enable a more positive feature to be developed for the benefit of this part of Seaham. The site should also be heavily planted to create a 'green wedge' through the centre of Seaham. A walkway/cycleway should be developed along the former mineral railway lines, providing a pedestrian link to Tempest Road and then to the town centre. Further cycleway/walkway links should also be provided to Station Road and the Deneside Housing estate.

Policy S9

The former Seaham Colliery site will be reclaimed and redeveloped for a mixed development comprising approximately 150 dwellings on the northern part of the site, and recreational/open space on the southern part. The former mineral railway line will be developed as a walkway/cycleway. The redevelopment will be undertaken in accordance with the following conditions:

- (i) remedial/reclamation measures being implemented in accordance with policy 45
- (ii) roads being designed in accordance with policy 36, to facilitate bus access
- (iii) a detailed landscaping scheme in accordance with policy 35
- (iv) pedestrian/cycleways being installed to link the site with station road and deneside housing estate. Subject to the provision of adequate privacy for adjacent residents, in accordance with policy 35, and the installation of appropriate security measures.

Implementation

1. *A detailed development brief will be prepared to determine the precise areas of land to be released for housing, recreation and open space use and to guide the redevelopment of the site.*
2. *The reclamation works will be funded from English Partnership's Land Reclamation Programme.*
3. *The part of the site to be developed for housing will be sold to a private developer.*
4. *The pedestrian and cycleway will be implemented as part of the reclamation scheme.*

- 21.39** This site of approximately 1.5 hectares is currently occupied by one of the two large warehouses utilised by the dock company for storage, bagging and other port-related activities. The site is bounded by the walkway on the Hawthorn Incline to the west, terraced housing to the west and south west and Seaham Ropery Walk to the south. The operation of the warehouse on the site and on the opposite side of Foundry Road causes disturbance to the neighbouring residential areas. The development of the proposed Dawdon-Town Centre Link Road and the relocation of the warehouses and port operations on land further south will, however, provide an opportunity for the redevelopment of the site for housing and playing fields to replace those used by Seaham Ropery Walk school which forms part of the land allocated for the relocation of the dock company warehouses. This will both improve the amenity of residents and improve the appearance of the area. The site would also be conveniently located close to the town centre and its development would help to support retail and commercial businesses there. The site would also have good access to the countryside south of the town by virtue of its location adjacent to the Hawthorn Incline. Given the predominance of terraced housing in the area it is considered that a relatively high density of development could be achieved. Access to the site should be taken from Foundry Road.

Policy S10

~~1.5 hectares of land west of Foundry Road is allocated for housing and playing fields.~~

Implementation

1. *The development of the site will be implemented following the completion of the Dawdon-Town Centre Link Road and the relocation of the warehouses.*

Former St Mary Magdalene's School Site, Station Road

- 21.40** As a result of a re-organisation of educational facilities in the Town this school became surplus to requirement and the site has subsequently been cleared. The site abuts a rest home and a small housing development and is also considered suitable for housing. It is estimated that the site could accommodate 20 dwellings. The northern part of the site is affected by noise from the adjacent railway line and would not be suitable for development without appropriate noise attenuation measures. Access should be developed from Station Road.

Policy S11

~~0.85 hectares of land on the site of the former St Mary Magdalene's School, Station Road, is allocated for housing.~~

South of Robert Square

- 21.41** In order to enable the replacement of two dwellings at Robert Square which lie within the route of the Dawdon-Seaham Town Centre Link Road, 0.1 hectares of land is allocated for housing.

Policy S12

~~0.1 hectares of land South of Robert Square is allocated for housing.~~

Ropery Walk

- 21.41A** This unsightly piece of land detracts from the appearance of the area. In land use terms the site would be suitable as a garden incorporating a domestic garage for No. 13 Ropery Walk. Alternatively, it should be improved through appropriate landscaping.

Policy S13

~~0.1 hectares of land south of Ropery Walk is allocated for garden purposes incorporating a domestic garage or appropriate landscaping~~

Implementation

As the site is not in Council ownership the owner will be approached to secure the

Transport

Strategic Road Improvements

- 21.42** Although the A19(T) forms the western boundary of Seaham, access to the road is inadequate and heavy industrial traffic has to pass through the town en-route to the Port. The completion of slip-roads at Cold Hesledon has reduced the amount of heavy traffic which previously passed down Times Bank in a southerly direction en route to Murton but the problem still remains. The junction of the A19(T) at Seaton is still, however, incomplete with access only to and from the north. The Department of Transport have no proposals to install additional slip roads at Seaton.

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- 21.43** Traffic problems in certain areas of the town have been relieved by the opening of Graham Way (formerly the Seaham Southern Link Road); the construction of a private road from Seaham Docks to Dawdon; and the imposition of Weight Restriction Orders on The Avenue, Station Road, and the road passing through Dalton-le-Dale. The Highway Authority is constructing a new road from the former Dawdon Colliery to the A19(T) at Cold Hesledon to provide improved vehicular access to the Port and to assist economic regeneration in the town and resolve the problem of heavy traffic. Construction work on the road commenced in Spring 1997 and is programmed for completion by December 1997. In association with the construction of this road, the local Highway Authority propose to review the existing Weight Restriction Orders to encourage greater usage of the new road. A further road is proposed from Dawdon to Seaham Town Centre (see paragraph 21.45/Policy S14).
- 21.44** Road links to Sunderland are expected to be improved during the Plan period through the construction of the Ryhope By Pass which will provide a new road from Hendon in Sunderland to a new junction on the A1018 road, approximately 400 metres north of the Council boundary. A new roundabout is also to be installed at the junction of the A1086 and B1285 road to provide improved access to the Seaham Grange Industrial Estate. As the land required for the improvement is located within the highway verge, the land is not safeguarded in the Plan.

Proposed Dawdon-Seaham Town Centre Link Road

- 21.45** Durham County Council is constructing a new road from the A19(T) to Dawdon. A further road is required to link it with the Town Centre. The link road is considered to have a wide range of benefits. It will provide improved vehicular access to the Port and serve the proposed warehousing (see Policy S1). It will provide improved access to the Centre and the former colliery sites and will assist the regeneration of the Town. It will help relieve the existing problems of heavy traffic (see paras 21.42-21.43) and obviate the need for traffic utilising the new A19(T) to Dawdon to pass through residential areas of Dawdon and Foundry Road, en route to the Town Centre. The proposed link road would follow a route along the cliff tops from Dawdon to the Town Centre. The scheme also includes a road linking South Dock with the Dock Warehousing.

Policy S14

The land required for the construction of the Dawdon-Seaham Town Centre link road will be safeguarded from development

Parking in Council Housing Estates

- 21.46** On-street parking can cause congestion, exacerbate road hazards and, particularly where

cars are parked on verges or on the pavement, degrade the condition and appearance of the street. It would be appropriate to alleviate such problems, particularly where wider housing and environmental improvements are to be undertaken during the plan period. Streets have been selected in Parkside and Dawdon where the provision of appropriate off-street parking facilities will be explored.

Policy S15

The district council will provide appropriate off street parking facilities in the following areas:-

- (i) Fern Crescent
- (ii) Beech Daphne Crescent
- (iii) Ash Crescent
- (iv) Maple Crescent
- (v) Jasmine Crescent
- (vi) Park Street
- (vii) Garron Street
- (viii) Queen Street
- (ix) Shaw Street

Implementation

1. Schemes 1-5 will be improved as part of the comprehensive improvement proposals for Parkside.
2. Finance for the remaining schemes will be sought from the District Council's Capital Programme or revenue budget to implement these schemes. Further details are contained in paragraph 3.9, Implementation Chapter.

Seaham Railway Station

21.47 Seaham station is located on the Durham Coast Railway Line, which connects the conurbations of Tyneside, Wearside and Teesside and serves the centres of Newcastle and Sunderland to the north plus Hartlepool and Middlesbrough to the south. An hourly passenger service is operated from the Station to Tyneside and Teesside during the week with a less frequent service on Sundays.

During the past five years the District Council has undertaken a small scale improvement scheme including the provision of a car park and associated landscaping works to enhance the appearance of the station and to make it more attractive to customers. A range of initiatives are proposed to increase the frequency of the rail services (see paras 6.16-6.20 Transport Chapter).

21.48 The existing station is not centrally located and suffers from poor links to the Town Centre and the housing estates, which has affected its patronage. The possible relocation of the station closer to the Town Centre was considered as part of the Seaham Regeneration Strategy. The Strategy concluded that the Station should remain in its current location but that linkages should be improved. A range of improvements are, therefore, proposed to increase its patronage:

- (a) Bus/Rail Interchange Negotiations are on-going between the County Council and bus operators to improve the services between the Town Centre, the existing housing estates and the station. New services are proposed between the major

developments (such as the proposed housing development at Vane Tempest) and the station. A small interchange facility is proposed to enable bus passengers to have easy access to the station.

- (b) Cycle Provision A network of cycleways is to be developed within Seaham (see para 21.50/Policy S17). A cycleway is proposed to provide links from the Town Centre, the Vane Tempest and Seaham Colliery housing sites to the station. A secure cycleway is proposed at the station to encourage greater usage of the rail service by cyclists.
- (c) Car Parking Off-street car parking provision at the station is extremely limited which restricts the opportunity for motorists to 'park and ride'. An additional car park is proposed on the vacant and overgrown land on the south side of Station Road.
- (d) Ticketing and Information At present there is no facility for users of the rail services to obtain tickets or journey information. Durham County Council is currently considering the potential for such services to be provided either at the station or within an adjoining or nearby shop.

Policy S16

Seaham Station will be improved through the provision of:

- (i) a bus/rail interchange facility
- (ii) a secure cycle facility
- (iii) a car park on land south of station road

Implementation

1. *Funding will be sought from the Seaham Package of the Transport Policy and Programme, the County Council, Railtrack and the European Regional Development Fund, to implement the proposed improvements.*

21.49 Both the Seaham Regeneration Strategy and a special study undertaken by Ove Arup for a group of local authorities into the future of the Durham coast rail line have examined the possibility of providing a new station at Dawdon. Neither study reached a firm conclusion on the issue in part due to uncertainty over the viability of the station and its dependence on the development and success of the proposed Dawdon and Fox Cover industrial estates which are unlikely to be fully implemented before the latter part of the Plan period. For this reason the Council will concentrate instead on securing improved bus services to the area and new pedestrian and cycle links. The issue of the potential for a rail halt at Dawdon will, however, be kept under review.

Cycleways

21.50 Cycling is an environmentally friendly form of transport. To assist with the Government's objective of reducing the level of vehicle emission a number of initiatives are being promoted to encourage people to cycle. A number of cycleways are planned in Seaham to link proposed/existing housing estates with industrial estates, the Town Centre, places of recreation, plus the Coast and the Countryside. This will involve upgrading existing walkways to accommodate bicycles, constructing cycleways along former mineral railway lines or providing cycle lanes adjacent to existing/proposed roads.

Policy S17

Cycleways will be developed along the following routes:

- (i) Town Centre - Seaham Colliery
- (ii) Former Hawthorn Incline
- (iii) Mount Stewart Street to Dawdon and Foxcover Industrial Estates
- (iv) Dawdon Industrial Estate-Town Centre-Seaham Hall Car Park
- (v) Seaham Station-Seaham Hall

21.51 In addition to the routes identified above in Policy S17 the Council is currently looking at developing local links, to co-ordinate with the routes being implemented as part of the Turning the Tide initiative and to complement the Gateways and Routeways environmental improvement schemes.

Implementation

1. *The proposals will be implemented by the County Council, in association with the District Council and Town Council utilising funds from the Seaham package of the TPP, the Turning The Tide Initiative and the European Regional Development Fund.*

Traffic Management and Bus Services

21.52 The District Council together with Durham County Council and other partners in the Seaham regeneration initiative are currently examining and implementing a range of traffic management schemes which are aimed at improving the efficiency of the highway network, facilitating improvements to local bus services and improvements to both pedestrian safety and residential amenity.

21.53 The catalyst for these schemes will be the development of the A19-Dawdon and Dawdon-Town Centre roads which will remove heavy traffic from a significant proportion of the town's road network. This will allow traffic calming schemes in a number of locations:

Queen Alexandra Road/Mount Stewart Street - this scheme will be necessary in order to cater for attracted traffic from the town intending to access the new A19-Dawdon Road.

Stockton Road through Westlea and Byron Lodge - this is an extremely busy road acting as the main north-south route through the town.

Station Road adjacent to former Seaham Colliery - this is the main east west route through the centre of the town which will experience increased residential traffic once the proposed housing site at Seaham Colliery is developed.

North Road - this route along the coast links the northern part of the town with the town centre and will also experience increased residential traffic as the Vane Tempest housing site is developed.

Policy S18

Traffic management and calming schemes will be implemented in the following locations:

- (i) Queen Alexandra Road/Mount Stewart Street
- (ii) Stockton Road Through Westlea
- (iii) Station Road Adjacent To Seaham Colliery Site
- (iv) North road

Implementation

1. *Limited funds have been secured from the 1997/98 TPP settlement for the commencement of the schemes, in particular that along Queen Alexandra Road. Further funds will be sought from a variety of sources including future TPP submissions.*

21.54 In addition to the above schemes a number of initiatives are being pursued within the town centre, including the redevelopment and refurbishment of the bus station, which will particularly assist in improving bus services (see paragraph 21.89).

- 21.55** The presence of three derelict colliery sites and large areas of terraced housing give parts of Seaham an industrial appearance similar to that of the former colliery villages elsewhere in the District. In recent years the appearance of Seaham has, however, been greatly improved by a number of comprehensive improvement and reclamation schemes. Major environmental improvement schemes are programmed to be undertaken during the Plan period as part of the Regeneration Initiative. The schemes include the reclamation /redevelopment of the three former colliery sites (Policies S8 & S9), the housing/environmental initiatives at Deneside and Parkside (Policies S5 & S6), the relocation of land based activities of the Port (Policy S1), the Town Centre Improvement Scheme (Policy S32) and the Conservation Area enhancement scheme (Policy S19).

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Seaham Harbour Conservation Area

- 21.56** In 1997 the District Council designated the Seaham Harbour Conservation Area. This broadly covers the Town Centre, North Dock, North Terrace, the area between North Railway Street and Tempest Road, plus Rock House. The precise area is shown on the proposals map. Policies 22 and 23 (Environment Chapter) will be applied to planning applications within the area.
- 21.57** A Conservation Area Partnership scheme is to be undertaken during the 1998/99 and the subsequent two financial years. Initially the scheme will focus on North Terrace, Bath Terrace and Terrace Green, but will subsequently be extended to the other properties within the Conservation Area.

Policy S19

An environmental improvement scheme is proposed in the Seaham Harbour conservation area. The scheme will include, where appropriate:

- (i) improvements to roofs, windows and shop fronts.
- (ii) environmental improvements to open areas
- (iii) renewal of pavements and installation of street furniture.

Implementation

1. The scheme will be managed by Durham County Council in consultation with English Heritage, Easington District Council, Seaham Town Council and Groundwork East Durham.
2. Funding will be sought from English Heritage/Heritage Lottery Fund, Single Regeneration Budget and the three Councils.

Other Environmental Improvements

In addition to major environmental initiatives, there are many quite small areas within Seaham, which although grassed and reasonably tidy could be improved by appropriate landscaping. Some are in District Council ownership, others private.

Policy S20

Landscaping works are proposed in the following areas:

- (i) Norfolk Close

- (ii) ~~North of Viceroy Street~~
- (iii) ~~Marlborough Street~~
- (iv) ~~West of Cliff House Garage, Tempest Road~~
- (v) ~~Westlea Garage Site~~
- (vi) ~~Station Road Flats~~
- (vii) ~~North of Northwood Road~~
- (viii) ~~Deneway~~
- (ix) ~~The Lawns~~
- (x) ~~East of Island Club, Station Road~~
- (xi) ~~East of proposed community centre, Strangford Road~~
- (xii) ~~Junction of Lord Street And Viceroy Street~~
- (xiii) ~~Junction of Mount Stewart Street and Queen Alexandra Road~~
- (xiv) ~~East of Rainton Street~~
- (xv) ~~North of Enfield Road~~
- (xvi) ~~South Side of 'The Graham Way'~~
- (xvii) ~~West of Station, Station Road~~
- (xviii) ~~Adjacent to Cottages Road/Ropery Walk~~

Implementation

1. *Sites (i) to (ix) are in the ownership of the District Council.*
2. *The schemes will be implemented either through the Seaham Regeneration Strategy, by approaching the landowners or through the District Council's Capital Programme or revenue budgets.*

The Denes

- 21.60** In addition to protecting open areas within towns and villages which are of recreational value, it is also important to protect those areas that enhance the character and appearance of settlements (see Policy 92). Within Seaham, Rock House, Hazel and Seaham Denes fulfil this role and provide pleasant nature features running through the Town. Seaham and Hazel Denes are also recognised for their nature conservation value through their designation as Sites of Nature Conservation Importance.

Policy S21

~~Development which would detract from the visual, amenity or nature conservation value of Rock House, Hazel or Seaham Denes will not be approved.~~

North Durham Green Belt

- 21.61** In order to prevent the coalescence of Seaham with the Wearside conurbation the Local Plan proposes the designation of Green Belt between the north limit of the town and the administrative boundary with Sunderland. The City of Sunderland Unitary Development Plan - Deposit Draft proposes to extend the Tyne and Wear Green Belt south of Ryhope. The establishment of the Green Belt will support the aims and initiatives being undertaken in Seaham in a number of ways:
- (i) By maintaining the separate physical identity of the settlement
 - (ii) By protecting the attractive rural setting of the northern part of the town ; and

- (iii) By helping to direct development pressures to the urban brownfield sites such as the former collieries and to the enterprise zone sites in the south.

A full explanation of these green belt proposals is given in the Environment chapter, see paragraphs 3.15 to 3.26 and Policies 4 and 5.

Seaham Hall and Grounds

- 21.62** Seaham Hall, its grounds and associated buildings lies within the countryside just to the north of the town and adjacent to Seaham Dene. It lies within the Northern Area of High Landscape Value. Furthermore the architectural and historic merit of the Hall has resulted in its designation as a Grade II Listed Building. The area is therefore of considerable importance to the setting and character of the northern part of Seaham.
- 21.63** Seaham Hall has been converted into a rest home for the elderly while the former nursing block has been adapted into residential flats. The rest home has, however, now closed. The District Council recognises that the best means of maintaining the Hall, its associated buildings and the grounds is to ensure that they remain in active or economic use. A range of uses including business, hotels, residential, community, leisure and tourism (Use Classes B1, C1, C2, C3, D1, D2) would be appropriate in principle in this area. Given sensitive design and location, proposals for the re-use or extension of the existing buildings to such uses should contribute positively to the preservation or enhancement of the area. The main test which the Council will apply to applications will therefore be whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character and setting of the listed buildings and the AHLV in accordance with Policies 7 and 24 (Environment Chapter) of the Plan. In order to protect the character of the area development within the grounds of the hall will only be appropriate where there is a proven need and where it is directly associated with the permitted use of the hall (e.g. car parks or sport/leisure facilities linked to a hotel). Such developments should also meet similar criteria to those related to the development of the hall and buildings.

Policy S22

~~Proposals for the re-use or extension of Seaham Hall and the buildings within its grounds for business, residential, hotel, community or leisure uses (use classes B1, C1, C2, C3, D1 and D2), will be approved provided that they would preserve or enhance the character and setting of the listed buildings and the area of high landscape value.~~

~~Development within the grounds of Seaham Hall will only be approved where it is appropriate in scale and character and:~~

- ~~(i) it is proven to be necessary and directly associated with the use of the hall; and~~
- ~~(ii) it would not detract from the setting of the listed buildings; and~~
- ~~(iii) it would not detract from the character of the area of high landscape value.~~

Land East of Seaham Hall

- 21.64** This area comprises approximately 4 hectares of open land to the east of Seaham Hall and Greystones. The majority of this area is grassed open space maintained by Seaham Town Council. Although the land itself is of limited visual interest it is of significant importance to the built heritage of the District on two accounts. Firstly its openness allows and affords dramatic and impressive views of St Mary's Church, Seaham Hall and Greystones from a number of vantage points, thereby significantly contribution to the setting of the area. Secondly, the area is known to contain significant archaeological remains relating to the early Christian settlement of Seaham. Such remains may be of national importance and should be preserved in-situ. For these reasons the use of the land should be limited to informal recreation.

Policy S23

~~The land to the east of Seaham Hall will be retained as open space. Development will only be approved for informal recreation.~~

Public Utilities

- 21.65** Seaham has adequate water, gas and electricity supplies to cater for development

envisaged during the Plan period. The Dawdon sewerage treatment works opened in late 1996 has provided additional capacity in the sewerage system which will cater for the various developments programmed during the next decade. It has also improved the quality of the effluent discharged into the sea, in accordance with European Commission Urban Waste Water and Bathing Directives.

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Recreation, Community Facilities and Tourism

Formal Recreation Facilities

- 21.66** Formal recreation facilities are located at Dawdon Welfare Ground, the Town Park and on playing fields at the Council's Leisure Centre and New Drive, together with the cricket ground. A playing field at Seaham Comprehensive school is available when not in educational use. These facilities are inadequate to meet the NPFA standards and fall some 25% below the recommended level of provision. Opportunities exist to alleviate this shortfall by the provision of facilities as part of the reclamation /redevelopment of the former Seaham and Vane Tempest Colliery sites. There may also be opportunities to provide formal pitches on two sites at Deneside which are currently used for informal recreational pursuits. The greater usage of school playing fields would also help eradicate the shortfall. In the meantime the existing facilities will be safeguarded from development under the terms of Policy 90 (Recreation Chapter).

Policy S24

The development of the following areas will only be approved for sport or recreational purposes:-

- (i) Grounds of Seaham Leisure Centre
- (ii) Town Park
- (iii) New Drive Playing Fields
- (iv) New Drive Cricket Ground
- (v) Dawdon Welfare Ground
- (vi) 2 Hectares of land at Former Parkside playing fields

- 21.67** As part of the proposals for the relocation of dock company offices and warehouses the existing playing fields on the east side of Gas Works Road used by Seaham Ropery Walk School will be lost. However, provision has been made for replacement facilities nearer the school west of Foundry Road (see Policy S10).

Implementation

1. Funding will be sought from the National Lottery to implement this proposal.

- 21.69** In the past, swimming pool provision existed at an open air pool at Dawdon Colliery and at Northlea Comprehensive School. Following the closure of Dawdon Colliery, however, the open air pool closed and the site has been cleared. In addition, the pool at Murton has also closed, following the closure of its colliery. There is, therefore, a need for an indoor swimming pool to serve the north of the District. The location for such a facility has still to be chosen and doubts exist as to whether finance will be available to implement such a proposal during the Plan period. (see paragraph 7.24, policy 88)

Open Space/Play Areas

- 21.70** In overall terms, Seaham is well provided with open space for informal/passive recreation with the main areas being at Dawdon Dene, north of Malvern Crescent together with a number of smaller areas in or adjacent to Council housing estates. There are, however, localised shortages in the housing estates west of Stockton Road, in a number of the Council housing estates and in former British Coal housing areas. The existing provision is supplemented by the denes, which provide dual functions as amenity and informal recreation areas. In accordance with Policies 91 and 92 (Recreation Chapter) the open spaces should be safeguarded from development. The Denes are also safeguarded under para 21.60/Policy S21. Additional open space should be provided as part of the colliery reclamation schemes.
- 21.71** Seaham has a range of children's equipped playgrounds and informal play spaces, located in two main areas: in the Welfare Grounds/parks and within the housing estates. As only limited provision has been made, there is a significant shortage within the Town. In accordance with Policy 91 (Recreation Chapter) the play grounds/play spaces should be safeguarded from development.

Policy S25

~~The development of the following areas of land will only be approved for informal recreation and other appropriate improvements:~~

- ~~(i) Rainton Street~~
- ~~(ii) Stockton Road~~
- ~~(iii) Dawdon Dene Park~~
- ~~(iv) Hawthorne Square~~
- ~~(v) Ash Crescent~~
- ~~(vi) Northlea~~
- ~~(vii) Watson Close~~
- ~~(viii) Adjacent To Deneside Recreation Ground~~
- ~~(ix) Hoy Crescent~~
- ~~(x) North of Malvern Crescent~~
- ~~(xi) South of Kingston Avenue~~
- ~~(xii) North of Haven House~~
- ~~(xiii) West of Seaham Colliery Site~~
- ~~(xiv) Malvern Crescent Recreation Ground~~

- 21.72** In addition to the areas outlined in Policies S24 and S25 a number of other small recreation areas lie outside the settlement boundary which will be protected under Policies 90, 91 and 92.

Recreational Footpaths

- 21.73** To encourage informal recreation in the south-west of Seaham a footpath link should be established between the Seaton Farm housing estate and the north of the Dalton Heights estate. The footpath should be continued from the B1285 south of the Dalton Grange housing estate to the Leisure Centre and Dawdon Dene.

Policy S26

~~To encourage greater recreational use of the area, a continuous footpath will be established around the south west of Seaham between Seaton Lane and Dawdon Dene.~~

Implementation

1. *Finance will be sought either from the District Council's Capital Programme or revenue budgets or as part of the Seaham Regeneration Strategy to implement the scheme.*

21.74 In addition to the above proposal Seaham Town Council are currently looking at developing a series of footpath links focusing on the wooded areas and denes within the town including Seaham Dene/Seaham Hall, Hazel Dene and Crowe Wood. The priority within this list will be the development of a link from Seaham Dene through to the Vane Tempest housing site and the link from Seaham Colliery to the railway station and town centre.

Tourism

21.75 As part of the Regeneration Strategy the potential for expanding the town's role as a tourist location has been assessed. This potential essentially derives from the town's coastal location, the attractive beaches and cliffs to the north of the town centre and its industrial and port-related heritage. The programme of environmental improvements being implemented within the town, particularly within the town centre and the gradual improvement in the condition of the coastline south of the docks formerly used for the dumping of colliery waste, will further increase the attractiveness of the area for coastal recreation and tourism.

21.76 In order to capitalise on this potential it is essential that new or improved opportunities for formal and informal leisure and recreation are provided. Initiatives such as the development of a coastal footpath will help to improve access to the coast in and around the town. Additionally a comprehensive range of environmental improvements is to be undertaken along North Road to create new and improved upper and lower promenades between the Vane Tempest site and Terrace Green. Terrace Green is also to be upgraded through improvements to the setting of the War Memorial, a new pedestrian entrance from North Terrace and new paving and street furniture (see paragraph 21.89).

Policy S27

~~The district council will undertake a comprehensive environmental improvement scheme to create a new and improved promenade along North Road between the Vane Tempest Site and Terrace Green.~~

Implementation

1. *Groundwork East Durham in partnership with Easington District Council, Durham County Council and Seaham Town Council are to manage the scheme utilising funding from a variety of sources.*

21.77 Seaham's greatest potential asset for tourism and leisure lies in the port area of the town. In particular the Seaham Regeneration Strategy has identified the land between North Dock and South Dock as having potential for the development of tourism and leisure uses such as a visitor/heritage centre and a family pub, and North Dock itself, currently used by a small fleet of local fishing boats, for the development of a small marina. Development of this nature would be able to take advantage of the views of the harbour and coastline from the promontory forming the northern boundary of North Dock. Utilising funding from English Partnerships works are to be undertaken to upgrade, repair and refurbish the harbour and North Dock so as to bring the area up to current health and safety standards for public standards. Within this context the District Council will favourably consider applications for leisure, recreation or tourism developments providing they are consistent with protecting the conservation area, the Grade II listed status of the Inner North Dock Walls and the North and South Inner Piers adjacent to the east of the Inner North Dock and the designated Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) between Featherbed Rocks and Red Acre Point. It is also important that any development proposals do not significantly conflict with the operations of the Dock Company or other maritime interests such as the local fishing fleet.

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Policy S28

The development of the North Dock area of Seaham Harbour for tourism, leisure or recreation uses will normally be approved provided that:

- (i) it would not adversely affect the SSSI between red acre point and Featherbed Rocks in accordance with policy 15; and
- (ii) it would conserve or enhance the Seaham Harbour conservation area in accordance with policy 22; and
- (iii) it would not adversely affect the listed buildings within the harbour in accordance with policy 24.
- (iv) it would not significantly conflict with the operations of the dock company or other maritime interests

Education

- 21.78** Seaham currently has an adequate range of education facilities including nursery, primary and secondary schools and two Roman Catholic Primary schools. Further education facilities are available at the former Denehouse Miners' Centre which has recently been adapted for this purpose by Seaham College. There is likely to be a shortage of places in the schools, as a result of the housing development which is programmed to take place in Seaham during the Plan period. This issue is being examined by the County Education Authority which is considering a number of solutions including the construction of additional classrooms. Sufficient land exists within the curtilages of the schools to facilitate these proposals which would be consistent with Policy 89 (Recreation and Community facilities chapter).

Health and Social Facilities

- 21.79** For its size, Seaham has an adequate range of health facilities. The County Council operates a library in the Town Centre which was refurbished in 1994. The County Council has a long-standing proposal to construct a new library on a cleared site at the junction of Stockton Road and Eastdene Road to serve New Seaham, but the proposal has been postponed due to lack of finance.

Police Station

- 21.80** The Durham Constabulary operate a police station for the town from the former Londonderry Offices, located opposite North Terrace. The building is unsuitable for the Constabulary's operational requirements. The Police Authority propose to construct a new Station on a 0.7 hectare site, adjacent to the New Strangford Road roundabout. The site is ideally located for this purpose lying adjacent to one of the main routeways and having quick and easy access to most parts of the Town.
- 21.81** The site is vacant and underused and has recently been the subject of a minor environmental improvement scheme. As the site is in a number of mixed/unknown ownerships it will be necessary to compulsorily acquire the land. The development of the site will be subject to a number of detailed requirements. As the site has previously been filled it will be necessary to assess whether any special foundations are required, in accordance with Policy 46 (Environment Chapter). A track runs along the eastern edge of the site and provides access to a vehicle dismantling depot, which will need to be retained. A junction improvement will be required to The Avenue to facilitate safe vehicular access to the site.
- 21.82** It is unlikely that the whole of the site will be required for the proposed Police Station. It is proposed that the remainder will be laid out as public open space, to serve the adjacent housing area which is deficient in this respect. Pedestrian access to the open space will be gained from existing footpaths and the proposed walkway/cycleway (see Policy S9).

Policy S29

~~The land north west of the New Strangford roundabout is allocated for a police station and open space. Planning permission for the police station will be granted subject to the following conditions:-~~

- ~~(i) an access to the depot to the north of the site being retained~~
- ~~(ii) a junction improvement being installed onto the avenue, in accordance with policy 36.~~

Implementation

1. *The County Council will institute compulsory purchase proceedings, to acquire the site which would then be sold subsequently to the Police Authority who would develop the land.*
2. *Any residual land would be passed onto the Town Council for development as an open space.*

Former Londonderry Offices

- 21.83** The former Londonderry Offices are likely to become surplus to the requirements of the Police Authority after the new Police Station becomes operational. A feasibility study is to be undertaken to investigate appropriate alternative uses for the building. As the building is Grade II listed it is important that any changes of use do not adversely affect its character, appearance, special architectural features. The building is located opposite North Terrace, which contains a number of residential units.

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Policy S30

~~The re-use of the former Londonderry Offices will be approved provided the use does not adversely affect the character, appearance, architectural features or setting of the building, in accordance with policy 24.~~

Town Centre And Shopping

- 21.84** The strategic role played by Seaham town centre in providing shops and services to both the town and its neighbouring villages, and the consequent priority of maintaining and enhancing its vitality is recognised within the Durham County Structure Plan. Although the town centre has a catchment of around 80,000 people, a significant amount of potential expenditure leaks away to larger centres such as Sunderland and Durham. The priority for the area will therefore be to improve its physical environment so as to attract new retail and leisure development. In increasing the range of shops and facilities, by improving public transport and the pedestrian environment it is expected that the town will be able to retain a greater proportion of available expenditure and the number of lengthy trips by car to more distant centres will be reduced in line with the principles of sustainability.

Town Centre Expansion

- 21.85** One of the main issues addressed within the regeneration strategy was an assessment of the existing retail stock and the potential need for new retail floorspace to be provided. The study revealed that the town centre possesses a relatively low level of representation among the multiple retailers and that although this is in part due to the catchment area and the proximity of higher order centres, the provision of a quality site or sites together with a comprehensive environmental enhancement programme would be likely to attract additional multiples to the town.

- 21.86** PPG6 requires that a sequential approach is taken to identifying and releasing land for new retail/town centre development looking first at town centre locations and only subsequently at edge of centre sites. The District Council has assessed the opportunities for providing for new retail development within the existing town centre. The physical nature of the existing retail core around Church Street offers little opportunity for a significant increase in floorspace or the type of site capable of attracting multiple retailers. However the development of the proposed Dawdon-Seaham town centre road together with the relocation of the dock company offices will release an area of approximately 3.2 hectares immediately adjacent to the eastern part of the town centre and east of Foundry Road. Development here could potentially provide a greater link between the shopping area and North Dock, Terrace Green and the promenade. In accordance with PPG's 1 and 6 a mixed use scheme incorporating retail, office, leisure or residential development would be appropriate on the site. Retail development will be encouraged provided it meets the terms of Policies 101 and 104 of the Plan and would be most appropriate at the northern end of the site where its location near to Church Street would help to provide a new focus at the head of the pedestrianised area.
- 21.87** The site's location close to the operational area of the port would constrain the potential for residential development. However a limited and sensitively located element of housing incorporating noise attenuation features would be acceptable.

Policy S31

3.2 hectares of land between South Crescent, South Terrace and Foundry Road and the proposed Dawdon to Seaham Town Centre road is allocated for a mixed use development. Acceptable uses within such a scheme would include retailing, leisure, offices or residential. Retailing will only be approved where it would not conflict with policies 101 and 104 of the plan.

Implementation

1. A brief will be prepared to guide the development of the site.

New Retail Development

- 21.88** The main shopping area is concentrated on Church Street although it has developed along Adelaide Row and Blandford Place. It contains approximately 100,000 square feet of retail floorspace. The main shopping area will, however, be expanded with the development of the land between South Crescent and the new Dawdon-Town Centre road. The District Council is undertaking a variety of environmental improvement initiatives within this area in order to attract new investment. It is therefore important that any new large retail developments should be located within the existing centre in accordance with Policy 101 or on the site identified as an expansion to the centre in Policy S31 above. Significant retail development elsewhere in out-of-town locations would undermine the strategy for the centre outlined in this chapter and the prospects for attracting investment to the town centre.

The District Council will, however, encourage other uses in this area including local offices (policy 114) and the conversion of first floor premises into residential flats (paragraph 5.48). Elsewhere in Seaham Policy 103 allows for the development of small retail units.

Policy S32

The main shopping centre in Seaham will be bounded by North Railway Street, the west side of Blandford Place, Sophia Street, Viceroy Street, Shelley Crescent, Green Street, South Terrace and the east side of South Crescent.

Environmental Improvement Initiatives

21.89 The District Council, in partnership with the County Council and Seaham Town Council has embarked on the Seaham Townscape Project - a programme of environmental enhancement schemes based on four priority areas within or near to the town centre:

- (a) Church Street - Work on the comprehensive upgrading of this area has already commenced through a floorscape enhancement scheme and the operation of a grant scheme for shop frontage improvements. The improvement of the eastern end of the street including its pedestrianisation will also be undertaken.
- (b) The former Mineral Line and Green Street Car Park - At present on-street car parking causes congestion and servicing difficulties in the town centre area. In order to allow traffic management measures to curb this problem it will be necessary to increase the currently limited and inadequate level of off-street public and parking provision within the centre. To this end, the District Council has acquired land between North and South Railway Streets and proposes a modest expansion of the Green Street car park. These proposals are fully in line with the principles of sustainability since they will reduce congestion within and around the town centre and thus improve bus circulation and efficiency. Furthermore the development of the land between North and South Railway Streets will incorporate a new footpath/cycleway which will complete a route running from the major housing development site at Seaham Colliery right into the town centre.
- (c) St John's Square - This area is the focus of civic activity in the town centre, comprising the library, Government Agency Offices, and the former magistrates court. The drab appearance of this area is compounded by the unsightly bus station along the western enclosure of the Square. The District Council and partners propose to implement a comprehensive enhancement scheme including the refurbishment or development of a new bus station.
- (d) North Terrace and Terrace Green - Terrace Green is an important public open space along the sea front adjacent to the town centre and is fronted by North Terrace which comprises a mixture of retail, leisure and residential uses. Both lie within the recently designated Conservation Area and the District Council and its partners are currently seeking funding for a Conservation Area Partnership Scheme from English Heritage/Heritage Lottery Fund to improve and upgrade the frontage of properties. Improvements to Terrace Green are also to be carried out under the management of Groundwork East Durham (see paragraph 21.76).

Policy S33

The district council will implement a comprehensive enhancement scheme within and around the town centre by focusing on:

- (i) improvements to the environment of Church Street
- (ii) additional off-street car parking and a cycleway on land between North and South Railway Streets together with an extension to the Green Street car park
- (iii) St John's Square
- (iv) North Terrace and Terrace Green

Implementation

1. *The proposal will be implemented utilising funding from the European Union's RECHAR Programme, the District Council, County Council, Town Council and the private sector, the Single Regeneration Budget and English Heritage/Heritage Lottery Fund.*

Traffic Management and Improving Bus Station

21.90 A high priority needs to be given to measures which will secure improvement to the pedestrian environment and to the operation of bus services. This will be achieved in a number of ways. Firstly the completion of the Dawdon-Seaham Town Centre road will secure an improved circulatory system around the eastern and southern parts of the town centre. It will also allow the downgrading of South Crescent and South Terrace to bus and service areas only, thus providing an efficient bus link to the eastern part of the town centre where environmental improvements and new retail development is proposed. Secondly restrictions on on-street parking will ease congestion. Finally the Plan proposes the improvement or redevelopment of the existing bus station.

Other Shopping in Seaham

21.91 Outside Seaham town centre any larger shops which are considered necessary should be located in the neighbourhood shopping centres at Dawdon, The Avenue, Station Road, Parkside and Westlea, in accordance with the criteria contained within Policy 102 (Shopping Chapter). Outside these centres Policy 103 (Shopping Chapter) which allows the development of small shops will be applied. In exceptional circumstances, the development of larger retail units will be permitted outside the town and neighbourhood centres provided the proposal accords with the criteria in Policy 104 (Shopping Chapter).

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Seaton

Summary of policies

Environment

~~St1 Safeguarding of open areas~~ - This policy has lapsed

Housing

Housing Land

~~St2 North of Seaton Lane~~ - This policy has lapsed

~~St3 East of Hillrise Crescent~~ - This policy has lapsed

Recreation and Community Facilities and Tourism

~~St4 Play area east of Hillrise Crescent~~ - This policy has lapsed

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Introduction

22.1 Seaton is an attractive, rural village with an estimated population of 330 (1991 Census). It is physically separated from Seaham by the A19(T). The village contains few facilities or opportunities for employment. However its location makes it accessible to the service and employment centres of Seaham and Sunderland.

Environment

22.2 Seaton is a small, compact and attractive village. In addition to protecting open areas within towns and villages which are of recreational value, it is also important to protect those areas which enhance the character and appearance of settlements (see Policy 92). Within Seaton there are two such areas worthy of protection. The first is the Village Green which provides an attractive focus for the oldest part of the village. The second area is a narrow strip of land adjacent to the A19 which runs along the eastern edge of the village. This is an open area framed by mature trees and hedgerows which contributes to the setting of the village. It also contains a public footpath providing an attractive link from the edge of the village to the village centre. This area may have some potential for informal recreational development. Both this area and the Village Green should, however, be protected from built development which would detract from their open nature. In the case of the former, such development would also represent a physical and visual intrusion into the countryside.

Policy ~~St1~~

~~Development which would detract from the open nature or the visual or amenity value of the village green or the land adjacent to the A19 on the south side of Seaton Lane will not be approved.~~

Public Utilities

- 22.3 Although existing sewers in this area are near to capacity, since no large scale development is envisaged in Seaton over the Plan period, this is unlikely to create problems. Capacity within the other utilities is sufficient to meet the needs of the village over the Plan period.

Housing

- 22.4 There has been an increasing demand for new private housing in Seaton over recent years, which has been accommodated through the development of infill plots. Demand for housing in attractive and accessible locations such as Seaton is likely to be further enhanced given the regeneration initiatives planned in the Seaham area during the period of the Local Plan. Insufficient land now exists within the existing framework of the village to accommodate this anticipated demand during the Plan period. A modest extension to the village is, therefore, considered necessary.

Land North of Seaton Lane

- 22.5 The provision of low density housing sites for incoming industrialists is seen as playing an important role in the regeneration of the District. The District is currently under-represented by people in the managerial and professional sectors and there is a perceived shortage of suitable sites for high quality, low density executive housing in the District. A number of sites have therefore been identified as part of the preparation of the Plan, including 1.61 hectares of agricultural land north of Seaton Lane, Seaton. This area is a triangular shaped area of land bounded by residential properties on Seaton Lane to the south, a railway embankment to the north west and a mature belt of trees to the east. The site would be well related to the existing physical framework of the village, and in visual terms, would be well concealed by the presence of the railway line and the housing next to Seaton Lane. It would be visible from the A1018 road leading from the A19(T) to Ryhope, but could be screened by reinforcing the existing hedge with additional trees. This site is located away from the 'historical core' of the village and is abutted by the inter-war/post war houses, which are common throughout the District. The development of this site would, therefore, not adversely affect the character of the village. Vehicular access to the site would be gained by upgrading the track, which leads from Seaton Lane, to an adoptable standard. A minor junction improvement would also be required where the track meets Seaton Lane. Since the site is allocated for low density housing, it is considered that a modest scheme of about 20 dwellings would be appropriate. The site is crossed by a public right of way, which may need to be re-routed as part of the development.

Policy St2

1.6 ha of land north of Seaton Lane is allocated for a low density development of up to 20 dwellings. Planning permission will only be granted provided that:

- (i) safe and adequate access arrangements, which may include minor junction improvements, can be secured from Seaton Lane and the requirements of policy 36 are met;
- (ii) satisfactory arrangements are made to accommodate the existing public right of way through the site;
- (iii) a scheme of landscaping and planting is devised to appropriately reinforce and supplement the existing landscape and topographical features on the site.

Implementation

1. *The District Council will prepare a detailed design brief to guide the development of the site.*
2. *The requisite highway improvements will be secured by means of a planning obligation or through the use of appropriate planning conditions.*

Land East of Hillrise Crescent

- 22.6** This land, between the houses on Hillrise Crescent and a small Council housing development on Hall Close, is currently under-used. It would be suitable for a small housing development with vehicular access provided by extending Hall Close or, in the case of one dwelling, off Seaton Lane.

Policy St3

~~0.19 hectares of land east of Hillrise Crescent is allocated for housing.~~

Transport

Traffic Congestion in the Vicinity of the Dun Cow Public House

- 22.7** The lack of off-street parking facilities in the vicinity of the Dun Cow public house results in vehicles parking on the Village Green and the blocking of access to adjacent properties. To prevent encroachment of vehicles onto the Green, bollards have been installed. The ultimate solution to the problem would, however, be the provision of a car park by the owners of the public house. Unfortunately, problems of land ownership have prevented the proposal from being implemented.

Recreation and Community Facilities

- 22.8** Within Seaton village itself there is currently an absence of formal outdoor sport and recreation facilities and equipped children's play areas. Sport and recreation facilities are, however, available reasonably close by in Seaham and the village has good access to the open countryside which has been further enhanced by the creation of a new recreational route along the disused Tuthill Quarry to Ryhope Railway Line. Within this context the most pressing need within the village is for an equipped children's play area. A small site is therefore allocated for such a play area on land to the south of the proposed housing site east of Hillrise Crescent. The site has the advantage of being centrally located within the village yet located away from major roads and traffic hazards.

Policy St4

~~0.04 hectares of land east of Hillrise Crescent is allocated for a children's play area.~~

- 22.9** In addition to the above site, the land to the east of the Seaton Lane Inn could be used for informal recreation (see paragraph 22.2).
- 22.10** Seaton is largely dependent on Seaham for facilities, although it does have its own community centre.

Shopping

- 22.11** There are no shops at present in Seaton. Recent housing development and potential new development during the Plan period may, however, create an adequate market to ensure the viability of a small general store and this would be consistent with Policy 103 (Shopping Chapter) which allows the development of small shops.

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Shotton

Summary of policies

Environment

- Sh1 ~~Landscaping on Council-owned land~~ - This policy has lapsed
- Sh2 ~~Landscaping on non-Council-owned land~~ - This policy has lapsed

Housing

Housing Land

- Sh3 [North of Victoria Street](#)
- Sh4 [East of Wundsoor Place](#)
- Sh5 [West of Dene Terrace](#)
- Sh6 [North of Dene Terrace](#)
- Sh7 [Alternative uses for Council Depot, Shotton Lane](#)
- Sh8 [Land west of Brackenhill Avenue](#)

Recreation and Community Facilities and Tourism

- Sh9 ~~Safeguarding formal recreation facilities~~ - This policy has lapsed
- Sh10 ~~Safeguarding children's play space/amenity open space~~ - This policy has lapsed
- Sh11 ~~Extension for Comrades Club~~ - This policy has lapsed

Shopping

- Sh12 [Local shopping centre](#)

Introduction

23.1 To alleviate severe housing and environmental problems in Shotton, the District Council initiated a major improvement programme in the mid-1970's, incorporating housing clearance and redevelopment, industrial development and large-scale reclamation schemes. Whilst most of this programme has been implemented, increasing out-migration so reduced the demand for new housing that in some areas demolition was not followed by re-building. The original Local Plan, prepared in the early 1980's, therefore, sought to concentrate redevelopment on more important sites in the village whilst the remainder were landscaped. Since then, the majority of the important sites have been redeveloped and there is now insufficient land available within the existing framework of the settlement to accommodate anticipated developments during the Plan period. The Plan, therefore, seeks to allocate suitable sites to accommodate these developments and thus complement initiatives being undertaken to regenerate the village.

- 23.2** The population of Shotton has declined significantly since the 1950's, due to declining job opportunities and increasing out-migration, to the current (1991) estimated level of 4,200. It is hoped that the population of the village will stabilise as further housing development takes place.

Environment

- 23.3** The appearance of Shotton has been considerably improved in recent years through a programme of clearance of older housing, the reclamation of the colliery and former mineral railway line and new housing development, together with a programme of landscaping and environmental improvement schemes. Further improvements are required elsewhere in the village, in particular the rationalisation and screening of several unattractive garage sites and the landscaping of a number of small sites.

Policy Sh1

The district council will improve the following areas through appropriate landscaping:

- (i) Bruce Glazier Terrace
- (ii) Arden Street Green

Implementation

1. Finance will be sought from the District Council's Capital Programme or revenue budgets to implement these schemes. Further details are contained in paragraph 3.9 (Implementation Chapter).

Policy Sh2

Landscaping works are proposed in the following areas:

- (i) Garage Site South of Dene Crescent
- (ii) Garage Site East of Bridge Road
- (iii) Commercial Garage, Front Street
- (iv) Salvation Army Hall, Front Street
- (v) North of Front Street
- (vi) East of Potto Street (2 Sites)

Implementation

1. The District Council will approach the landowners, the Parish Council and the Groundwork East Durham, as appropriate, to secure the improvement of these sites.

Public Utilities

- 23.4** The sewerage system in Shotton has recently been improved and this along with the electricity and water supply system should now be adequate to cater for proposed developments over the Plan Period.

Employment

- 23.5** The closure of the colliery in 1972 removed the main source of employment from the village. To try to reduce rising unemployment, small industrial estates have been developed by the District Council on the site of the former colliery yard (known as the Shotton Colliery Industrial Estate) and at Thornley Station immediately south of the settlement. In accordance with Policy 54 (Industry and Business Chapter) the two estates are designated for uses in Class B1, B2 and B8 of the Use Classes Order and retail uses permitted by Policy 105. Bad neighbour Uses are also permitted at Thornley Station. The Shotton Colliery Industrial Estate is also identified for an industrial estate enhancement scheme in accordance with Policy 61.
- 23.6** A variety of factory units have been constructed on these estates by the District Council and the Rural Development Commission. These developments, together with the close proximity of the Peterlee industrial estates and the Brackenhill Business Park, mean that

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Housing

Existing Stock

- 23.7** There are approximately 1700 dwellings in Shotton of which 40% are in District Council ownership, 40% are privately owned and the remainder are owned by Home Housing.

House Conditions

- 23.8** As a result of the clearance and redevelopment programme, few of the Council properties require improvement schemes. The environment of the housing estates has also been improved. The Home Housing dwellings and their surrounding environment have also undergone improvement. Of the private housing, the majority of the older terraced houses remaining in the village centre may be eligible for renovation grants.

New Council Housing

- 23.9** There is likely to be a small need for additional aged persons/special purposes accommodation in Shotton over the Plan period, for which a suitable site has been identified.

Land to the North of Victoria Street

- 23.10** This is a landscaped area (of 0.6 hectares), in Council ownership, created following the completion of the housing clearance programme. In view of its proximity to shops and other facilities in the centre of the village part of this area would be suitable for any aged persons' dwellings which the Council or a housing association may wish to develop within the Plan period. The remainder would be suitable for private housing development.

Policy Sh3

0.6 hectares of land north of Victoria Street is allocated for housing.

Implementation

1. *A design guide will be prepared to guide the development of the site.*

New Private Housing

- 23.11** During the past fifteen years there has been a moderate demand for private housing in the village. This is evidenced by the redevelopment of the Friar's Green and former school sites in the centre of the village, the development of the largest site adjacent to Salters Lane (nearing completion) and small sites at Fleming Field and Station Road. In September 1998, the Council granted planning permission for 95 dwellings on land north of Station Road. Whilst this site is expected to meet much of the need for new housing within the plan period, there is still a need to allocate a modest amount of additional housing land. Although there is a general lack of available land within the village itself the plan has identified land on the edge of the village which is well related both to the existing framework of development and to existing services.

Land to the East of Windsor Place

- 23.12** Along the eastern edge of Shotton between Windsor Place and Sandgate Cottage lies approximately 3.1 hectares of land including a grassed area and peripheral tree planting. The land, part of which is in Council ownership, includes the site of the former mineral railway line and reclaimed colliery housing land. In view of the need for additional housing land on the edge of the village, it is considered that this area is well related to the provision of local services and its allocation for housing would serve to 'round-off' the physical framework of the settlement.
- 23.13** As part of the site's development a comprehensive landscaping belt should be established along its eastern boundary utilising, enhancing and extending the existing belt of trees. The trees on the site's north-western boundary should also be retained. This will allow the establishment of a logical boundary to the settlement and an improvement to the setting of the village in this area. Vehicular access to the site should be gained from Front Street.
- 23.14** Subject to the retention of the existing tree belts, approximately 2.6 hectares of developable land are available and it is estimated that 55 dwellings could be accommodated on the site.

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Policy Sh4

3.3 hectares of land to the east of Windsor Place is allocated for housing. Development proposals should incorporate the retention and enhancement of the existing tree belts along the site's eastern and north-western boundaries and the retention or diversion of the existing public right of way.

Implementation

1. *The District Council will acquire land not in its ownership and will dispose of this 3.3 hectare site to a developer.*
2. *The District Council will prepare a design brief to guide the development.*

Land to the West of Dene Terrace

- 23.15** There is an area (of 0.9 hectares) of open space, predominantly in Council ownership, between the two rows of terraced houses on Dene Terrace and Milton Grove. The infilling of the gap between the two rows of terraced houses with housing development would improve the appearance of the village and enclose the space to the south. The development should allow a footpath to be developed from Shotton Lane to the allotments and the angling ponds to the south. It is estimated that the site could accommodate five dwellings.

Policy Sh5

0.1 hectares of land is allocated to the west of Dene Terrace, fronting onto back Victoria Street, for housing. Development proposals should incorporate a footpath in order to provide access from Shotton Lane to the open space to the south of the site.

Implementation

1. *The District Council will prepare a design brief to guide the development.*

Land North of Dene Crescent, Shotton Lane

- 23.16** Between Dene Crescent and a terrace of new houses on Shotton Lane is an area of open

space created by the demolition of several houses and the reclamation of a former mineral railway line. The redevelopment of the remainder of the frontage for this purpose would be particularly beneficial to the village as this would link the two terraces, Dene Crescent and Dene Terrace, to the main body of the village. Such redevelopment should provide for the public right of way which crosses the site.

Policy Sh6

0.17 hectares of the land north of Dene Crescent is allocated for housing. Development proposals should incorporate the retention of the public right of way across the site.

Council Depot, Shotton Lane

- 23.17** This site on Shotton Lane is owned by the District Council and is currently used as a cleansing depot. The site lies within a residential area and therefore if the land becomes surplus to the Council's requirements, redevelopment for housing would be the most appropriate alternative use. It is estimated that the site could accommodate two dwellings. Provided there are no adverse effects on the amenity of neighbouring dwellings, B1 (light industrial /offices) Uses may also be acceptable.

Policy Sh7

The council depot, Shotton Lane is allocated for housing. Light industrial/office (Class B1) development will also be acceptable provided there would be no adverse effect on the amenity of neighbouring residents.

Land west of Brackenhill Avenue

- 23.18** This is a rectangular piece of low grade agricultural land, 0.3 hectares in size, whose conditions detract from the appearance of the area and the south west approach to the village. The development of the northern part of this site for a single dwelling, coupled with the implementation of a landscaping/tree planting scheme on the remainder of the land would improve the appearance of the area and 'round off' this part of the village.

Policy Sh8

0.3 hectares of land west of Brackenhill Avenue is allocated for a single dwelling. Planning permission will be granted for the dwelling subject to the proposal incorporating an appropriate environmental scheme on the remainder of the site

Transport

- 23.19** A number of improvements schemes have been carried out in recent years including the re-alignment of the junction of Front Street and Station Road and the provision of parking lay-bys on the Ashbrooke Estate. There are, however, localised problems of congestion outside the school on Station Road at certain times of the day.

Recreation and Community Facilities

Outdoor Sport and Recreation Facilities

- 23.20** Shotton is well provided with formal recreation facilities, having a recreation ground on Station Road which has been extensively developed by the Parish Council. In addition, the Victoria Show Ground, the land adjacent to the community centre, has been developed as recreation fields. In order to protect these valuable facilities only sport and recreational development will be approved on these sites as set out in Policy 90 of the Plan.

Policy Sh9

~~The development of the station road recreation ground or the Victoria Showground, or land adjacent to the community centre will only be approved for sport or recreational purposes.~~

Children's Play Space/Amenity Open Space

- 23.21** Shotton is well provided with informal areas of open space comprising sites north of Victoria Street, west of Dene Terrace, east of Hopper Terrace, Arden Street, Ashbrooke Estate and adjacent to Bruce Glasier Terrace. The extent of the over-provision has allowed the release of the Victoria Street site for housing development (see paragraph 23.10, Policy Sh3). There is however a shortage of equipped children's play space in the village compared to NPFA minimum standards. The playground in the village is at the Recreation Ground. Further provision could be made on the existing areas of open space. In accordance with Policies 91 and 92 of the Plan (Recreation Chapter) the remaining areas of informal open space and the playgrounds should be safeguarded from development.

Policy Sh10

~~The development of the following areas will only be approved for recreational purposes:~~

- ~~(i) West of Dene Terrace~~
- ~~(ii) Adjacent to Bruce Glasier Terrace~~
- ~~(iii) East of Hopper Terrace~~
- ~~(iv) Arden Street~~
- ~~(v) Ashbrooke Estate~~
- ~~(vi) Dunelm Place~~

Health and Community Facilities

- 23.22** Shotton is well served with health and community facilities.

Land Adjacent to the Comrades Social Club & Institute

- 23.23** The District Council has sold the cleared housing site to the west of the club for extensions to their premises and car park.

Policy Sh11

~~The land west of the Comrades Club is allocated for extensions to the existing premises and car park.~~

Shopping

- 23.24** The main shopping centre within Shotton is centred around Potto Street and Old School Row. It contains a variety of small shops, and a supermarket together with key non-retail uses such as a library and a doctor's surgery. It is therefore classified as a local shopping centre under the terms of Policy 102 (Shopping Chapter) of the Plan. In accordance with Policy 102, any new large shops/supermarkets within the village should be located here. The District Council will, however, encourage other uses in this area including local offices (Policy 114) and the conversion of first floor premises into residential flats (paragraph 5.48).

- 23.25** Shotton also possesses two other small groups of shops on Front Street and Carlyle Crescent. Here, and elsewhere in the village outside the designated local centre, Policy 103 allows for the development of smaller retail units.

Policy Sh12

The local shopping centre for Shotton will consist of the east side of Potto Street between Cowley Street and the Comrades Club, Old School Row and the public library.

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South Hetton

Summary of policies

Environment

- ~~So1 Safeguarding of land east of Windsor Drive~~ - This policy has lapsed
- ~~So2 Environmental improvements on Council owned land~~ - This policy has lapsed
- ~~So3 Environmental improvements on non-Council owned land~~ - This policy has lapsed

Housing

Housing Land

- ~~So4 South of Fallowfield Terrace~~ - This policy has lapsed
- So5 [North of Fallowfield Terrace](#)
- ~~So6 Primary School site~~ - This policy has lapsed
- So7 [East of Windermere Road](#)

Recreation and Community Facilities and Tourism

- ~~So8 Safeguarding of the Welfare Ground~~ - This policy has lapsed
- ~~So9 Safeguarding of children's play space/amenity open space~~ - This policy has lapsed

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Introduction

- 24.1** South Hetton developed around the colliery which was established in 1831, and is divided into three distinct parts by land comprising two former railway lines which ran north to south through the settlement.
- 24.2** As a result of housing clearance and reclamation and the subsequent lack of demand for redevelopment due to a declining population, there are several large areas of open space within South Hetton. In order to bring a greater degree of cohesion to the village, it is considered that these should be the priority areas for development over the Plan period. While some of these have become valued resources for informal recreation, the development of others would help to improve the environment of the village and bring a greater degree of cohesion to the pattern of development within it.
- 24.3** The population of South Hetton is estimated to be 2,780 (1991 Census) having declined slightly since 1971.

Environment

- 24.4** The appearance of South Hetton has been greatly improved over the past 20 years with the clearance of older housing, the reclamation of the former colliery site, new housing

development and a programme of environmental improvements. Further improvements will be achieved following the reclamation and redevelopment of the Hawthorn Coke Works site (paragraphs 4.21-4.31/Policy 50 of the Business and Industry Chapter), the development of the housing sites identified/under construction, together with environmental improvements on particularly prominent sites.

Land East of Windsor Drive and South of Ravensworth Court

- 24.5 This large grassed area, 3.6 hectares in total, adjoins Front Street and provides a green buffer between the existing housing centred around Windsor Drive and the industrial estate to the east. It also contains a small equipped children's play area. The area therefore provides an important informal recreational resource which should be maintained and protected. The area is, however, rather open and exposed and its appearance would be considerably enhanced by appropriate tree planting and landscaping. Tree planting along the site's southern boundary would also help to enclose the open space and improve the general environment of Front Street.

Policy So1

The district council will improve the open land east of Windsor Drive and south of Ravensworth Court through appropriate landscaping which:

- (i) reinforces the settlement boundary; and
- (ii) provides additional screening of the South Hetton Industrial Estate; and
- (iii) improves the children's play area; and
- (iv) enhances the environment of Front Street.

Development which would detract from the visual or amenity value of the site will not be approved.

Implementation

1. *The District Council owns the land and will implement the proposal through its Capital Programme or revenue budgets. Further details are contained in paragraph 3.9 (Implementation Chapter).*

Other Environmental Improvements

- 24.6 In addition to the Frederick Street garage site, which will be improved through its development for housing (see paragraph 24.17) there are six areas in South Hetton which would benefit from landscaping /improvement.

Policy So2

The district council will improve the following areas through appropriate landscaping:

- (i) Charters Crescent Garage;
- (ii) Hawthorn Cottages.

Implementation

1. *Finance will be sought from the District Council's Capital Programme or revenue budgets to implement these schemes.*
2. *In the event of the two remaining garages on the Charters Crescent site being removed the Council will consider marketing the land for housing, in accordance with Policy 67 (Housing Chapter).*

- 24.7 Because of the removal of the former mineral railway embankment which provided screening for the haulage yard south of Fallowfield Terrace, which tends to form an intrusive and unsightly element at a key point in the settlement, landscaping works will be required in the area east of the haulage depot.

Policy So3

Landscaping/improvement works are proposed to the following sites:-

- (i) ~~public conveniences east of Hedley Terrace;~~
- (ii) ~~east of haulage depot, Fallowfield Terrace;~~
- (iii) ~~former pithead baths~~
- (iv) ~~former Co-Op, Welfare Crescent~~

Implementation

1. *The District Council will approach the landowners to secure the implementation of these sites.*

Public Utilities

- 24.8** As a result of improvements to the sewerage system, there should be adequate capacity to cater for existing and proposed development in South Hetton over the Plan period.

Employment

- 24.9** The run-down and eventual closure of South Hetton Colliery in 1982 removed the main source of employment from the village.
- 24.10** In an attempt to diversify the employment structure of the village the District Council has developed a small industrial estate to the west of the colliery. The estate is now largely developed and has recently been extended onto the former colliery site. In accordance with Policy 54 (Industry and Business Chapters), the industrial estate is designated for Uses in Class B1, B2 and B8 of the Use Classes Order 1987 and retail uses permitted by Policy 105. The estate has been the subject of a partial enhancement scheme, which remains to be completed.

Housing

Existing Stock

- 24.11** There are approximately 1100 dwellings in South Hetton of which two thirds are in Council ownership.

Housing Conditions

- 24.12** Most of the Council houses in South Hetton are in good condition and lie in pleasant surroundings. A large proportion of private houses are pre-Second World War and some may be eligible for renovation grants. The Home Housing properties and their environment have been the subject of an improvement scheme.

New Council Housing

- 24.13** Although there is little need for general Council house building in South Hetton there is a demand for aged persons' housing. Part of this demand has been met by the aged persons/sheltered housing complex of 20 units, which has been developed adjacent to the Welfare Ground. Any outstanding demand could be met by the conversion of existing stock.

New Private Housing

- 24.14** The completion of the Plantation housing estate in 1993, together with the granting of detailed planning permission for 42 dwellings on land opposite the Welfare Park (now underway) indicates some interest from the private housing market. To encourage continuing investment and to consolidate the built-up areas of the settlement, further sites should be identified.

Land South of Fallowfield Terrace

- 24.15** This site comprises two hectares of under-used agricultural land, in private ownership. 0.1 hectares of land on the north eastern edge of the site next to the haulage depot has already been developed for a single dwelling. The development of the remainder of the site would consolidate the physical framework of the village and round off its southern boundary. Access should be gained by utilising the existing road between numbers 17 and 18 Fallowfield Terrace, then installing an access through the allotments to the necessary standards of the Highways Authority. As an alternative, access could also be taken from the track running along the site's western boundary. This would, however, require the relevant stretch of the track being upgraded to adoptable standard. Any built development should be set back from the haulage depot and where necessary include appropriate noise attenuation measures to ensure that the amenity of prospective residents is not affected by this use. It is estimated that the site could be developed for 40 dwellings.

Policy So4

Two hectares of land south of Fallowfield Terrace is allocated for housing. In order to protect residential amenity development proposals should include a landscaping buffer between new dwellings and the haulage depot to the north east.

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Land North of Fallowfield Terrace

- 24.16** This site, of approximately 0.68 hectares comprises a former garage and petrol station together with adjoining open space to the north. The site is currently in an unsightly condition. Its development would help to consolidate the physical framework of the village and enhance the environment of the area. The incorporation of a tree planting belt along the northern edge of the site would help to reinforce the settlement boundary. The site is in mixed ownership and may need to be acquired utilising compulsory purchase proceedings before it can be developed. In order to secure adequate visibility onto the A182, access should be developed at the extreme western edge of the site. It is estimated that the site could be developed for approximately 8 dwellings.

Policy So5

0.68 hectares of land north of Fallowfield Terrace is allocated for housing. Development proposals should incorporate a tree planting belt along the northern boundary of the site.

Implementation

1. *The District Council will acquire the plots not in its ownership and then dispose of the site for private housing development.*

Former Primary School Site, Frederick Street

- 24.17** Planning permission for housing on this 0.39 hectare site was granted in 1992 but has now lapsed. The site is centrally located within the village and well related to existing facilities.

It is estimated that the site could accommodate approximately six dwellings.

Policy So6

~~0.39 hectares of land west of Frederick Street is allocated for housing.~~

Land East of Windermere Road

- 24.18** Opposite the existing houses on Windermere Road is a narrow site in Council ownership, previously occupied by terraced houses. This site (0.27 hectares in area) is considered to be suitable for housing development, for up to 3 dwellings.

Policy So7

0.27 hectares of land east of Windermere Road is allocated for housing.

Implementation

1. *The District Council will attempt to dispose of the land. If unsuccessful, the land will be considered for appropriate landscaping or disposal to the adjacent farmer.*
2. *The District Council will prepare a design brief to guide the nature of the development.*

Transport

- 24.19** Road links from the village to Seaham, the A19 and the A690 will be greatly improved during the Plan period with the completion by Durham County Council and Sunderland City Council of the Dawdon-Snippergate road and the Hetton-Houghton Bypass respectively. These roads will provide easy access to new employment sites at Hawthorn Coke Works, the Enterprise Zones south of Seaham and at Rainton Bridge.

Recreation and Community Facilities

Outdoor Sport and Recreation Facilities

- 24.20** South Hetton is well provided with outdoor sport and recreation facilities. The Welfare Ground at Greencroft includes football pitches, a tennis court, bowling green and a cricket ground and has recently been improved through the provision of a new pavilion. In order to protect this valuable facility, only sport and recreational development will be approved on this site.

Policy So8

~~The development of the welfare ground will only be approved for sport and recreational purposes.~~

Children's Play Space/Amenity Open Space

- 24.21** South Hetton is well provided with informal areas of open space on the former colliery site and at Ravensworth Court, and possesses children's playgrounds at the Welfare Ground, Quinn Square, Jubilee Square, and Ravensworth Court. These valuable facilities will be safeguarded from development.

Policy So9

~~The development of the following areas will only be approved for recreational purposes:-~~

- ~~(i) Quinn Square~~
- ~~(ii) Jubilee Square~~
- ~~(iii) Welfare Ground~~
- ~~(iv) Ravensworth Court~~

Health and Community Facilities

- 24.22** For its size South Hetton is adequately served by health and other community facilities having a doctor's surgery and a child welfare clinic. The village lacks ophthalmic and dental facilities with the result that residents have to travel to neighbouring settlements for such provision. In addition, since 1983 the Community Association has converted the former British Coal offices into a general purpose sports and community centre.

Shopping

- 24.23** There is no single shopping centre in South Hetton, instead, three small groups of shops at Welfare Crescent, Fallowfield Terrace and Hedley Terrace /Argyle Place serve the three main housing areas. New development proposed should ensure the viability of existing shops and may possibly stimulate the establishment of further small units which would be consistent with Policy 103 (Shopping Chapter).



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Thornley

Summary of policies

Environment

- ~~Th1~~ ~~Landscaping of Council owned sites~~ - This policy has lapsed
- ~~Th2~~ ~~Landscaping of non-Council owned sites~~ - This policy has lapsed

Employment

- ~~Th3~~ ~~Showman's Compound site~~ - This policy has lapsed

Housing

Housing Land

- Th4 [South of Hartlepool Street](#)
- Th5 [North of Hartlepool Street](#)
- ~~Th6~~ ~~Thornley House~~ - This policy has lapsed

Transport

- ~~Th7~~ ~~Off-street parking scheme~~ - This policy has lapsed

Recreation and Community Facilities and Tourism

- ~~Th8~~ ~~Safeguarding of children's play space/amenity open space~~ - This policy has lapsed
- ~~Th9~~ ~~Proposed children's play area~~ - This policy has lapsed
- ~~Th10~~ ~~Proposed community/resource centre~~ - This policy has lapsed

Introduction

- 25.1** Thornley achieved its peak population in the early 1950's but the clearance of unfit housing, together with the run-down and eventual closure of the colliery in 1970, resulted in population decline and rising unemployment. Although many environmental improvements were carried out in the 1970's, because of the lack of interest shown by the private sector in investing in the village and the lack of demand for Council housing, cleared areas have not been redeveloped.
- 25.2** New development would do much to promote confidence and re-establish the village form but the scale of development necessary for this to be achieved is only likely to result from District Council initiatives including the disposal of Council owned land for private development.

- 25.3 The population of Thornley has declined from over 4700 in 1951 to its current 1991 Census figure of 2,950. Continuing decline is likely to occur over the Plan period putting further pressure on the viability of shops and services unless positive action is taken to reverse the trend.

Environment

- 25.4 The reclamation of the colliery and many smaller environmental improvement schemes have greatly improved the appearance of Thornley. In the past decade limited improvements have been carried out to the area between Bow Street and the B1279 and to the Village Green. A number of small scale landscaping/tree planting works have also been carried out.
- 25.5 There is a continuing need for environmental improvements in the village. The proposed redevelopment of the Hartlepool Street area (Policies Th3-5) would have the most significant effect on the village but equally necessary are improvements to small areas throughout the village.
- 25.6 There are a number of other small areas within housing estates and adjacent to the main roads which would also benefit from landscaping.

Policy Th1

The district council will improve the appearance of the following areas through appropriate landscaping:-

- (i) Thornlaw North housing estate
- (ii) Northern and western boundaries of Coopers Close estate
- (iii) west of infants school
- (iv) south of the community centre
- (v) bank adjacent to gospel hall, Coopers Terrace
- (vi) open space at Hillside Crescent
- (vii) open space at Gorehill Estate
- (viii) Shinwell Crescent garage site
- (ix) Gorehill garage site
- (x) Thornlaw South housing estate

Implementation

1. Finance will be sought from the District Council's Capital Programme or revenue budgets to implement these schemes. Further details are contained in paragraph 3.9 (Implementation Chapter).

Policy Th2

Landscaping and improvement works are proposed to:-

- (i) garage site to the west of Thornlaw South housing estate
- (ii) land north of the community centre
- (iii) Elvet House, Hartlepool Street
- (iv) Colliery Inn, Hartlepool Street

Implementation

1. The District Council will approach the landowners and the Groundwork East Durham to secure the improvement of the site.

Public Utilities

- 25.7 Due to the large amount of clearance which has taken place in Thornley previously, there should be enough spare sewerage, water and electricity capacity to accommodate

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Employment

- 25.8** The closure of Thornley Colliery and the washery in the 1970's removed the major sources of employment from the village. It is now heavily dependent on outside sources of employment.

South of Hartlepool Street

- 25.9** As part of the Council's general initiative to improve the appearance and the environment of the Hartlepool Street area, land south of Hartlepool Street has been set aside for the development of a compound for a local showman who currently stores showground equipment in the winter months on land north of Hartlepool Street. Vehicular access should be gained along Durham Street. In order to reduce the visual impact of the compound a landscaped buffer should be provided around its western and southern edges.

Policy Th3

~~0.56 hectares of land south of Hartlepool Street and west of Durham Street is allocated for a storage compound. Development proposals should incorporate a landscaped buffer around its western and southern edges.~~

Implementation

1. *The District Council has prepared a brief for the redevelopment of the site and will fund its implementation.*

Housing

Existing Stock

- 25.10** There are approximately 1254 dwellings in Thornley, 51% of which are in Council ownership. Private housing is concentrated in three areas, the ribbon development along Dunelm Road in the west of the village, the Villas/Stanley Terrace and the Galt Street/Asquith Street/Garden Terrace area in the east.

Housing Conditions

- 25.11** The Thornlaw South housing estate has deteriorated during the past five years, as evidenced by the number of vacant properties and cleared housing sites. In accordance with Policy Th1(x) the estate is identified for an environmental initiative. With the exception of the late nineteenth century terraced housing in the east of the village, which may be eligible for renovation grants, the private housing is generally in good condition and in attractive surroundings.

New Council Housing

- 25.12** At the present time, there are a number of vacant Council houses in the village. Any need for additional family/aged persons/special need accommodation over the Plan period is likely to be met within the existing Council housing stock.

New Private Housing

- 25.13 During the past decade there has been a small, though increasing demand in Thornley for the construction of private housing, as evidenced by the development of the land west of the Vicarage, the school site, the former Ritz Cinema site, and the granting of planning permission for the construction of 6 dwellings at Thornlaw North. Private housing development is likely to play an important role in the regeneration of the village. Further land should, therefore, be allocated in areas which will help to re-establish the framework of the settlement.

South of Hartlepool Street

- 25.14 The decline which has affected the whole of Thornley is most evident in the Hartlepool Street area. With the clearance of houses most of the shops have closed and there are now numerous areas of open space where clearance has not been followed by rebuilding. Throughout the 1970's and 1980's, the Council has tried to improve the appearance of the area by acquiring derelict properties, demolishing them and grassing over the sites so that the area is now relatively tidy. The District Council has now completed a land assembly exercise south of Hartlepool Street and is seeking the comprehensive redevelopment of the site. The development of the site for housing would help to re-establish the framework of this part of the village and greatly improve its appearance. It is estimated that this site will accommodate 35 dwellings. The existing vehicular access onto Hartlepool Street, serving the pair of semi-detached houses known as Dunelm/Fencote Houses, should be widened to serve this area. In order to reduce its visual impact development proposals should incorporate a landscaping belt on the southern and eastern boundaries of the site. Landscaping will also be required on the western side of the site adjoining the proposed showman's compound.

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Policy Th4

1.89 hectares of land to the south of Hartlepool Street and to the east of Durham Street, is allocated for housing. Development proposals will be required to incorporate a landscaping belt on the southern, eastern and western boundaries of the site.

Implementation

1. The District Council will dispose of the land to a private developer.

North of Hartlepool Street

- 25.15 The land north of Hartlepool Street between Bow Street and Cooper's Terrace exhibits the same characteristics as the land to the south. The piecemeal nature of land ownership has prevented the scale of redevelopment necessary to bring about a permanent improvement to the area. Since 1983, the District Council has undertaken a land assembly exercise. Once this has been completed the area will be disposed of for housing. It is estimated that this site (two hectares in area) will accommodate 40 dwellings. A new vehicular access should be established between Percy and Bow Streets, to serve this development.

Policy Th5

Two hectares of land to the north of Hartlepool Street between Bow Street and Coopers Terrace is allocated for housing.

Implementation

1. *The District Council will complete the purchase of the site using compulsory purchase powers where necessary and then dispose of the land to a private developer.*
2. *The District Council will prepare a brief to guide the redevelopment of the site.*

Thornley House

- 25.16** Planning permission for housing on this site was granted in 1990 but has now lapsed. The site is well related to the main area of shops and facilities in the village and the existing pattern of development. It is estimated that the site will accommodate 20 dwellings. Part of the site is covered by a tree preservation order. Although many of the trees are in a damaged or diseased state any development scheme should seek to retain as many of the healthy specimens as possible and incorporate new planting in order to reflect the character of the area.

Policy Th6

~~0.75 hectares of land in the grounds of the former Thornley House is allocated for housing. Development proposals should take account of the existing tree preservation order and incorporate new planting to reflect the character of the area.~~

Transport

- 25.17** Thornley is well located in relation to major traffic routes with the A181 which passes close to the western end of the village providing links eastward to the A19(T) and Peterlee and westward to the centre of the County. Road links to the A19(T) have recently been improved following the completion of the Wheatley Hill By-Pass. The County Council is seeking funding for the construction of the final part of this road, from Wheatley Hill to Bowburn, through its annual TPP submission. The implementation of this scheme will improve the area's accessibility to the A1(M).
- 25.18** Since 1994 two off-street parking schemes have been completed at Hillside Crescent and at Thornlaw North which have helped improve the local environment. However, the absence of adequate off-street facilities in the Villas causes traffic congestion at certain periods. The Parish Council has identified the need for a car park but to date, a suitable site has not been identified. On street parking in other parts of the village causes localised problems of congestion. This problem is particularly acute in the Thornlaw South Estates.
- 25.19** The absence of a direct vehicular access from Percy Street to the Coopers Close Estate results in residents having to follow a circuitous route to the estate. Consideration will be given to developing a link to the estate as part of the development brief for the land north of Hartlepool Street (see Policy Th5). Elsewhere in the village, traffic calming measures are required, particularly on the B1279 road to reduce traffic speeds.

Policy Th7

~~The district council will provide appropriate off street parking facilities in the Thornlaw South estate.~~

Implementation

1. *Finance will be sought from the District Council's Capital Programme or revenue budgets to implement these schemes. Further details are contained in paragraph 3.9 (Implementation Chapter).*

Recreation and Community Facilities

Outdoor Sport and Recreation Facilities

- 25.20** The existing recreation ground is located at the extreme eastern edge of the village and is rather remote from most of the residents. The Parish Council is developing a recreation ground on the former colliery site which should provide a range of facilities to meet the needs of the village. Facilities already provided on the site include an all-weather playing pitch, a children's play area and a football pitch. In addition the open area within the centre of the Thornlaw North housing estate has potential to provide limited formal recreation facilities. The recreation grounds are valuable facilities which will be safeguarded from development under the terms of Policy 90 (see recreation chapter).

Children's Play Space/Amenity Open Space

- 25.21** Thornley is well provided with informal areas of open space comprising sites on the Village Green, in the Thornlaw North and South housing estates, at Gorehill and on the new recreation area. Play area provision is, however, limited to sites at Coopers Close, Thornlaw South, Gorehill and Bow Street. In accordance with Policies 91 and 92 (Recreation Chapter) these areas should be protected from development. Additional sites are required in Thornlaw North and in the Gorehill Estate.

Policy Th8

The development of the following areas of land will only be approved for informal recreation:-

- (i) The Village Green
- (ii) Open Space, Thornlaw North
- (iii) Open Space, Thornlaw South
- (iv) Open Space, Gorehill Estate
- (v) Coopers Close
- (vi) Bow Street

- 25.22** There is one area of grassed land, adjacent to Gorehill Estate, which is owned by the District Council. In view of its location away from main roads and in housing areas, it would be suitable for use as more formal play areas.

Policy Th9

The following area should be developed as children's play area:-

- (i) land west of the infants' school

Education

- 25.23** There is one primary school within Thornley and a Roman Catholic school situated between Thornley and Wheatley Hill which serves both villages. There should be sufficient spare capacity in existing schools to cater for the limited amount of housing development anticipated during the Plan period.

Community Facilities

- 25.24** The main community facilities are found in the former aged miners' hostel opposite the Villas which the District Council has converted into an aged persons' communal centre and the community centre on Hartlepool Street. However, the community centre requires considerable refurbishment and is located on the eastern edge of the village some distance away from the main residential areas. An opportunity exists to develop a new and more centrally located facility on the site of the former library which was destroyed by fire in 1996. The site, on High Street, is ideally located to provide both a new library and a community /resource centre. Proposals on or adjacent to the site which complements the aims of the Parish Council to develop the former colliery land as a recreation area will be considered against Policy 89 of the Plan (see recreation chapter).

Policy Th10

1.3 hectares of land is allocated on High Street for a new library and community/resource centre.

Implementation

1. *The site will be developed as a co-operative venture between the District and Parish Councils, Durham County Council and local residents.*

Shopping

- 25.25** The shops in Thornley are concentrated in two areas, the Villas/Stanley Terrace and Hartlepool Street. There has been a considerable decline in the shopping facilities over the past fifteen years and this has been particularly noticeable in the Hartlepool Street area. In order to increase the vitality of the shopping areas new small shops should normally be located in these areas, in accordance with Policy 103 (Shopping Chapter). The District Council will, however, encourage other uses in these areas, including local offices (Policy 114) and the conversion of first floor premises into residential flats (see para 5.48).



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Trimdon Station (Deaf Hill)

Summary of policies

Environment

- Tr1 ~~Improvement scheme at Luke Street, Rodwell Street, Windsor Street~~ - This policy has lapsed
- Tr2 ~~Landscaping on Council owned land~~ - This policy has lapsed
- Tr3 ~~Landscaping on non-Council owned land~~ - This policy has lapsed

Housing

Housing Land

- Tr4 ~~Small housing sites Transport~~ - This policy has lapsed
- Tr5 ~~Off-street parking schemes~~ - This policy has lapsed

Recreation and Community Facilities and Tourism

- Tr6 ~~Safeguarding of the recreation ground~~ - This policy has lapsed

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Introduction

- 26.1** Trimdon Station (Deaf Hill), situated on the south-western boundary of Easington District, forms a continuous settlement with Trimdon Colliery in Sedgefield District. Although formerly a mining village, the colliery closed in 1967 and Trimdon has now adjusted to the role of a dormitory settlement.
- 26.2** Sedgefield District Council has adopted a District-wide Local Plan which identifies Trimdon Colliery as one of a number of suitable locations for housing development, because of its capacity to support essential services. The Plan also designates a site of 1.2 ha on the north side of Trimdon Colliery for some 30 houses. Clearly, policies for Trimdon Station and Trimdon Colliery should be compatible, particularly as regards scope for expansion and co-ordination of facilities; landscaping and planting, and general environmental improvement.
- 26.3** Following the closure of the colliery, the population of Trimdon has declined to an estimated level of 1400 (1991 Census). It is envisaged that the population will stabilise over the Plan period.

Environment

- 26.4** The appearance of Trimdon Station has been considerably improved in recent years, in particular, through the reclamation of the colliery and the former railway line which runs east to west through the village, the redevelopment of the sites of the Trimdon Foundry Boys School and the land south of the Methodist Chapel, landscaping works in the inter-war housing estate and further tree planting along the former railway line. Continuing

improvements are, however, still needed. In addition, tree-planting various sites and the rationalisation and screening of allotments would contribute to the general appearance of the village.

Luke Street, Rodwell Street, Windsor Street

- 26.5** This area, on the boundary with Sedgefield District, consists of five terraces of early twentieth century private housing. The land between Windsor Street and Rodwell Street is partly used as allotments and partly rough grass. Planning permission has also been granted for a dormer bungalow. The area has been the subject of a partial improvement scheme, undertaken by the Parish Council, but further works are required. It would make an attractive open space/play area. The entrance between Luke Street and Rodwell Street to the allotments behind Luke Street is unsurfaced and very untidy. Surfacing, screening of the allotments and landscaping would greatly enhance the area.

Policy Tr1

~~Landscaping works are proposed in the area of Luke Street, Windsor Street and Rodwell Street.~~

Implementation

1. *The District Council will investigate in more detail necessary improvements in consultation with the Groundwork East Durham, the Parish Council and local residents.*

- 26.6** There are still a number of small areas of open space within housing areas and adjacent to main roads which would benefit from landscaping.

Policy Tr2

~~The district council will improve the appearance of the Laburnum Crescent garage site through appropriate landscaping.~~

Implementation

1. *Finance will be sought from the District Council's Capital Programme or revenue budgets to implement the scheme. Further details are contained in paragraph 3.9 (Implementation Chapter).*

Policy Tr3

~~Landscaping works are proposed in the following areas:~~

- ~~(i) western boundary of St Paul's churchyard~~
- ~~(ii) south side of Wingate Road, west of housing estate~~
- ~~(iii) between 22 and 25 Lilac Crescent~~
- ~~(iv) between Nattress Terrace and Purvis Terrace~~
- ~~(v) land adjacent to garage site (west end of Luke Street)~~
- ~~(vi) 'The Green' (Sycamore Road)~~
- ~~(vii) area adjacent to the garden society/rear of 1-14 Beech Grove~~

Implementation

1. *The District Council will approach the landowners, the Parish Council and Groundwork East Durham to secure the implementation of these schemes.*

Public Utilities

- 26.7** Due to recent improvements to surface drainage in the Wingate/Station Town area, to which Trimdon Station is connected, the sewerage system is unlikely to experience any capacity problems over the Plan period. The Commercial Street area of the village

previously suffered from flooding, but this problem has been alleviated through improvement works.

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Employment

- 26.8** Local sources of employment are limited to Durham Pharmaceuticals, who became established in the former pithead baths, a small haulage business and a number of shops and garages.
- 26.9** To reduce unemployment Sedgefield District Council has developed, with the aid of the Rural Development Commission, a small industrial estate of 3ha at nearby Trimdon Grange. A total of 13,000 square feet of factory floorspace has been provided by the Rural Development Commission. Trimdon Station also lies within reasonable commuting distance of Spennymoor and the industrial estates in the centre of the County.

Housing

Existing Stock

- 26.10** Of the 580 dwellings in Trimdon, 19% are owned by Home Housing. These form the eastern half of the inter-war housing estate in the extreme east of the village. The rest of the houses in the estate are owned by the District Council, together with the more recent development on Malvern Crescent. The remaining dwellings (44% of the total) are in private ownership. Due to lack of demand it is likely that about 32 vacant properties in Beech Grove and Lilac Crescent owned by the Council and Home Housing, which also suffer from structural defects, will be demolished.

Housing Conditions

- 26.11** In the past the Home Housing/District Council estate, between Wingate Road and the former mineral railway line has undergone a housing revitalisation/environmental improvement scheme. The private housing is generally in good condition, and is located in attractive surroundings.

New Council Housing

- 26.12** The only recognised need for new Council housing in Trimdon is for a limited amount of aged persons' accommodation. Sedgefield District Council feel that it is very unlikely that any Council housing will be built in Trimdon Colliery within the Plan period.

New Private Housing

- 26.13** During the past fifteen years there has been a moderate demand for private housing in Trimdon, as evidenced by the redevelopment of several cleared sites in the village. Work began on a site south of Margaret Terrace for the development of a nursing home/14 retirement bungalows but was subsequently halted with the development incomplete. 25 dwellings are being constructed at Rydale Court and the scheme is approximately 50% complete.

East of Margaret Terrace

- 26.14** The land between Margaret Terrace and Wingate Road has been untidy and under-used for a number of years. At the eastern end is a small fish and chip shop and in the centre are

some allotments. The adjacent land is currently being developed for housing. Development of the site (0.5 hectares in area) for the same purpose would greatly improve the area, help to consolidate this part of the village and complement the adjacent development. It is estimated that this site would accommodate 10 dwellings.

Former Garage Site, Luke Street

- 26.15** This site (0.17 hectares in area), on the edge of the village, has been lying in a semi-derelict condition for some time. It is suitable for the construction of a small housing scheme of approximately 5 dwellings which, in combination with landscaping proposals under Policy Tr1, would considerably improve this approach to the village.

Policy Tr4

~~The following sites are allocated for housing:-~~

- ~~(i) 0.5 hectares of land east of Margaret Terrace;~~
- ~~(ii) the former garage site, Luke Street.~~

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Transport

- 26.16** In the past Trimdon Station was not well located in relation to main transport routes. Road communications have, however, been improved following the recent completion of the Wheatley Hill By-Pass and the associated improvements to the B1278 north of the village. Access to the A1(M) and the centre of the County will be improved with the construction of the new road from Wheatley Hill to the Bowburn Interchange, for which the County Council is currently seeking funding through its annual TPP Submission to the Department of Transport.
- 26.17** On-street parking causes congestion in the Council housing estate north of Wingate Road, and this problem is particularly severe in Lilac Crescent. The problem would be alleviated through the provision of appropriate off-street parking facilities. There are also localised on-street parking problems on Station Road, but unfortunately, there is no immediate solution.

Policy Tr5

~~The district council will provide appropriate off-street parking facilities in Lilac Crescent.~~

Implementation

1. *Finance will be sought from the District Council's Capital Programme or revenue budgets to implement these schemes.*

Recreation, Social and Community Facilities

Formal Recreation Facilities

- 26.18** The formal Recreation Ground serving Trimdon Station and Trimdon Colliery, is largely situated in Sedgefield District. Although poorly located for the northern part of Trimdon Station, the settlement as a whole is adequately provided with these facilities, particularly as it has a relatively elderly population. In order to protect the valuable resource which

the Recreation Ground represents, only recreational development will be approved on this site. The only exceptions where this approach may be relaxed are set out in Policy 90 of the Recreation Chapter and include circumstances such as the provision of new outdoor sports facilities which are related to the existing outdoor sport area.

Policy Tr6

~~The development of the recreation ground south of Wingate Road will only be approved for sport and recreational purposes.~~

Open Space/Play Areas

- 26.23** Informal areas of open space/children's play space provision are limited to the recreation ground. These facilities are, however, remote from residents in the north of the village. Residents in the west of the village have easy access to play facilities on the south side of Rodwell Street in Trimdon Colliery.

Education

- 26.24** Trimdon has one primary school on Station Road. Falling numbers mean that there would be adequate capacity to cater for any increase in the number of school children likely to result from the limited amount of housing development expected to take place over the Plan period.

Health and Community Facilities

- 26.25** As there are no health facilities, Trimdon Station relies on Trimdon Grange for dental and doctor's surgeries. It is unlikely that additional community facilities will be required in Trimdon during the Plan period.

Shopping

- 26.26** There are a small number of shops in Trimdon Station and additional facilities in Trimdon Colliery. There is no apparent demand for new shop units and it is possible that there may be a decline in existing facilities over the Plan period. Any new small shops would be consistent with Policy 103 (Shopping Chapter).



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Wheatley Hill

Summary of policies

Environment

~~Wh1 Landscaping on Council-owned land~~ - This policy has lapsed

~~Wh2 Landscaping on non-Council-owned land~~ - This policy has lapsed

Housing

~~Wh3 Housing/environmental improvement scheme~~ - This policy has lapsed

Housing Land

Wh4 [Former Numbered Streets](#)

~~Wh5 Cleared site, Thornley Road~~ - This policy has lapsed

~~Wh6 Quilstyle Road~~ - This policy has lapsed

~~Wh7 Former Scrapyard~~ - This policy has lapsed

Transport

~~Wh8 Off-street parking schemes~~ - This policy has lapsed

Recreation and Community Facilities and Tourism

~~Wh9 Safeguarding recreation ground~~ - This policy has lapsed

~~Wh10 Safeguarding open space~~ - This policy has lapsed

Shopping

Wh11 [Local shopping centre](#)

Wh12 [Improvement scheme at eastern end of Front Street](#)

Wh13 [Uses permitted in area covered by Policy Wh12](#)

Introduction

27.1 The closure of Wheatley Hill Colliery in 1968 and Thornley Colliery in 1970 resulted in rising unemployment followed by population decline, with the result that in most cases housing clearance was not followed by rebuilding. In the past fifteen years £450,000 has been invested in the redevelopment of the site of the former Boys School, on Front Street and part of the former Numbered Streets as small industrial estates. Other areas, notably the remainder of the former Numbered Streets have undergone environmental improvements and the former Named Streets have been redeveloped for housing. Further

new development is required to restore confidence to the village, but this is only likely to result from District Council initiatives through the disposal of Council owned land for private or partnership development. Further environmental improvements are required to make the village more attractive for residents and to encourage private investment.

- 27.2** Past development extended the village south to the A181 with the result that many residents are a considerable distance from shops and facilities. In order that this situation is not aggravated, any new development should be located as close to the central area as possible to provide support for shops and facilities.
- 27.3** Since reaching its peak in the early 1950's, the population of Wheatley Hill has declined to its current (1991 Census) figure of about 3,420. Further decline may occur over the Plan period, putting further pressure on the viability of shops and services, unless positive action is taken to reverse the trend.

Environment

- 27.4** Due largely to extensive reclamation over the last twenty years, Wheatley Hill is now set in attractive surroundings, although some areas remain, particularly on the northern edge of the settlement, where landscaping works, allied in some cases to sympathetic and appropriate redevelopment, would assist in consolidating the form of the village. The District Council has also undertaken a number of schemes including a limited painting scheme to the shop frontages in Front Street, utilising funds from the Rural Development Commission, and landscaping schemes to sites adjacent to the Patton Street Housing Estate and at the junction of Wingate Lane/Quetlaw Road.
- 27.5** Despite these improvements, further initiatives are required if Wheatley Hill is to be attractive to residents, and to encourage new investment. Priority should be given to the redevelopment of the Numbered Streets (Policy Wh4). There are also several smaller sites elsewhere in the village which would benefit from attention. In addition, overhead wires along Front Street are particularly unsightly. The undergrounding of these wires is, however, unlikely as the priority over the Plan period will be existing Conservation Areas and schemes undertaken as part of the settlement renewal projects.

Policy Wh1

~~The district council will improve the following areas through appropriate landscaping:~~

- ~~(i) housing estate south of Wingate Lane (5 sites)~~
- ~~(ii) Bevan Crescent garage site~~

Implementation

1. *Finance will be sought from the Council's Capital Programme or revenue budgets to implement the schemes. Further details are contained in paragraph 3.9 (Implementation Chapter).*

Policy Wh2

~~Landscaping works are proposed in the following areas:~~

- ~~(i) adjacent to council yard, Thornley Road~~
- ~~(ii) east of Stephen's Terrace~~
- ~~(iii) north of scrapyards, Black Lane~~

Implementation

1. *The District Council will approach the landowner, the Parish Council and the Groundwork East Durham to secure the implementation of the scheme.*

Public Utilities

- 27.6** Wheatley Hill has adequate sewerage, water and electricity capacity to accommodate development of the scale proposed over the Plan period.

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Employment

- 27.7** Although formerly heavily dependent upon coal mining, the structure of the local economy has completely changed and many people travel to surrounding areas for employment. Thornley Station Industrial Estate has been developed one mile to the east of the village, whilst Peterlee Industrial Estate, easily accessible via the A181, provides a variety of employment in close proximity. A significant number of residents also commute to sources of employment in Durham City. Employment is also available locally in shops and services in the village and in the Wheatley Hill workshops. In accordance with Policy 54 (Industry and Business Chapter), the workshops are designated for uses in Class B1, B2 and B8 of the Use Classes Order 1987 and retail uses permitted by Policy 105. The workshops are also identified for an industrial estate enhancement scheme in accordance with Policy 61.
- 27.8** The abattoir also provides an important source of employment in the village. The site is, however, constrained and the presence of nearby residential properties has prevented its expansion, due to the amenity problem the use could create. Without prejudice to the current operations, the Council would encourage the relocation of the business to an alternative site.

Housing

- 27.9** There are approximately 1460 dwellings in Wheatley Hill, of which 60% are in District Council ownership.

Housing Conditions

- 27.10** During the past fifteen years a substantial number of Council houses have been the subject of full or partial improvement schemes, although some have been identified as still being in need of improvement. In addition, the environment of some parts of the Council estates would benefit from tree and shrub planting. The private housing is generally in good condition and in attractive surroundings.
Housing Estate South of Quilstyle Road
- 27.11** A significant number of properties in this Council housing estate have been improved, though a number still need full improvement schemes. Some of the areas of open space within the estate are unattractive and would benefit from landscaping. In addition, there is a shortage of children's playing space on the estate and its existing layout effectively prevents additional sites from being provided. The Council will explore the opportunities for increasing provision in the context of undertaking the planned improvements to the houses and the environment on the estate

Policy Wh3

~~The district council will complete the improvement of the houses and environment in the estate south of Quilstyle Road and will explore the opportunities for increasing the provision of children's playing space.~~

New Council Housing

- 27.12** At the present time there are a number of vacant Council houses in the village. Any need for additional family/aged persons/special needs accommodation over the Plan period, is likely to be met within the existing Council stock.

New Private Housing

27.13 There has been a significant amount of private housing development in Wheatley Hill during the past three years as evidenced by the redevelopment of the former Named Street for 38 dwellings, and the former school site north of Church Street for 16 dwellings (currently underway). These schemes have made a significant improvement to the appearance of the village. Interest is also being shown in the redevelopment of a number of vacant/semi-derelict sites in the village for residential purposes. Further sites are allocated in the Local Plan to meet demand for future housing development and to reinforce and improve the appearance of the edge of the village.

Numbered Streets

27.14 With the exception of the northern five properties of First Street, which have been improved and are to remain, the former Numbered Streets have been cleared and are in the ownership of the District Council. The eastern part of the site has been developed as a small industrial estate (see paragraph 27.7) and a substantial landscaped buffer planted around it. A doctor's surgery and a row of four terraced houses have also been developed on part of the former First Street. The remaining land is ideally related to shops and facilities and its redevelopment for housing should be actively promoted. It is estimated that the site could accommodate 35 dwellings. The site is currently used as an area of open space by residents in the vicinity. Any development will, therefore, need to retain an area of open space, which will be considered in detail in a design brief.

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Policy Wh4

1.4 hectares of land between First and Ninth Street is allocated for housing.

Implementation

1. The District Council will dispose of the land for private housing development.
2. The District Council will prepare a design brief to guide the redevelopment of the site.

Cleared Site, Thornley Road

27.15 The cleared site on the south side of Thornley Road is suitable for residential; retailing (Class A1); offices and services for local needs (Class A2); Business (Class B1) and Community Facilities.

Policy Wh5

~~The cleared site on the south side of Thornley Road is allocated for the following uses:~~

~~residential;
retailing (Class A1);
offices and services for local needs (Class A2); business (Class B1) and community facilities.~~

Peripheral Sites

27.16 There are two sites on the north side of Quilstyle Road, with a total capacity of around 10 dwellings, which would be suitable for housing development. An additional site is also available at the former scrapyard off Black Lane. This covers about 0.5ha and is currently in a poor and unsightly condition. Development of this site for housing accords with the objectives of the Local Plan in that such action would assist in tidying the edge of the settlement and would provide additional residences, strengthening the social and economic base of the village. It would also consolidate the framework of this part of the village. As

there is a shortage of open space in the vicinity, part of the site should be laid out for this purpose. Black Lane would need to be upgraded to an adoptable standard to serve this development.

Policy Wh6

The following sites are allocated for housing:

- (i) adjacent to number 7 Quilstyle Road, and
- (ii) at the western end of Quilstyle Road.

Policy Wh7

The former scrapyard off Black Lane is allocated for housing and open space together with an adjacent allotment and a strip of grazing land to extend no more than 35m northwards of the existing track to the allotment. Planning permission will only be granted provided that:

- (i) safe and adequate access arrangements can be secured from Black Lane and the requirements of Policy 36 are met;
- (ii) a scheme to secure appropriate planting and landscaping on the site, which will include the elevated land to the north, is devised.

Transport

- 27.17** Wheatley Hill is well located in relation to major traffic routes, with the A181 which runs through the southern part of the settlement providing links eastwards to the A19(T) and Peterlee and westwards to the centre of the County. In 1992 the Highway Authority completed the construction of a southern by-pass on the A181 which has removed heavy traffic from the village. Access to the A1(M) will be improved after the completion of the new road from Wheatley Hill to the Bowburn Interchange, for which funding is being sought through the County Council's Transport Policies and Programme submission. A minor improvement scheme has also to be carried out on the B1279 at the eastern end of the village.
- 27.18** On-street parking causes congestion in a number of the Council housing estates in Wheatley Hill and also occurs in the vicinity of the Co-op/adjoining club on Quilstyle Road. The problem would be ameliorated through the provision of appropriate off-street parking facilities.

Policy Wh8

The district council will provide off-street parking facilities in the following areas:

- (i) Burns Street
- (ii) Shakespeare Street
- (iii) Moore Street
- (iv) Byron Street
- (v) Johnson Estate
- (vi) on former warehouse site, Quilstyle Road

Implementation

1. Finance will be sought from the Council's Capital Programme of revenue budgets to implement these schemes. Further details are contained in paragraph 3.9 (Implementation Chapter).

Recreation and Community Facilities

Outdoor Sports and Recreation Facilities

- 27.19** The formal recreation provision in Wheatley Hill is provided by the recreation ground east of Cemetery Road, but this is too small to meet national guide-lines. The County Council is intending to release playing fields on the north side of Quilstyle Road, which could potentially meet the shortfall. In the meantime, in accordance with Policy 90 (Recreation Chapter) the existing recreation ground will be safeguarded from development.

Policy Wh9

The development of the recreation ground east of cemetery road will only be approved for sport and recreational purposes.

Children's Play Space/Amenity Open Space

- 27.20** Wheatley Hill is inadequately provided with children's playing space and with amenity open space in relation to the NPFA Standard. The only play area provision is at Dodds Close, but that is located on the periphery of the settlement and is only safely accessible to children living in the north eastern part of the village. In addition, there is a shortage of play space in the Council housing estate between Quilstyle Road and the A181. The existing layout of the estate effectively prevents additional sites from being provided, but the Council will explore the opportunities for increasing provision in the context of undertaking the planned improvements to the houses and the environment there, as indicated in policy Wh3. Depending on the success of those efforts, other opportunities may also need to be explored. In the meantime the existing provision should be safeguarded.

Policy Wh10

The development of the open space at Dodds Close, will only be approved for purposes of informal recreation.

Education

- 27.21** As a result of education re-organisation, in the past decade several buildings have become surplus to requirements. The District Council has developed a light industrial estate on the site of the former Boys School on Front Street (see Paragraph 27.7). The Junior and Infants School on Church Street has been disposed of by the County Council and is being redeveloped for housing. The former Central Kitchen to the north of these schools has been demolished and the site redeveloped with a house. There would appear to be adequate capacity in the remaining schools to cater for any increase in the number of school children likely to result from housing development over the Plan period.

Health

- 27.22** During the past decade a new doctor's surgery has been constructed on First Street. The village is now adequately served with health facilities.

Community Facilities

- 27.23** The youth and community association uses the building adjacent to the recreation ground. A new fire station has been developed at the junction of Quetlaw Road and the A181.

Shopping

- 27.24** The main shopping area in Wheatley Hill is located either side of Front Street and serves both Wheatley Hill and Thornley. During the past five years, the shopping centre has declined and there are a number of vacant units. In order to maintain the viability of the shopping centre, the development of new shops and supermarkets should normally be

located in/adjacent to Front Street, in accordance with Policy 102 (Shopping Chapter). The District Council will, however, encourage other uses in the centre including local offices (Policy 114) and the conversion of first floor premises into residential flats. Elsewhere in the village Policy103 (Shopping Chapter) which allows the development of small shops will be applied.

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Policy Wh11

The local shopping centre for Wheatley Hill will consist of both sides of front street.

27.25 The decline in the shopping centre is most apparent in the block of properties between the former Connolly, Keiller and Whitburn premises and Stephens Terrace where a significant number of units are vacant and boarded up. In addition, the frontages of a number of the remaining shops are in a poor state of repair. The condition of the block of properties detracts from the appearance of this part of Front Street and warrants a comprehensive improvement scheme. This is, however, likely to be difficult to implement due to limitations on Council expenditure. It is, therefore, proposed that a detailed study should be undertaken involving the District Council, County Council, Parish Council, Rural Development Commission, the property owners to investigate the scope for devising and implementing an improvement scheme.

27.26 Pending the preparation of this study it is considered that a flexible approach should be taken to the uses permitted in this block of properties. In addition to the uses specified in para 27.24 it is considered that the conversion of vacant properties in this area into residential flats/dwellings should be encouraged. Proposals of this nature should not be located adjacent to uses which would cause a loss of residential amenity and should incorporate appropriate sound-proofing measures.

Policy Wh12

An improvement scheme is proposed to the block of properties on Front Street between the former Connolly, Keiller and Whitburn premises and Stephens Terrace.

Policy Wh13

Within the area covered by policy Wh12 the conversion of properties as residential flats or dwellings will be approved provided:

- (i) there is no detrimental effect on the amenities of occupiers of adjoining nearby premises;
- (ii) the prospective residents would not suffer from loss of amenity caused by a neighbouring use.

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Wingate and Station Town

Summary of policies

Environment

- ~~Wi1~~ ~~Alternative uses for former Methodist Chapel~~ - This policy has lapsed
- ~~Wi2~~ ~~Landscaping on Council owned land~~ - This policy has lapsed
- ~~Wi3~~ ~~Landscaping on non-Council owned land~~ - This policy has lapsed

Housing

Housing Land

- ~~Wi4~~ ~~South of Moor Lane~~ - This policy has lapsed
- Wi5 [North of Rodridge Street](#)
- ~~Wi6~~ ~~Land opposite Ridgeway House~~ - This policy has lapsed
- ~~Wi7~~ ~~Land at Watson's Windows premises~~ - This policy has lapsed
- ~~Wi8~~ ~~Land east of Front Street~~ - This policy has lapsed
- ~~Wi9~~ ~~Small housing sites~~ - This policy has lapsed

Recreation and Community Facilities and Tourism

- ~~Wi10~~ ~~Safeguarding of AJ Dawson playing fields~~ - This policy has lapsed
- Wi11 [Proposed play area at Cummings Square](#)
- ~~Wi12~~ ~~Safeguarding of Welfare Park~~ - This policy has lapsed
- ~~Wi13~~ ~~Safeguarding of other recreation/play areas~~ - This policy has lapsed

Shopping

- Wi14 [Local shopping centre](#)

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Introduction

- 28.1** Wingate and Station Town developed as separate settlements in the nineteenth century but expansion of the two villages caused them to become physically linked. Whilst recognising the distinct identities of the two communities, the District Local Plan

considers them together because of the inter-relationship of their problems.

- 28.2** Following the closure of Wingate Colliery both settlements have declined and suffer from a variety of socio-economic problems. These include high unemployment caused by an absence of alternative job opportunities, depopulation due to out-migration, particularly in the economically active age groups, and a poor physical environment caused by a general lack of private investment in shops and services over a long period. The District Council has tried to redress the difficulties of the area by a variety of means and has co-operated with other agencies set up to give priority to dealing with these problems. Steps have included the reclamation of the former colliery site, the development of a small industrial estate, and a programme of housing revitalisation and environmental improvements. These measures have been successful in attracting some private investment to the villages and since 1981, over 120 new houses have been built.
- 28.3** The problems of both villages were addressed in the early 1990's through a Settlement Renewal Initiative. This comprehensive regeneration programme aimed at producing a better environment in the context of the economic and social regeneration of the village, utilising a range of measures backed by significant levels of investment from a number of public sector sources.
- 28.4** A key feature has been the involvement of the local community in arriving at a plan of action. Several million pounds have been spent on projects which range from the landscaping of sites and a programme of environmental upgrading, to the improvement of individual buildings, traffic management measures and the introduction of new community facilities. The initiative has helped to revitalise the village and attract new investment, including private housing. Following completion of the initiative, a new body, the Wingate, Station Town and Hutton Henry Partnership, a successor body to the Wingate/Station Town Steering Committee, has been set up to continue work on essential projects still outstanding. In recognition of the important role of Hutton Henry, the Partnership has been extended to include this village.
- 28.5** Since reaching its peak in the early 1950s, the population of Wingate and Station Town has declined to 4,430 (1991 Census). Arising from the implementation of the Settlement Renewal Initiative, it is likely that the population will stabilise over the Plan period, assisting the viability of shops and services.

Environment

- 28.6** The appearance of Wingate and Station Town has been greatly improved in recent years through the clearance of much of the older housing, the reclamation of the former pit heaps, the redevelopment of the former colliery yard as an industrial estate and new housing development. Major environmental improvements have been carried out in the villages as part of the Settlement Renewal Initiative. These include a comprehensive revitalisation scheme in the local shopping centre on Front Street, improvements in the 'crossings' area east of the Victoria Public House, and in the vicinity of Market Crescent.
- 28.7** The Civic Trust's recent Study has identified that the poor environmental conditions prevalent in the settlements are a very serious impediment to economic growth and also diminish the quality of life of the residents. Various priority areas are identified for treatment.

Edge of the Villages

- 28.8** The villages occupy prominent locations and are visually intrusive in the landscape. A comprehensive programme of landscaping proposals is put forward to soften the edges of the settlements (see Policy 31, Environment Chapter).

Front Street

- 28.9** The majority of land between Pickering Street and the Employment Exchange on the west side of Front Street has been cleared and grassed over. The area has been laid out as a public park and planning permission has been granted for the development of twelve houses on two sites on either side of the park. On the east side of Front Street are a number of commercial properties plus a haulage business. The area forms the commercial heart of Wingate/Station Town and is particularly prominent from the main road. Its redevelopment and improvement would, therefore, be of benefit in trying to revitalise the area, which is a principal aim of both the Local Plan and the Settlement Renewal Initiative.

Building Improvements, Front Street

- 28.10** Measures taken through the now completed Settlement Renewal Initiative via the Commercial Buildings Improvement Grant Fund have resulted in the improvement of the frontages of 33 retail/commercial properties. The impact of these improvements has done much to upgrade both the visual and physical appearance of Front Street particularly in those locations where numbers of shops are grouped together. Notwithstanding the extensive improvements which have been undertaken a small number of vacant and 'run down' commercial properties still remain which require improvement if the area is to be further enhanced. The scale of improvement required to individual properties varies considerably and whilst some are in need of major refurbishment, in other cases relatively minor repairs and the repainting of new shop signs and fascias would have a dramatic and cumulative effect. Wherever possible improvements proposed for these remaining properties should accord with the design and detailing of other retail/commercial properties in the vicinity previously improved through the Commercial Buildings Improvement Grant Fund. It has been the policy of the Council to serve improvement notices on the owners of properties requiring improvement works to be carried out. The Council will continue to serve such notices where owners are reluctant to improve 'run down' properties voluntarily. Alternatively, the District Council will consider acquisition with a view to demolition and either resale of the cleared sites for redevelopment, the creation of off-street parking facilities or landscaping to improve the appearance of the area.
- 28.11** The principal eyesore in Front Street/North Road is the former Methodist Chapel which is unused and in a deteriorating condition. It has been the subject of complaint. Alternative use of the chapel will be encouraged. Appropriate uses include retailing, local offices, leisure, studios/laboratories or the provision of community facilities. In the event of no alternative use being forthcoming, the clearance and redevelopment of the site for residential purposes, subject to satisfactory access and parking, is considered appropriate.

Policy Wi1

~~Alternative uses for the former Methodist Chapel in Front Street include A1(shops), A2(financial and professional services), B1(a)(offices), B1(b)(research and development, studios, laboratories), D1(non-residential institutions), D2(assembly and leisure). The council will also support the demolition of the premises, should no alternative use be found for the building, to provide a residential redevelopment site.~~

- 28.12** There are a number of other sites in the two villages, which would benefit from landscaping/other improvements.

Policy Wi2

~~The district council will undertake appropriate landscaping schemes to the following areas:-~~

- ~~(i) Dawson Road (4 sites)~~
- ~~(ii) Gutley Road~~
- ~~(iii) north of Station House~~
- ~~(iv) west of North Road West~~
- ~~(v) junction of Wellfield Road/North Road~~
- ~~(vi) land south of Station House, Station Town~~
- ~~(vii) Williamson/Laing/Cummings Squares~~

Implementation

1. Finance will be sought from the District Council's Capital Programme or revenue budgets to implement these schemes. Further details are contained in paragraph 3.9 (Implementation Chapter).

Policy Wi3

Landscaping works are proposed in the following areas:

- (i) ~~embankment north of Corner House~~
- (ii) ~~rear of dairy, Wellfield Road~~
- (iii) ~~east of Wingate Community Centre~~
- (iv) ~~eastern boundary of Holy Trinity Churchyard and Wingate Infant School~~
- (v) ~~electricity substation, south of Newholme Estate~~
- (vi) ~~curtilage of Corner House Public House~~

1. *Implementation 1. The District Council will approach the landowners, the Parish Council and Groundwork East Durham, as appropriate, to secure the implementation of these schemes.*

Public Utilities

- 28.13** Wingate and Station Town have adequate water, electricity, gas and sewerage capacity to cater for the level of development expected over the Plan period.

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Employment

- 28.14** The closure of Wingate Grange Colliery in 1962 removed the major source of employment from the villages, and left most of the workforce reliant upon jobs elsewhere, particularly in Peterlee and other large centres. A small, dwindling group of miners still lives in the villages and commutes to working collieries outside the area, but Wingate and Station Town are now no longer susceptible to contractions in the mining industry to any significant extent.
- 28.15** To try to ameliorate the serious unemployment situation, the District Council has developed a small industrial estate of some 4.5ha on the site of the former colliery yard providing nursery factory units and plots for sale. During the past 15 years the estate has been extended to provide additional serviced industrial land. A range of factory units has been provided by the Council and the Rural Development Commission. An enhancement scheme has also been undertaken to upgrade the units and improve the physical environment. The economic development strategies of the Council and its Task Force Partners seek to concentrate new industrial development on the strategic industrial estates in the A19(T) corridor. Wingate is well placed to take advantage of these estates, particularly Peterlee. Further employment creation in Wingate/Station Town should stem from the redevelopment of the remaining plots on the industrial estate and the encouragement of alternative uses within the vacant shop premises in Front Street.

Housing

Existing Stock

- 28.16** There are approximately 1880 dwellings in Wingate and Station Town with 825 in Council ownership and the remainder in private ownership, the latter being concentrated along the former A181 and B1280.
- 28.17** During the past twenty five years, the District Council has undertaken comprehensive housing /environmental improvement schemes in the Council housing estates in the village, including most recently, the revitalisation of the Newholme Estate in partnership with the private sector, using finance from a variety of sources. Works have resulted in the improvement of some 59 dwellings to a very high standard, and a corresponding improvement in the external environment. Although much of the private housing

elsewhere in the village is in good condition and the older housing along the B1280 may be eligible for renovation grants, its attractiveness is reduced by its location on busy through routes.

New Council Housing

28.18 There is likely to be no need for new Council houses in Wingate and Station Town during the Plan period.

New Private Housing

28.19 There has been a notable increase in demand for new private housing in Wingate and Station Town in recent years, particularly in the northern part of Wingate adjacent to the Wellfield By-Pass. This is evidenced by the development of small housing estates, west of the Greenhills Estate, on the site to the north of Durham Road and a number of other smaller sites in the two villages. In addition, housing is under construction on 2.6 hectares of land between Wellfield Road and the by-pass and conversion/redevelopment currently underway at the former school site at Wellfield will provide 137 more units on completion. If the population decline is to be stemmed, adequate land should be allocated for housing over the Plan period in locations which help to consolidate the existing physical framework of the settlements and which, preferably, are close to the shared centre of the two villages. Further development of peripheral sites at the north and south ends of the village are not therefore supported.

Land South of Moor Lane

28.21 This agricultural land (2.5 hectares in area) south of Moor Lane, has previously been identified as being suitable for housing. It is well related to village facilities and its development would help to consolidate the settlements. Moor Lane provides vehicular access along the northern edge of the site but is unmade and substandard in width and would, therefore, need to be made up to an adoptable standard as part of the development. The junction of Moor Lane with the B1280 (North Road) would also require improvement works. The requisite highway improvements would need to be secured by means of a planning obligation or appropriate planning conditions. In view of these access constraints, however, it is considered that the site should be limited to 60 dwellings.

Policy ~~Wi4~~

~~2.5 hectares of land south of Moor Lane is allocated for housing. Development proposals will be required to incorporate an access road to an adoptable standard. The junction of the access road and the B1280 (North Road) must be constructed so as to meet the highway authority's standards.~~

North of Rodridge Street

28.22 Following housing clearance in the 1970's this site (2.25 hectares in area) has been reclaimed and laid out as a recreation ground. A community centre has been developed on the south eastern corner of the site and the edges have been extensively landscaped. The site would be suitable, in land use terms, to be redeveloped for residential purposes though the existing landscaped features should be retained. It would also be necessary to provide an alternative site for recreational purposes. The land to the east of this site is leased by Hutton Henry Parish Council and may be suitable as a recreation ground. The existing vehicular access is inadequate. An improved access would, therefore, need to be installed over the cleared site, opposite Ridgeway House, which once comprised 1-6 Millbank Terrace. The local planning authority would seek to enter into a planning obligation to ensure that alternative recreation provision and suitable access arrangements are secured. It is estimated that

the site could accommodate 45 dwellings.

Policy Wi5

2.25 hectares of land north of Rodridge Street, Station Town is allocated for housing. Development proposals will be required to provide for an alternative football pitch and the upgrading of the vehicular access to the site.

Policy Wi6

~~The land opposite Ridgeway House, formerly 1-6 Millbank Terrace, will be retained by the district council as open space until such time as it is required for access purposes in accordance with policy Wi5.~~

Implementation

1. *The site, in Council ownership will be disposed of to the private sector.*

Watsons Windows premises, Wellfield Road

- 28.22A** The Watsons Windows company has operated from its existing premises on Wellfield Road for nearly 20 years. The site, covering an area of approximately 0.6 hectares is, however, fully developed and there is no scope to expand the business at its current location. The owner has expressed a desire to relocate onto an industrial estate. Without prejudice to the operation of the business from its current premises it is considered that the redevelopment of the site for housing would be beneficial to the area. It would remove an industrial use from a primarily residential area and complement the housing developments which have recently been carried out at the 'Maltings' and are underway at the former A J Dawson School. Access would be gained from the existing entrance on the Greenhills Estate. In view of its current use a contaminated land survey would be required to identify any materials which require removal/treatment prior to redevelopment occurring.

Policy Wi7

~~0.6 hectares of land at the Watsons Windows premises, Wellfield Road is allocated for housing. Planning permission will be granted subject to the completion of a contaminated land survey.~~

Land east of Front Street, Wingate

- 28.22B** Tonks and Swainston have long established haulage/waste transfer and corn merchants businesses which have operated from adjoining sites on Front Street. In recent years both businesses have expanded on to adjoining land to the east. Both businesses operate satisfactorily and do not cause problems. It is considered, however, that further intensification/expansion of the businesses onto the land to the east would generate additional noise and nuisance problems to the detriment of nearby residents. Such a proposal would generate additional traffic utilising North Road or Front Street, which detrimentally affects amenity of residents living in the nearby properties. In addition, the intensification of the industrial use on the site would totally change the character of this part of Wingate. It is considered that the expansion of businesses ought to take place on an industrial estate rather than in a mixed commercial/residential area.
- 28.22C** Tonks and Swainston have made representation to seek the allocation of their existing operational land, plus a further 1.5 hectares of agricultural land for residential purposes. Without prejudice to the operation of the businesses from the current premises it is considered that the redevelopment of the land would be beneficial to the area. The redevelopment of the site would consolidate the framework of the settlement, the site would be located close to schools, the shared shopping area and other facilities in the two villages. It would also accord with current central government advice which encourages the reuse of previously developed land. Vehicular access could be gained through the existing entrance to Tonks premises.

28.22D Part of the sites have been the subject of landfill tipping, and as such a developer would need to satisfy the Local Planning Authority that a problem of landfill gas does not exist, in accordance with Policy 44. The eastern part of the site abuts Wellfield Brick Ponds which is a County Wildlife Site. In order to safeguard the feature any development would need to be set back from the Pond and a landscaping belt would need to be installed to provide a substantial buffer between the two uses. No foul or surface water discharges would be permitted into the Pond. In view of the limitations it is estimated that the site could accommodate 75 dwellings.

Policy Wi8

~~3.6 hectares of land east of Front Street is allocated for housing. The development will be approved subject to the following conditions:~~

- ~~(i) the proposal fulfils the requirements of policy 44 (landfill)~~
- ~~(ii) the housing development is undertaken in a manner which accords with the requirements laid down in Policy 16 (sites of nature conservation interests)~~
- ~~(iii) an appropriate landscaping belt is provided along the eastern edge of the site.~~

Implementation

1. *The District Council will prepare a detailed development brief to guide redevelopment of the site.*

28.23 In addition to the large sites already identified, there are a number of smaller sites in Wingate and Station Town which would be suitable for housing development. Their development would improve the appearance of the villages. The grassed open space north of Market Crescent is owned by the District Council. Planning permission has already been given for twelve dwellings and a public park. The garages on the north of the site should be relocated further along Pickering Street. Extension of housing development along Pickering Street would be unacceptable due to unsuitable access. There are also two infill plots in Station Town, east of Bridge Terrace and the former railway line east of the Corner House public house, which would be suitable for housing.

Policy Wi9

~~The following sites are allocated for housing:~~

- ~~(i) north of Market Crescent~~
- ~~(ii) east of Bridge Terrace, Station Town (0.1 hectares)~~

28.24 A further housing site is considered in paragraph 28.1 (Policy W11).

Transport

28.25 The Wellfield By-Pass has eased the problem of heavy traffic flows through the north of the settlement. There is, however, no apparent solution to the problems created by the B1280 which runs the length of Wingate and Station Town. The traffic is particularly intrusive for the residents of many houses which front directly onto the main road, often without the benefit of front gardens to provide a limited buffer from the noise and pollution.

28.26 The absence of off-street parking facilities, in the curtilages of the dwellings in North Road, and in the central commercial areas where the main road is particularly narrow, causes traffic congestion. The problem has been partly relieved by upgrading of land west of North Road, which has included parking bays. Any new business should provide off-street parking facilities (see Policy 37, Environment Chapter).

Recreation and Community Facilities

Formal Recreation Facilities

- 28.27** The formal recreation provision in Wingate and Station Town is located adjacent to the Roman Catholic School south-west of Market Crescent and north of Rodridge Street in Station Town. In addition, the County Council has provided a football field adjacent to the former Wellfield Comprehensive School boating lake. The Rodridge Street site has been identified for housing development (Policy Wi5) but this site will only be released in the event of alternative provision being made. The recreation facilities are rather remote for the northern part of the village. It is, therefore, suggested that some of the surplus playing field associated with the A J Dawson School is retained for community use as open space.

Policy Wi10

~~The open land north of the former A J Dawson school at Wellfield Road will be kept as public open space to retain the setting of the former school buildings.~~

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Open Spaces/Play Areas

- 28.28** In overall terms the villages are well provided with informal open space with a large site of 7.5 hectares at Woodland View and smaller sites at Cummings Square and south of Rodridge Street in Station Town. These sites are, however, located close to the centre of the two villages and there is a shortage in Wellfield. It is suggested that some of the surplus school playing fields in this area protected under Policy Wi10 should be used to alleviate the shortage. Play area provision is limited to one site. An additional site is proposed near Cummings Square.

Land North of Cummings Square

- 28.29** This open space owned by the District Council has a house and community centre on its northern edge. The development of part of the land as a children's play area would be of benefit to the estate.

Policy Wi11

Part of the land north of Cummings Square is proposed as a children's play area.

The Welfare Park and Associated Land

- 28.30** The Welfare Park, football ground and associated recreational areas are an important facility in Wingate/Station Town. This is an amenity which is well-appreciated by local residents and which it is important to maintain. The inclusion of the area within the settlement boundary enables the facilities to be specifically safeguarded.

Policy Wi12

~~The development of the Welfare Park and adjacent area will only be approved for purposes of outdoor recreation and sports.~~

Other Open Space Recreational and Play Facilities

- 28.31** A survey of recreational open space in the District has revealed a number of sites which are important in the local context and which should be safeguarded against inappropriate

development.

Policy Wi13

Development of the following areas will only be approved for purposes of informal recreation:-

- (i) adjacent to Wellfield Comprehensive School
- (ii) Woodland View
- (iii) The 'Old Rec'
- (iv) Vicarage Estate
- (v) South Rodridge Street
- (vi) Market Crescent

Education

28.32 The settlements have an adequate range of education facilities and with falling numbers of pupils, there would appear to be adequate capacity to cater for any increase in the number of school age children likely to result from housing development over the Plan period.

Community Facilities

28.33 Wingate and Station Town are adequately provided with community centres on the west side of Front Street and north of Rodridge Street.

Shopping

28.34 The majority of shops in Wingate and Station Town are located at the southern end of Front Street with others along North Road. There has been considerable decline in the number of shops in recent years and this has been most severe on Front Street because the shops are a considerable distance from the main housing areas further north. In order to maintain the viability of the existing centre the development of new shops and supermarkets will be directed to this area, in accordance with Policy 102 (Shopping Chapter). The District Council will, however, encourage other uses in the centre including local offices (Policy 114) and the conversion of first floor premises into residential flats. Elsewhere in Wingate and Station Town Policy 103 (Shopping Chapter) which allows the development of small shops will be applied.

Policy Wi14

The local shopping centre for Wingate and Station Town will consist of Front Street between Gladstone Terrace and Pickering Street.



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Appendix 1

This appendix lists those policies from other statutory local plans which will apply to Easington District.

Waste Disposal Subject Plan

- NB.** The County Council is preparing a Waste Local Plan which, once adopted, will supersede the provisions of the Waste Disposal Subject Plan and provide guidance for waste planning throughout the County until 2016. The Waste Local Plan is expected to be placed 'on deposit' for initial public consultation in January/February 2002. Until the Waste Local Plan is adopted, the Waste Disposal Subject Plan will remain the appropriate guidance document.
- WD1** There will be a presumption against tipping on productive agricultural land.
- WD2** The tipping of baled waste or inert material will be allowed on unproductive agricultural land only if it improved agricultural quality and accords with proposals WD3 to WD10 inclusive.
- WD3** Waste disposal will not normally be allowed on sites where it would have a significant adverse environmental impact upon residential areas. Restrictions may be placed on the type of waste to be disposed to prevent such impact.
- WD4** Waste disposal will not normally be allowed within a site of particular ecological importance, exceptions will normally only be considered where the ecological importance of the site can be conserved.
- WD5** Waste disposal will not normally be allowed in the area of great landscape value in the west of the county. It may be allowed if it does not detract from the high landscape quality of the area. Waste disposal will not normally be allowed in other areas of great and special landscape value.
- WD6** Earthmoving operations, the planting and maintenance of trees and shrubs and the protection of existing attractive landscape features will normally be required in any waste disposal site where necessary to minimise its visual impact.
- WD7** Waste disposal will only be allowed where it will not cause pollution of water courses or sources of ground water, where necessary, suitable pollution prevention measures will be required.
- WD8** The road access to waste disposal sites should provide adequate visibility and be well related to the surrounding main road network.
- WD9** The use of land for waste disposal will normally be subject to a time limit to ensure that its subsequent restoration to beneficial use is not unduly delayed.
- WD10** Any approval for the use of land for waste disposal will only be granted subject to:
- The removal of all plant, buildings and other structures when no longer needed;
 - Restoration works to produce a landfill compatible with the surrounding area and ensure the land can be successfully put to a beneficial use.
- WD15** Waste disposal will be allowed at the following locations in the Easington sub-area, subject to the provisions of proposals wd1 to WD10 inclusive.

Site	Acceptable after use	Proposals Map Inset Map No.	Supplementary Proposal (See following paragraphs)
Existing approved sites			
1. Blackhall	Agriculture/Recreation	24	
2. Station Town/Railway	Walkway/Agriculture /Woodland	22,23	Type of Waste
3. Tillery Farm	Agriculture	23	
4. Wingate Quarry	Nature Reserve	23	Type of Waste
5. Wingate former Coal Stocking Site	Nature Reserve	23	
6. Wellfield Farm Station Town	Nature Reserve	23	Nature Conservation

WD15 2 & 5 Only tipping of inert waste will be allowed in the cuttings of the Former Station Town - Thorpe Thewles railway and at the Wingate former coal stocking site.

WD6 Tipping at Wellfield farm should be restricted as far as possible to enable features of particular nature conservation interest to be retained.

WD16 Waste disposal will be allowed to assist restoration of land where quarrying is taking place or permitted at the following locations in the Easington sub-area, subject to the provisions of proposals wd1 to wd10 inclusive. Any waste deposited at these sites must normally be treated beforehand.

Site	Acceptable after use	Proposals Map, Inset Map No.	Supplementary Proposal (See following paragraphs)
Existing approved sites			
1. Blacks Bank Quarry	Agriculture	16	
2. Crime Rigg & Sherburn Sand Pit	Agriculture/Woodland /Nature Conservation	16	Access Commencement Protection of area of
3. Hawthorn Quarry	Agriculture/Woodland	24	
4. Witch Hill Quarry	Agriculture	16	

WD25 Tipping will be allowed to assist the restoration of areas approved for mineral extraction subject to the provisions of proposals wd1 to WD10 inclusive.

WD34 Civic amenity sites will be retained at the following waste disposal sites until tipping is completed and alternative permanent sites are available. The land will then be reclaimed

WD39* The county council will provide civic amenity sites to serve Seaham and Peterlee and the coastal villages.

WD40* The county council will provide a civic amenity site in conjunction with the Thornley Station plant.

Magnesian Limestone Escarpment (Minerals and Landscape Restoration) Subject Plan

NB. The County Durham Minerals Local Plan replaces the minerals element of the above plan.

ML8 The following sites may be agreed for restoration to beneficial uses as specified below:

Site	After Use
Black Banks (Haswell Moor) Quarry	Agriculture Woodland
Wingate Quarry	Nature conservation and recreation provision

ML9 The county council will give priority to the planting of approximately 50,000 trees in the following areas:

Pittington/Littletown/Sherburn Hill/Crime Rigg
Elemore
Trimdon Grange

ML11 The following areas of landscape importance will be protected as far as possible from quarrying and other large scale development which would adversely affect their character.

Pittington Hill/Elemore Woods
Kelloe/Old Thornley/Old Wingate/Southern Laws/Trimdon Grange

ML12 25 kilometres (16 miles) of existing rights of way as defined below will be protected as far as possible from quarrying and other large scale development. Where possible these rights of way will be improved.

Parish - (Town)	Footpath No. on register
Haswell	10(part)

* Policies have been implemented

County Durham Minerals Local Plan

ML8 Durham County Council has prepared a Minerals Local Plan which sets out the detailed planning policies which will guide future mineral development throughout the County in the period to 2006. The Plan was adopted in December 2000. The Plan contains no site specific policies affecting Easington District but encompasses the following detailed policies which will be used in the determination of mineral planning applications:

ML8 Other than as allowed for in policy M8, mineral extraction in or adjacent to the north Pennines and will only be permitted where one or more of the following applies:

ML8 The following sites may be agreed for restoration to beneficial uses as specified below:

- (a) There is an overriding need for the mineral which cannot be met from alternative sites or sources elsewhere, including suitable secondary or recycled materials, and which is sufficient to outweigh the need to conserve the character of the area;
- (b) The mineral extraction is in advance of other approved development (see policy M12);
- (c) the proposal is acceptable as a borrow pit (see policy M10);

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- (d) A significant part of the site is land which can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the mineral planning authority to be derelict or contaminated and in need of treatment and the proposal provides for its comprehensive reclamation;
- (e) Where it leads to an overall improvement through the relinquishing or consolidation of other planning permissions (see policy M47);
- (f) It is a small scale extension required to maintain an existing source of employment.

In all cases proposals will be required to conform with other relevant policies of this plan.

M23 In areas of high landscape value and historic parks and gardens, mineral working will only be permitted where one or more of the following applies:

- (a) There is a need for the mineral which cannot be met from alternative sites or sources elsewhere, including suitable secondary or recycled materials;
- (b) The mineral extraction is in advance of other approved development (see policy M12);
- (c) The proposal is acceptable as a borrow pit (see policy M10);
- (d) A significant part of the site is land which can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the mineral planning authority to be derelict or contaminated and in need of treatment and the proposal provides for its comprehensive reclamation;
- (e) Where it leads to an overall improvement through the relinquishing or consolidation of other planning permissions (see policy M47);
- (f) It is a small scale extension required to maintain an existing source of employment.

In all cases proposals will be required to conform with other relevant policies of this plan.

M24 Minerals development will be required

- (a) Ensure that the scale of any adverse effects on local landscape character is kept to an acceptable minimum; and
- (b) Conserve, as far as possible, important features of the local landscape.

Restoration proposals should have regard to the quality of the local landscape and seek to provide landscape improvements where appropriate.

M25 Minerals development affecting existing or proposed internationally important nature conservation sites, including SPAs, SACs AND RAMSAR sites, which is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the nature conservation site will not be permitted unless the mineral planning authority is satisfied that:

- (a) The proposal will not have an adverse effect on the site, either individually or in combination with other proposals; and
- (b) The developer has demonstrated that there is no alternative solution; and
- (c) There are imperative reasons of overriding public interest

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- M26** Minerals development affecting existing or proposed nationally important nature conservation sites, including Nnrs and Gcrs, which may have an adverse effect either directly or indirectly, will not be permitted unless the minerals planning authority is satisfied that
- (a) The developer has demonstrated that there is an established national need for the mineral which cannot be met from alternative sites or sources, including secondary or recycled materials; and
 - (b) The reasons for the development clearly outweigh the value of the site itself and national policy to safeguard the nature conservation value of such sites.
- M27** Minerals development affecting regional or locally identified sites of nature conservation interest, including Lnrs Rigs Sncis and ancient semi natural woodlands, which may have an adverse effect will not be permitted unless the mineral planning authority is satisfied that the developer has demonstrated there are reasons for the proposal which clearly outweigh the need to safeguard the intrinsic qualities of the site.
- M28** Minerals development should seek to preserve the nature conservation value of defined wildlife corridors by maintaining their integrity and continuity. Where possible, minerals development should contribute to their nature conservation interest through appropriate restoration and management.
- M29** All proposals for mineral development should incorporate appropriate measures to ensure that any adverse impact on the nature conservation interest of the area is minimised. In considering proposals for mineral working regard will be had to:
- (a) Opportunities for the creation of new areas of nature conservation interest;
 - (b) The need to conserve local features of nature conservation
- M30** Planning permission for mineral development will not be permitted where this would have an unacceptable adverse effect on listed buildings, conservation areas, or their settings.
- Where, in exceptional circumstances, working in the vicinity of listed buildings and conservation areas is justified permission will only be granted where the working and restoration of the site ensures:
- (a) The retention of important built and landscape features; and
 - (b) Final restoration is to at least the original landscape quality, with replacement of any landscape features that it is not possible to retain during working.
- M31** Where there is reason to believe that archaeological remains may existing within or in the vicinity of the site of a proposed mineral development, developers will be required to provide an archaeological field evaluation prior to the determination of the planning application.
- M32** Where nationally important archaeological remains, whether scheduled or not, and their settings are affected by a proposed mineral development there will be a presumption in favour of their preservation in situ.
- Proposals for mineral development that would have a significant adverse effect on regionally important remains will only be permitted where:
- (a) No other suitable locations are available, or
 - (b) Where there is an overriding need for mineral which outweighs the requirement for physical preservation

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- M33** Where the preservation of archaeological remains in situ is not appropriate planning permission will not be granted unless satisfactory provision has been made for the excavation and recording of the remains.
- M34** Mineral development which affects or is likely to lead to the loss of 20 or more hectares of the best and most versatile agricultural land will not be permitted unless:
- (a) There will be no overall loss of agricultural land quality following final restoration; or
 - (b) There is a need for the mineral which cannot be met from suitable alternative sources on lower quality agricultural land
- M35** Mineral development that would have a significant impact upon the recreational value of the countryside, and in particular facilities such as paths, other public rights of way, the local path network, country parks and picnic areas, will not be permitted unless there is a need for the mineral which cannot be met from suitable alternative sites or sources.
- Adequate arrangements will be required for the continued use of public rights of way both during and after mineral development, either by means of existing or diverted routes.
- M36** Proposals for mineral working should incorporate suitable mitigation measures to ensure that any potentially harmful impacts from the following sources are reduced to an acceptable level:
- (a) Pollution by noise vibration dust and mud;
 - (b) Visual intrusion
 - (c) Traffic and transport
 - (d) Subsidence, landslip and gaseous emissions
- M37** Unless it is demonstrated that the amenity of local communities can otherwise be protected from the adverse impacts of mineral working, mineral development will not be permitted where:
- (a) Extraction or associated activities are within 250 metres of a group of 10 or more dwellings; or
 - (b) In the case of hard rock workings, operations involve blasting taking place within 500 metres of a group of 10 or more dwellings
- Exceptions to this policy will be considered where mineral extraction will achieve particular benefits through the reclamation of derelict or contaminated land, or avoiding sterilisation in advance of other development, and where these benefits clearly outweigh the disturbance caused to nearby residents.
- M38** If a proposal for mineral development would affect the supply of, or cause contamination to, underground, surface or coastal water, it will not be permitted unless measures are carried out as part of the development which would mitigate those impacts throughout the working life of the site and following final restoration.
- M39** Planning permission will not be granted for any development which would prejudice the use of the following rail connections for mineral traffic:
- (a) Bishop Auckland-Eastgate cement works
 - (b) Ferryhill-Cornforth-Raisby quarry be safely and conveniently accessed without additional disturbance to roadside communities; and

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- M40** In determining a planning application for mineral development conditions may be imposed or planning obligations or legal agreements sought with the developer and rail operator, to ensure that, where rail use is feasible, the movement by rail of a mineral, or mineral products, is maximised.
- M41** The establishment of disposal points for the transfer of minerals from road to rail transport will be permitted provided that the development would have an acceptable impact in relation to traffic, amenity and other environmental effects.
- M42** Applications for mineral development will only be permitted where:
- (a) Traffic generated by the proposal can be accommodated safely on the highway network; and
 - (b) The strategic highway network can be safely and conveniently accessed without additional disturbance to roadside communities; and
 - (c) The impact of traffic generated by the proposal on local and recreational amenity is otherwise acceptable
- M43** In granting planning permission for mineral development, planning conditions will be imposed, and planning obligations or other legal agreements sought, to cover the following matters, insofar as they fairly and reasonably relate to the proposed development:
- i) The routing of traffic to and from the site;
 - ii) Highway improvements or highway maintenance;
 - iii) The prevention of the transfer of mud and dirt onto the public highway by measures including the provision of wheel cleaning facilities, suitably metalled access roads and the sheeting of laden vehicles;
 - iv) Access to and from the site and the provision of on site turning, parking, loading and unloading areas;
 - v) The means of transporting material within the site, or between different parts of the same working area
 - vi) The operating hours of lorry traffic to and from the site.
- M44** Oil and gas should normally be transported from production wells to export terminals by pipeline. Export terminals should be located to allow the use of long distance pipelines and/or rail for transporting oil or gas from them.
- In assessing proposals for pipelines particular account will be taken of:
- (a) The impact on the development potential of adjacent land; and
 - (b) Any environmental impact
- M45** In considering proposals for mineral development the cumulative impact of the following will be taken into account;
- (a) Existing mineral working in the area.
 - (b) mineral development with planning permission, including proposals not yet started

or where extraction is in abeyance;

- (c) Past mineral working in the area
- (d) Current planning applications for mineral development in the area;
- (e) Other non-mineral activities in the area

Permission will not be granted where the cumulative impact exceeds that which would be acceptable if produced from a single site under the relevant policies of this plan

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- M46** Planning applications for mineral development should include proposals for the satisfactory restoration of the site. Conditions will imposed, and planning obligations or other legal agreements sought, to cover the following matters as necessary:
- (a) The submission of further detailed restoration proposals at specified stages in the development;
 - (b) The phased extraction and restoration of mineral operations in order to ensure that the period over which land is out of beneficial use is kept to a minimum;
 - (c) The stripping, storage, replacement and management of topsoil, subsoil and soil making material in good condition for ultimate restoration;
 - (d) The installation of drainage systems;
 - (e) The contouring and grading of restored land
 - (f) A programme of after-care following the completion of restoration including, where appropriate, provision for long term management;
 - (g) The removal of buildings, plant, structures, machinery and hardstanding used in connection with the mineral working operations after the completion of mineral extraction.
 - (h) Any other matters necessary to ensure the satisfactory restoration of the site.
- M47** All proposals for the after-use of mineral sites shall have particular regard to the following:
- (a) The impact on the amenity of local communities and opportunities for their enhancement;
 - (b) The impact on landscape character and opportunities for improvements to the landscape;
 - (c) Impacts on the cultural and built environment;
 - (d) The quality of agricultural land;
 - (e) Opportunities for the provision of recreational facilities or public open space;
 - (f) Opportunities for the enhancement and creation of features of nature conservation importance;
 - (g) Opportunities for the creation of community woodland;
 - (h) Opportunities for the creation of new rights of way.
- M48** the disposal of imported waste will only be permitted as part of a restoration scheme for any minerals site where:

- (a) the site is allocated for that use in the adopted waste local plan; or
- (b) Waste disposal can assist in achieving the most appropriate landform; and in all cases,
- (c) The impact of traffic and waste disposal operations would not have any increased detrimental impact on the environment or residential amenities of the area.

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M49 The disposal of imported waste on opencast coal sites will not be permitted unless the proposal;

- (a) Conforms with policy m48; and;
- (b) Would not delay the final restoration of the site

M50 Where planning permission is required, minerals processing and manufacturing plant, and other developments ancillary to mineral extraction, will be permitted within the boundaries of mineral extraction sites provided that:

- (a) In the case of processing plant, it is required to process minerals extracted from the mineral working site; or
- (b) In the case of manufacturing plant, the greater part of the minerals to be used to manufacture the product will be extracted from the mineral working site and the manufacturing activity will remain ancillary to the primary use of the site for mineral extraction; or
- (c) In the case of other ancillary development, it is required solely in connection with the administration or servicing of the site.

In granting permission for plant and machinery, conditions will be imposed, and planning obligations or other legal agreements sought, to cover the following matters as necessary:

- i) Minimisation of environmental impact;
- ii) Ensuring the removal of plant, structure or buildings as soon as extraction of minerals from the site has ceased;
- iii) Preventing the import of material from elsewhere, other than material necessary for the operation of the plant but which is not capable of extraction from the site.

M51 In granting planning permission for mineral stocking areas conditions will be imposed and planning obligations or other legal agreements sought, to cover the following matters as necessary:

- (a) Minimisation of environmental impact;
- (b) Time limits on the storage of materials after working has ceased;
- (c) Preventing the import of materials from elsewhere.

M52 In considering planning applications for mineral development the ability and commitment of the intended operator to operate and reclaim the site in accordance with an agreed scheme will be taken into account. Proposals will only be permitted where either:

- (a) The operator is capable of, and committed to, the working and full restoration of the site in accordance with the requirements of any planning permissions; or
- (b) Adequate safeguards are in place, through the provisions of financial bonds, appropriate mutual funds operated through the industry, or other means, to ensure that any breach of planning conditions, particularly with regard to the restoration and after care of the site, can be remedied without additional public cost.

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Appendix 2

Population Change

The following table details population change by settlement of the period 1971 - 1991

Settlement	Population ¹ (to nearest 10)			Change* 1981-91	
	1971	1981	1991	No.	%
Blackhall	5,850	5,330	5,310	-20	**
Castle Eden	350	320	310	-10	*
Dalton le Dale	290	280	280	0	*
Easington	9,160	8,650	7,400	-1,250	-14
Haswell	1,800	1,760	1,530	-230	-13
Hawthorn	350	320	340	+20	*
Hesleden	700	580	560	-20	*
High Hesleden	210	170	190	+20	*
Horden	10,390	8,710	8,090	-620	-7
Hutton Henry	300	460	410	-50	*
Murton	8,230	7,910	7,370	-540	-7
Peterlee	21,940	22,810	22,620	-190	-1
Seaham	24,390	22,030	21,740	-290	-1
Seaton	330	340	330	-10	*
Shotton	5,170	4,290	4,200	-90	-3
South Hetton	2,790	2,630	2,780	+150	+6
Thornley	3,840	3,330	2,950	-380	-11
Trimdon	1,670	1,390	1,400	+10	-1
Wheatley Hill	4,760	3,790	3,420	-370	-10
Wingate/Station Town	5,280	4,810	4,430	-380	-8
The Countryside ²	1,830	1,090	2,160	+1,070	-

Notes

- * Population count too small to make percentage change meaningful.
- ** Population change too small to make percentage change meaningful.
- 1. Settlements as defined by the boundaries in the Inset Chapters.
- 2. Countryside is defined as all land outside the defined settlement boundaries.

3. Population counts are District Council estimates based on the respective Censuses.
4. The population change should be treated with caution due to the different methodologies used in the counts, particularly with regard to the Countryside.
5. 2001 census data not available at time of publication.

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Appendix 3

Structure Plan Review - Housing Requirements 1991 - 2006

	Total population 2006	Private Household Population 2006	Average Household Size 1991	Average Household Size 2006 *	Number of Households 2006	Vacancy Rate 2006 (%)	Dwelling Stock Required 2006	Dwelling Stock 1991	Additional Dwelling Stock Required 2006
Derwentside	86,000	84,900	n/a	2.25	37,700	4	39,300	36,500	2,800
Chester le Street	54,000	53,600	n/a	2.30	23,300	4	24,300	21,800	2,500
Wear Valley	63,000	62,300	n/a	2.23	27,900	5	29,400	26,900	2,500
City of Durham	81,000	79,500	n/a	2.28	34,900	4	36,400	33,400	3,000
Easington	98,000	97,000	2.49	2.33	41,600	4	43,300	40,600	2,700
Teesdale	24,000	23,700	n/a	2.26	10,500	8	11,400	10,600	800
Sedgefield	93,000	91,900	n/a	2.32	39,600	4	41,300	37,200	4,100
Darlington	101,000	99,000	n/a	2.26	43,800	4	45,600	41,600	4,000
<hr/>									
County Durham	600,000	591,900	n/a	2.28	259,300		271,000	248,600	22,400

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Appendix 4

Table 1

Land with planning permission as at April 1998

Site	Sector		Status		Comment B - brownfield G - greenfield	Anticipated Output Over Plan Period
	Public	Private	Detailed	Outlined		
Peterlee						
1. Oakerside West		124	124		B	124
Total		124	124			124
Seaham						
1. Deneside	128		128		B	128
2. small sites		20		20		10
Total	128	20	128	20		138
Rest of District						
1. S of Yoden Way		8	8		G	8
2. C Streets Easington	10		10		B	0
3. Cadwell Lane Easington		38		38	B	38
4. Cosmic garage		16	16		B	16
5. Coach depot Horden		6	6		B	6
6. Former colliery Murton		100		100	B	100
7. Station Rd Shotton		96		96	G	96
8. Ridgeway House St Town		5	5		B	5
9. Market Cres Wingate		12	12		B	0
10 Small sites		64	54	10		32
Total	10	345	111	244		301
District total	138	489	363	264		563
Grand total (627 units)	437 brownfield, 104 greenfield					

Table 2**Sites under construction as at April 1998**

Site	Developer	Total	Under Constr	Complete	Outstanding	Comment
Peterlee		0				
Seaham						
1. Dalton Gge	Leech	52	20	32	0	B
2. Viceroy St	Various	7	1	1	5	B
3. Castlereagh	Various	8	0	3	5	B
Total		67	21	36	10	
Rest Of District						
1. Village Gn Easington	V Green Devts	16	2	12	2	B
2. The Copse	Leech	28	8	0	20	B
3. Blossomfield Haswell	Various	22	3	18	1	G
4. Bungalows H Hesleden	Dunelm	5	3	2	0	G
5. Dene Villas Horden	Plot build	45			45	B
6. Westgarth Ave Shotton	Various	6	3	1	2	B
7 Oakwood South Hetton	Various	42	3	15	24	B
8. Rodridge Pk Station Town	Plot Build	14	0	1	13	B
9. School Gn Thornley	Plotbuild	12	1	10	1	B
10 Ryedale Ct Trimdon	Kirby	25	2	13	10	B
11. Maltings Wingate	Alexander	50	3	47	0	G
12. AJ Dawson school	Alexander	137	0	0	137	B/G
13. Small sites	Various	19	19	0	0	
Total		421	47	119	255	
District		488	68	155	265	

333 units remain to be completed. It is expected that all sites will be fully developed within the Plan period.

300 of these units are being built on brownfield sites.

Table 3**Modified housing allocations**

Policy Ref.	Site	Area	Dwelling capacity		Comment	Anticipated output in period
			Public	Private		
Peterlee						
P5	Edenhill Rd	0.1	7		B	7
P7	Eden Lane	1.8		15	B	15
P9	Yoden Way	2.6		65	B	65
P10	Helford Rd	0.1		3	B	3
Total		4.6	7	83		90
Seaham						
S7	Lawnside	0.1	5		B	5
S8	Vane Tempest	32.7		500	B	500
S9	Seaham Colliery	13.44		150	B	150
S11	M-M School site	0.85		20	B	20
S12	Robert Square	0.1		2	B	0
Total		47.19	5	672		675
Rest of District						
B4	N of B1281 Blackhall	1	24		B	24
B5	Hesleden Rd	3.44		65	B	65
B6	Glenholme Tce	0.1		1	B	1
C4	Golf Club Castle Eden	0.86		6	B	6
C5	large grounds			2	B	2
C7	The Castle			6	B	6
C6	adj Ivy Cottage			1	B	1
D4	East of S Farm Dalton-le-Dale	0.1		1	G	1
E9	A Street, Easington		29		B	29
E10	S of Seaside Ln Easington	6.22		110	G	110
E12	S of Holmehill Ln	0.66		20	B	20
Ha9	W of Blossomfield, Haswell	3.1		70	B/G	70
Ha10	E of George St	0.32		7	B	7
Ha11	Plough Farm, Haswell Plough	0.2		3	G	3
Ha12	Chapel Lane	0.1		1	B	1
Hw3	West Farm (conv)			3	B	3
Hw4	West Farm	0.47		3	B	3
Hw5	RAF Camp	2.25		30	B	30
Hw6	High West Lane	0.1		1	B	1
He2	East of Station Rd, Hesleden	1.56		45	B	45
He4	rear of Grey Ave	0.3		6	B	6
Hi1	South View, High Hesleden	0.1		1	G	1
Hu1	South View, Hutton Henry	0.1		2	B	2

M5	Rex Cinema, Murton	0.3	15		B	15
M6	Bus Depot	1.42		40	B	0
St2	N of Seaton Lane, Seaton	1.6		20	G	20
St3	Hillrise Crescent	0.19		2	B	2
Sh3	Victoria Street Shotton	0.6		15	B	15
Sh4	Windsor Place	3.36		55	B/G	55
Sh5	Dene Terrace	0.1		5	B	5
Sh6	Dene Crescent	0.2		5	B	5
Sh8	Brackenhill Ave Shotton	0.3		1	B	1

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Table 3 - Continued

Modified housing allocations

Policy Ref.	Site	Area	Dwelling capacity		Comment	Anticipated output in period
			Public	Private		
So4	S of Fallowfield Tce, S Hetton	2.0		40	G	40
So5	N of Fallowfield	0.68		8	B	8
So6	Fredrick Tce	0.4		6	B	6
So7	Windermere Rd	0.1		3	B	1
Th4	S of Hartlepool St, Thornley	1.9		35	B	35
Th5	N of Hartlepool St	2.0		40	B	40
Th6	Thornley House	0.75		20	B	20
Tr4	Margaret Tce, Trimdon	0.5		10	B	10
Tr4	Luke St	0.17		5	B	5
Wh4	Numbered Sts, Wheatley Hill	1.4		35	B	35
Wh6i & ii	Quilstyle Rd	0.3		10	B	0
Wh7	Black Lane	1.0		10	B	0
Wi4	Moor Ln, Wingate	2.5		60	G	60
Wi7	Watson Windows	0.6		10	B	10
Wi8	E of Front St	3.6		75	B	75
Wi9	Market Crescent	0.1		1	B	1
Wi5/6	Rodridge St Station Town	2.25		45	B	0
Wi9	Bridge Terrace	0.1		3	B	3
Total	Rest of district	47.43	83	928		822
All total		99.22	95	1683		1587

Grand total	1778 units	1473 on brownfield, 305 on greenfield
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Appendix 5

Accessibility and car parking standards

Revised parking standards are currently under review by the County Council as highway authority. Once adopted, the revised parking standards will be incorporated into the Local Plan as supplementary planning guidance. There will be no minimum standard of parking for development, except to ensure provision for people with disabilities. Maximum levels of parking will be set for broad classes of development, designed to be used in a wider context with other measures aimed at promoting sustainable transport choice, reducing land take for development, easing the assimilation of projects within constrained central area sites, promoting linked trips, and enabling developments to be accessed by those who do not have the use of a car.

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Appendix 6

Further Planning Guidance Design and Layout of Residential Development

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The design and layout of residential development has a significant impact on the quality and character of the built environment. New development should be based on good urban design principles which embrace all aspects of natural and built environment. Good design should help to promote sustainable development, improve the quality of the existing environment, attract business and investment, and create a safe and attractive place for people to live and work.
- 1.2 The appearance of proposed development and its relationship to its surroundings are material considerations in the determination of any relevant planning application. It is important that all those in the development process demonstrate that they have considered the relationship between buildings and the wider setting, including the appearance and treatment of spaces between and around buildings.

2. Pre-application discussion

- 2.1 Applicants are advised to consult the Local Planning Authority and other parties who may have a relevant or legitimate interest in their proposals, before formulating housing proposals. This will enable constructive feedback on their design proposals and allow the Local Planning Authority to comment on their design expectations.
- 2.2 In order to allow full and careful consideration of housing proposals, applicants for planning permission should, as a minimum, provide a short written statement setting out the design principles adopted, as well as illustrative material showing the wider context of the site.

3. Design and visual considerations

- 3.1 Residential layouts should be based on a proper assessment of the character of the surrounding built and natural environment. In this respect new development should take advantage of the features of the site and local architectural styles and materials.
- 3.2 Good quality design addresses the complex relationship between the elements of the built and unbuilt space. In applying for planning permission, developers need to consider the relationship between existing and proposed buildings, the space between and around buildings and how they integrate into the wider street scene.
- 3.3 In order to create individuality and a strong sense of place, the layout of a development should exploit the existing ground levels, landscaping and street patterns.
- 3.4 Residential development should include complementary but varied house types with different massing, roof shapes, orientation, together with single storey elements such as garages, conservatories and boundary enclosures, which will add to an area's individualism.
- 3.5 External materials are an important part of the design process and need to be selected on the basis of the characteristics of the site and its surroundings. Generally traditional materials, brick, stone, tiles and slates will be preferred. Materials should create a rich

variety and visually interesting street scene.

- 3.6** An estate layout should provide a range of different house types to attract mixed communities, for example, designing a reasonable number of houses accessible to elderly persons, or persons with disabilities.

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4. Space, privacy and outlook

- 4.1** The distance and space around dwellings is important in ensuring satisfactory living conditions for the occupants and helps to shape the visual character of the development.
- 4.2** Sufficient space should be provided around dwellings for access, parking, storage and general amenity space. The spacing and layout of buildings is an essential element of the townscape creating pleasant user friendly environments.
- 4.3** Dwellings should be designed so that the occupants have a pleasant outlook from the main habitable rooms, reasonable privacy in the rear garden area and the amenity space within the dwelling is not directly overlooked from a neighbouring dwelling or the street outside.
- 4.4** The protection of the privacy, outlook and spacing around dwellings is an important factor that needs to be taken into account when designing residential development. The spacing of dwellings will normally be required to meet the minimum standards set out below. Variations to these standards may be justified where a development brief proposes a more flexible approach in response to unique local situations.
- A minimum of 21 metres should be provided between main elevations of one or two storey dwellings facing each other.
 - A minimum distance of 13.5 metres between a main elevation containing windows to habitable rooms and the gable elevation of an adjacent building.
 - Where end elevations without main windows are facing each other in 1 or 2 storey dwellings then a minimum spacing of one metre between the side elevation of the dwelling and side boundary is required.
 - Where there are landing windows in side elevations, it is preferable to arrange houses so that spacing is increased by placing garages alongside facing gables.
 - In order not to sterilise land adjacent to proposed residential development and ensure a reasonable amenity space there should not be less than 10.5 metres between the main windows of habitable rooms and facing boundary.
 - For the avoidance of doubt, habitable rooms shall include: livingrooms, diningrooms, kitchens, bedrooms, study, games rooms, nurseries, conservatories, etc. Non-habitable rooms include: bathrooms, toilets, halls, landings, cloakrooms and utility rooms.

5. Gardens

- 5.1** The length and width of gardens will generally be dictated by the use of minimum distancing standards. Where buildings are only provided with minimum garden areas, permitted development rights for extensions may be withdrawn to protect the amenities of surrounding residents.
- 5.2** Access to rear gardens should include an exterior route to allow movement of garden waste, household refuse, etc, without having to enter the dwelling and thus a side footpath should preferably be at least one metre wide.

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6. Boundary enclosures

- 6.1** The use of boundary enclosures is an integral part of the design and layout of housing. Boundary enclosures should be in scale and character with their surroundings.
- 6.2** The types of enclosures and materials selected should ensure a good long-term appearance to minimise maintenance and prevent untidy non-conforming replacements.
- A 1.8 metre high screening fence along the rear and side boundary of dwellings is necessary to safeguard the security and privacy of residents.
 - Enclosures at the entrance and edges to developments should incorporate brick walls and fences or railings.
 - Where developments are designed on open plan principles, permitted development rights will be withdrawn to ensure that open plan frontages are maintained.

7. Security and crime prevention

- 7.1** The design and layout of buildings can affect the way people behave. It is important to provide defensible space, safe and secure housing and an attractive environment in which to live and work.
- 7.2** Thought should be given to security at the early design stage. This includes defensible space, lighting, landscaping and boundary treatments.

8. Landscaping, street furniture and amenity open space

- 8.1** The use of hard and soft landscaping is an important element of the street scene. Landscaping identifies the public and semi-private space between dwellings. It creates interest and provides an attractive environment. If used correctly it can reduce the visual dominance of features such as roads and car parks.
- 8.2** It is important that landscaping, amenity space and street furniture are selected and designed as an integral part of the housing layout and not positioned on land which is left over after other elements of the layout have been determined.
- 8.3** Applicants will be expected to show a high standard of landscape design, producing a scheme which is sympathetic and complementary to the development and its setting.
- 8.4** Developers are encouraged to submit full landscaping details alongside details of layout and design as part of the main planning application.

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Appendix 7

Further Planning Guidance; Extensions to Existing Dwellings

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Due to the various range of dwelling types in the District it is important that individual planning applications are considered on their own particular merits. It is important that all extensions respect the scale and character of the existing building and its relationship to the street scene, whilst maintaining and, where possible, improving the amenities of residents of adjoining properties. Prior to considering extensions and alterations to existing dwellings, the possibility of bat roosts should be investigated. As a protected species, their presence is a material consideration in the determining of planning applications.
- 1.2 This guidance note provides the general approach that should be adopted when considering extensions and alterations to existing dwellings. Architects and householders are urged to contact the Local Planning Authority before formulating development proposals and prior to the submission of a planning application in order to discuss the merits of individual schemes.

2. Extensions

- 2.1 Extensions to existing dwellings should be designed to incorporate the design features and materials of the original building.
- 2.2 The use of flat roofs on extensions should, where possible, be avoided and will not normally be allowed on two storey extensions.
- 2.3 Extensions to dwellings resulting in significant numbers of additional bedrooms should provide adequate off-street parking in accordance with the standards contained in appendix 5.
- 2.4 Where side extensions would result in the loss of parking, proposals should normally maintain existing or minimum in-curtilage/parking in accordance with standards contained in appendix 5.
- 2.5 Extensions to dwellings in modern housing estates should maintain minimum distancing standards. In this respect a 21 metre distance between walls of dwellings containing windows of habitable rooms and a 13.5 metre distance between window elevations and opposing gable end walls should be maintained.
- 2.6 Where, because of the age of the property, it is not possible to match brickwork exactly, side extensions should be set back a minimum of one brick width to avoid problems of unsightly bonding.

3. Rear extensions

- 3.1 Where possible rear extensions to terraced properties should be developed on a back-to-back basis with two part yard widths between each extension.
- 3.2 In modern housing estates, two storey rear extensions which extend along a shared boundary with an attached neighbouring property, or reduce minimum distancing

standards will not normally be allowed.

- 3.3** Two storey rear extensions to terraced properties will be considered on their own merits, giving due consideration to the amenities of adjoining residents.
- 3.4** The depth of a single storey rear extension shall be proportionate to two metres plus the distance between the extension and the nearest point of any principal ground floor window of the adjoining property. For the avoidance of doubt, habitable rooms shall include: livingrooms, diningrooms, kitchens, bedrooms, studies, games rooms, nursery, etc. Non-habitable rooms include: bathrooms, toilets, halls, landings, cloakrooms and utility rooms.

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4. Front extensions

- 4.1** Front extensions to existing dwellings should:
- not project more than 1.5 metres forward from the existing buildings;
 - be designed to incorporate design features of the original dwelling and should be constructed in materials used in the construction of the original dwelling;
 - be sympathetic in scale and character to the building itself and the area generally;
 - be designed to respect the immediate outlook of adjacent residents and in this respect should not adversely affect the amenities they currently enjoy or result in the intervening privacy distance being reduced below the minimum standard.
- 4.2** Two storey front extensions will be assessed on their merits taking into consideration the scale and character of the existing property and surrounding area.

5. Extensions into the roof space

- 5.1** Extensions into the roof space should respect the plane of the original roof and should be appropriately proportioned and positioned in respect of the eaves and the ridge so as not to detract from the original form of the building.
- 5.2** Dormer extensions should usually be set back from the eaves, should not be higher than the ridge, nor extend the full length of the roof, and should be designed to reflect the same proportion as the windows below.
- 5.3** Extensions into the roof space should be designed to incorporate the design features and materials of the original dwelling.

6. Conservatories

- 6.1** Conservatories and sun lounges should adhere to the same guidelines as single storey front and rear extensions.
- 6.2** Conservatories onto the front of properties will not usually be approved.
- 6.3** In order to safeguard the amenities of the adjoining residents in terms of privacy and overlooking, the Council will request that the side elevations of the extension located along boundaries with neighbouring properties are constructed with either a solid wall or obscure glazing.

7. Garages

- 7.1 Garages to existing dwellings should be designed to incorporate design features of the original dwelling and should be constructed of materials used in the construction of the original dwelling.
- 7.2 Garages should be unobtrusively sited in relation to existing houses and the street scene and should not restrict access to neighbouring properties, drives or garages.
- 7.3 In order to protect the amenities of neighbours and/or the surrounding area, the Council will seek to ensure that domestic garages are used incidental to the enjoyment of the dwelling and that no trade or business use takes place.
- 7.4 Garages should be provided with a minimum drive length of 5.5 metres to ensure that a vehicle can be parked fully within the curtilage of the property so as not to obstruct the highway.



Appendix 8

Further Planning Guidance; Shop Fronts and Security Shutters and Grilles

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Well designed and attractive shop fronts, provide visual interest in the street scene as well as adding quality and vitality to the shopping centre. The following guidelines are to assist all those involved in the design and development process, wishing to undertake works to shop fronts. It outlines the Council's design principles which will be taken into account in determining planning applications for shop fronts, and security shutters.

2. Design of shop fronts

- 2.1 New shop fronts will normally be expected to reflect the characteristics of the best design features of the property in question, adjacent and nearby properties and existing or original shop front detailing.
- 2.2 The detailing and decoration of older shop fronts is particularly valuable in the street scene. It is important that, when repairing and renovating existing shop fronts, the loss of attractive and decorative features should be avoided.
- 2.3 Traditional structural elements, such as stallrisers, pilasters and fascia, which create a frame to the shop front, should be in appropriate proportion, materials and detailing to reflect their surroundings.
- 2.4 All newly built shops should be fully accessible to disabled people, with level thresholds and wide doorways. When installing new shop fronts into existing buildings, wherever possible and without affecting the character of the building, easier access for all sectors of the community shall be provided.

3. Security shutters and grilles

- 3.1 In determining applications for security shutters and grilles to buildings, the Council will take into account the following guidelines:
- External shutters or grilles will not normally be permitted on listed buildings and buildings in a Conservation Area unless it can be demonstrated that there is no significant harm caused to the appearance of the building and surrounding area.
 - Solid shutters will not normally be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that they can be provided without causing significant harm to the appearance or character of the building or street scene.
 - Where external shutters or grilles are acceptable, any box housing, runners, retainers or fixings should where possible be located within the reveal or fascia, as appropriate.
 - Where external shutters or grilles are acceptable they should be treated with a suitable colour coating and this must be specified in the application. Untreated galvanised steel shutters will not be acceptable.

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Appendix 9

Further Planning Guidance; Energy Efficiency

1. Introduction

- 1.1** The design and layout of new development should be designed with the aim of conserving energy by enhancing the micro climate and including elements within the building which reduce the waste of energy.
- 1.2** The height, mass and density of the built form together with considerations of siting, orientation and landscaping can directly influence the energy efficiency as well as the overall quality of a development.
- 1.3** This guidance note provides advice on the principles that should be taken into account when designing new development to assist with the efficient use of energy.
- Developments should be sited and designed with the aim of conserving energy by making the maximum use of solar radiation and minimising the cooling effects of the wind.
 - Buildings should be designed and orientated to ensure principal rooms face south to benefit from solar gain. Unoccupied rooms, storage rooms and rooms with lower heat demands should be positioned on the north side of the building.
 - Choose dwelling type and form and ensure adequate spacing between buildings, to limit overshadowing.
 - Semi-detached, terraced houses and flats will give rise to less heat loss than detached housing.
 - Buildings should be grouped and designed to protect them from the worst effects of the elements. In this respect buildings should be arranged in irregular patterns, with long uninter-rupted street patterns avoided.
 - Courtyard designs can be used to capture heat and provide maximum shelter from prevailing winds.
 - Landscaping techniques such as mounding, trees, bushes and fences can provide shelter for buildings.
 - Buildings can use energy more efficiently if consideration is given at the design stage to the form and layout of individual dwellings. The following should be considered
 - i) the orientation of buildings;
 - ii) the form, height and roof design;
 - iii) high insulation levels for both heat and sound;
 - iv) fenestration and type of glass.
 - A high efficient energy system should be selected with consideration given to the choice of energy source. Suitable controls for heating, lighting and ventilation should be provided in each room.

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Appendix 10

1. Introduction

- 1.1** Proposals for new buildings, or planning applications for the alteration or change of use of an existing building, provides the opportunity to secure a more accessible environment for all sectors of the community including people with disabilities, parents with young children, the elderly and other special needs groups.
- 1.2** Developers and the Local Planning Authority should consider the access needs of people with disabilities at an early stage in the design process.
- Applications for development including the change of use, alteration or extension to buildings open to the public and buildings used for employment and educating purposes, will be required to provide suitable access for people with disabilities.
 - Provision shall be made of easily identifiable and conveniently located parking for people with disabilities.
 - As far as practicable, disabled access should be provided to all public buildings. This should include a level or ramped approach and flush threshold at the main entrance.
 - The design, layout and surfacing of access routes and public space around buildings should be designed with accessibility in mind.
 - All new buildings should provide suitable entrance doors and lobbies, circulation space and access routes within the development, and suitable toilet and changing facilities for all sectors of the community.
 - It may be difficult to meet the minimum standards when altering existing buildings, however, the applicant will be expected to demonstrate why access provision is neither practicable or reasonable.

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Appendix 11

Further Planning Guidance; Crime Prevention

1. Introduction

1.1 The design and layout of buildings can affect the way people behave. It is important to provide defensible space, safe and secure housing and an attractive environment in which to live and work.

1.2 In considering the design of new development the Local Planning Authority, developers and designers should take into account crime prevention and security at an early stage of the design process. The following principles can assist in designing out crime:

- Use natural surveillance as primary aid of crime prevention.
- Layouts should where possible provide single identifiable points of access.
- Car parking, garage forecourts, cycleways, footpaths, open spaces and play areas should be visible from adjoining houses.
- The design of residential development should emphasise the ownership of the building and the space around it to provide defensible space.
- Rear gardens of houses should interlock for mutual protection.
- Footpaths should be as direct and straight as possible to eliminate potential hiding places.
- Lighting should be consistent and of high intensity.
- Provide adequate and clear directional signs for pedestrians.
- Ensure that landscaping is vandal-proof and of easy maintenance and is designed and located to eliminate potential hiding places.
- Landscaping around buildings should be designed so that a clear view is maintained and is set back from the pavement to avoid creating hiding places.
- Footpaths linking different housing estates should be limited because of the way in which they provide escape routes.
- A careful choice of building materials will help to reduce levels of damage and vandalism.
- Fencing around exposed rear gardens should incorporate trellising to deter unauthorised access.
- Play areas, in particular, should allow natural surveillance.

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Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

Activity Rates	Percentage of population of working age who are economically active.
Affordable Housing	Housing designed for those whose incomes generally deny them the opportunity to purchase or rent houses on the open market as a result of the local relationship between income and price.
Agricultural Land Classification	System used by the Department of Environment, Farming and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) to define the quality of agricultural land throughout Britain, graded from 1 (best) to 5 (poor). Grade 3 is divided into 3a, 3b and 3c, depending on its quality.
A.H.L.V. (Area of High Landscape Value)	Designated areas which are deemed, by the Council, to be particularly attractive in landscape terms and where extra care needs to be taken to ensure that they are not spoiled by inappropriate development.
Amenity	The pleasant, or at least satisfactory, aspects of a location or neighbourhood which contribute to its enjoyment by residents.
Ancient monument	'Scheduled' ancient monuments are monuments and/or archaeological sites considered by the Secretary of State for National Heritage to be of national importance and given statutory protection under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979, as amended.
Article 4 Direction	A Direction, made under the Town and Country Planning General Development Order, 1988, which enables the withdrawal of permitted development rights (see below) in exceptional circumstances where there is a real and specific threat to an interest of acknowledged importance.
Brownfield site	Previously developed land that is or was occupied by a permanent structure.
Bulky goods	Goods requiring facilities not readily available in existing shopping centres due to the need for large storage and display areas and the generation of greater volumes of traffic. Bulky goods include DIY, furniture and carpets but exclude electrical goods, toys and clothing
Business (Use Class B1)	Use as an office (other than offices used by the public), for research and development of products or processes provided that the use could be carried out in any residential area without detriment to the living conditions of local residents.
Community facilities (Use Class D1)	Including health centres, creches, day centres, schools and colleges, art galleries and museums, public libraries, public halls and places of worship.
Community Forest	A joint initiative between the Countryside and Forestry Commissions to improve the countryside around major built up areas where major environmental improvements will create well-wooded landscapes for wildlife, work, recreation and education.
Comparison goods	Goods bought infrequently or on an irregular basis, e.g. washing machines, television sets, cameras, usually of a high cost, where the purchaser will be prepared to shop widely in order to achieve the best price.

Conservation Area	An area deemed to be of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve and enhance designated under, and afforded special protection by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990.
Convenience goods	Goods bought frequently or on a regular basis, e.g. food, drink, tobacco, magazines and other goods of a standardised type for which there is a wide sale.
Contaminated land	Land which represents an actual or potential hazard to health as a result of current or previous uses.
Countryside Commission	National body, funded by the Government, which is responsible for promoting and advising on the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty and amenity of the countryside and public enjoyment of it. Now called the Countryside Agency.
County Wildlife Site	A local, non-statutory designation of the County Council, in consultation with the District Council and conservation bodies, of sites of local conservation interest, including some coastal denes, ponds and marshes, woodland, disused quarries, grassland and reservoirs.
D.L.G (Derelict Land Grant)	Central Government aid to assist in the reclamation of derelict land.
Derelict land	Land so damaged by industrial or other development that it is incapable of beneficial use without treatment.
Development	Defined for planning purposes, by Section 55 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as "the carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operations in, on over or under the land or the making of any material change in the use of any building or other land."
Dual use (of schools)	Use of school facilities by the community and community groups as well as by pupils.
Durable goods	Items such clothing, footwear, furniture, toys, electrical and other household goods.
Durham Wildlife Trust	Charitable organisation promoting nature conservation in County Durham, Darlington, Gateshead, South Tyneside and Sunderland.
Dwellinghouse (Use Class C3)	A dwelling inhabited by a single person, a family or by not more than 6 persons living together as a single household.
E.C./E.E.C. (European Economic Community)	Association of Member States comprising the United Kingdom and 11 other countries. The Community affects land-use planning through its environmental legislation (directives) and through grants made for infrastructure improvements (such as E.R.D.F.).
Edge of centre shopping	Retailing in a location within reasonable walking distance of the centre and providing parking facilities that serve the centre as well as the store, thus enabling one trip to serve several purposes.
E.R.D.F. (European Development Fund)	E.E.C. grant aid towards major public sector projects.
English Heritage	National body, funded by the Government, which manages some ancient monuments and provides specialist advice on conservation of the built environment.

English Nature	The Government's statutory advisers on nature conservation.
English Partnerships	National body, funded by the Government, with the task of regenerating derelict, vacant and under-used land and buildings throughout England in partnership with public, private and voluntary sector organisations.
Enterprise Zones	Areas defined by Central Government as part of economic regeneration initiatives. Lasting for 10 years, premises within them are exempt from rates, and development therein which conforms with the the published scheme for each zone will not require individual planning permission.
Environment Agency	The Government's statutory advisers on aspects of pollution control and waste regulation
Executive housing	High quality houses generally of four or more bedrooms with two bathrooms, double garage, utility room/study, full central heating on a large plot and situated in a pleasant locality.
Factory shop	Shop owned by a manufacturer which sells 'seconds' of the company's branded goods at a discount price, usually at a location within or adjoining the main factory.
Farm diversification	The process of broadening the economic base of industrial farm businesses, within the overall structural changes in agriculture brought about by the reform of the European Community's Common Agricultural Policy, through the development of tourism, crafts and small scale -business enterprises on farms.
Field Penalty Assessment	Technique used by the Department of Environment, Farming and Rural Affairs to determine and quantify farming problems in urban fringe locations.
Floorscape scheme	Introduction of variations in surface treatment to add interest to the street scene.
Footprint	The aggregate ground floor area of an existing or proposed building
Forestry Authority	Government appointed body responsible for regulating public and private forestry plantations and managing State-owned forests.
Geological Conservation Review Sites (GCRs)	British geological and geomorphological areas where conservation is essential for education and research in the earth sciences
General Industry (Class B2)	Any industrial process other than one that is a Business or Special Industry use.
Green Belt	A policy device established through development plans for the prevention of urban sprawl by safeguarding countryside surrounding urban areas. Green Belt policies are more long term and permanent than other planning policies
Greenfield site	Land that has not been previously developed.
Green Wedge	Open area around or between settlements, allocated in the development plan, where built development will be resisted in order to maintain and enhance the separation between nearby settlements.
Hard end use	A term derived from derelict land reclamation practice referring to the final use of a reclaimed site for built development having an obvious market value, such as housing or industry, rather than non-commercial uses like public open space or amenity, known as 'soft' end uses.

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Hectare	Metric measure of land area, equivalent to 2.47 acres, an area 100x100 metres, or about the size of a football pitch. abbreviated to 'ha.'
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Highway Authority	The authority with the statutory responsibility for the maintenance and improvement of the highway network, including public rights of way. In the area covered by the plan, Durham County Council is the Highway Authority.
HIP (Housing Investment Programme)	Annual statement by the District Council of the extent of housing need, the strategy by which it hopes to deal with it, and a request for capital allocation from the Government.
Historic Parkland	Maintained area of countryside (ranging from extensive stately homes to more modest country houses) characterised by permanent grassland, individual and clumps of trees, water and woodland.
Hotels and Hostels (Use Class C1)	Hotel, boarding or guest houses where no significant element of care is provided.
Household	One person living alone or a group of people (who may or may not be related) living or staying at the same address and sharing living expenses.
Housing Association	Non-profit making organisation whose purpose is the provision, construction, improvement or managing of houses for sale or rent.
Housing Land Availability Schedule	An assessment by the District Council of the amount of land available for housing development. It is revised annually and aims to ensure the availability of a 5 year supply of land.
H.R.A. (Housing Renewal Area)	Area-based scheme for the improvement of housing.
Hypermarkets	Single level self-service stores selling a wide variety of food or food plus non-food goods of over 5000 net square metres.
Infill/infilling	Small scale developments fitted into the existing pattern of development in a built-up area.
Informal recreation	Recreational activities which are not organised by a club or public organisation. Such activities are non-competitive.
Infrastructure	Services which need to be in place to serve development e.g. roads and footpaths, electricity, water and sewage. Social infrastructure includes schools, shops, community and health facilities.
In the countryside	All of the area within the District that is outside of the defined settlement boundaries.
Landfill site	Site where waste is tipped to fill a hole or raise the surface level.
Listed building	A structure considered by the Secretary of State for National Heritage to be of special architectural or historic interest and given legal protection by the Government under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990.
Local Agenda 21	A local authority response to the 1992 Earth Summit commitment to work towards sustainable development for the 21st century.

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Local Nature Reserve (LNR)	LNRs are generally habitats of local significance and serve to assist with nature conservation in terms of the management of habitat but also public access to it and education about local wildlife. LNRs may be established by local authorities under Section 21 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949.
Local Transport Plan (LTP)	Plan prepared by the County Council in conjunction with district councils and other partners, covering all forms of transport and designed to co-ordinate and improve local transport provision.
Local shopping centre	Main grouping of shops within and serving each of the principal villages, but excluding Peterlee and Seaham, and the smaller villages
Management agreement	Where, for the purpose of conserving those natural features considered to

be of special interest (i.e. within a S.S.S.I.), English Nature may enter into an agreement with the owners, lessees and occupiers of the land which imposes restrictions on the exercise of rights over the land by persons bound by the agreement. This power is available under Section 15 of the Countryside Act 1968.

Migration	The movement of people into and out of an area to live.
National Nature Reserve (NNR)	NNRs are areas of national, and sometimes international, importance which are owned or leased by English Nature or bodies approved by it, or are managed in accordance with Nature Reserve Agreements with landowners and occupiers. The essential characteristic of NNRs is that they are primarily used for nature conservation.
Nature Conservation Review Sites (NCR)	Areas identified in the Nature Conservation Review 1977 and subsequent amendments as being key sites of national nature conservation importance for habitats and species.
Natura	Natura 2000 - A European network of sites comprising all SACs and SPAs established under the Habitats Directive to enable steps to be taken to maintain the favourable conservation status of the natural habitats and species concerned.
Neighbourhood shopping centres	Small parades of shops serving parts of Seaham and Peterlee.
Non-operational car parking	The space required for the vehicles which do not need to park or wait within the curtilage of the building, including cars belonging to employees (mainly long-stay parking), shoppers, business callers and visitors (mainly short-stay parking).
N.P.F.A. (National Playing Fields Association)	National voluntary body which campaigns for the provision of playing fields, public open space and playgrounds.
N.R.A. (National Rivers Authority)	Government appointed body established following water privatisation to monitor and control the quality of water in rivers and streams.
Northern Region	The counties of Durham, Cleveland, Cumbria and Northumberland.
Offices & Services for Local Needs (Use Class A2)	Premises from where services are provided principally to visiting members of the public, including banks, building societies, estate agents, betting offices, solicitors' and accountants' offices.
O.P.C.S. (Office of Population Censuses and Surveys)	Government body responsible for the collection and dissemination of information on aspects of the country's population.

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Operational car parking	The space required for cars and other vehicles regularly and necessarily involved in the operation of the business of a particular building. It includes space for delivering or collecting goods at premises but not for storing or servicing vehicles except where this is necessary as part of the business carried on at the premises. Residential parking, being essential and directly related to car ownership, is classified as operational parking space.
Permitted development	Certain forms of development are permitted without express planning permission under sections 58 - 61 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. In some circumstances, the permission given is subject to extensive qualification and restrictions.
Planning brief	Statement for the guidance of potential developers, giving information on the favoured land uses for a particular site or sites, indicating constraints and the standards which any development should meet.
Planning obligations	Obligations may be entered into by agreement between a developer and the local planning authority or a developer may undertake to carry out an obligation unilaterally. Planning obligations might restrict the use of land, require certain activities or operations to be carried out or require payments to be made to the Council. They are drawn up under Section 106

Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPG's)	Notes issued periodically by the Secretary of State setting the broad framework within which local planning authorities should decide policy on planning matters
Plan period	The length of time that is catered for by the Plan. The Plan period envisaged for the Easington District Local Plan is 2001-2006.
P.P.G. (Planning Policy Guidance)	Notes issued periodically by the Secretary of State for the Environment to determine the broad framework within which local planning authorities should decide policy on planning matters.
Prestige industrial sites	High quality major industrial sites capable of competing against the very attractive sites now available in many parts of the country. To be so designated sites require high quality landscaping and building design with good access to major roads and residential areas.
Protected Species	Those wild animals and plants afforded statutory protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1992, the Conservation (Natural Habitats etc) Regulations 1994 and certain other Acts and Regulations.
Ramsar sites	Sites listed by the Secretary of State under the Ramsar Convention to protect Wetlands of international importance, particularly as waterfowl habitats.'
RECHAR	An E.C. fund to assist the regeneration of coalfield/former coalfield areas.
Reclamation	The process of rendering derelict or contaminated land fit for beneficial use.
Regional Planning Guidance	Policy framework used in the preparation of the Durham County Structure Plan and the Easington District local Plan, issued by the Secretary of State for the environment.
Regionally Important	Geological/Geomorphological sites (RIGS) non - statutory sites of regional importance recognised by English Nature and local planning authorities

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Residential institutions (Use Class C2)	Residential care homes, hospitals, nursing homes, residential schools or colleges.
Ribbon development	Linear development into the countryside, usually along a main transport route.
Rights of Way	Routes over which the public have a right to pass
Safeguarded land	Land identified as being required at some future date for the construction or improvement of roads or other infrastructure, and kept free of other forms of development for that purpose.
Service industry	Any economic industry which does not produce a natural or manufactured product. This sector includes retailing, transport, local government, tourism, banking and finance.
Settlement boundary	Defines the limits to the development of a settlement that will normally be allowed.
Settlement Renewal Initiative (S.R.I.)	Rolling programme of village based regeneration projects jointly funded by the District and County Councils, and a range of other public and private bodies.
Small shops (Use Class A1)	Shops of all types including post offices, hairdressers, sandwich bars, travel agents, and showrooms (except car showrooms).
S.N.C.I. (Sites of Nature Conservation Importance)	A local, non-statutory designation of the County Council or District Council in consultation with nature conservation bodies of sites of local conservation interest, including ponds and marshes, woodland, disused quarries, grassland and reservoirs: they include County Wildlife Sites and County Geological Sites.

Soft after use	A term derived from derelict land reclamation practice referring to the final use of a reclaimed site for amenity, landscaping or agricultural purposes which may have no, or very limited, market value, rather than commercial uses which typically require the construction of buildings and can generate significant income. (see 'hard end use')
Special Areas of Conservation	A site, designated under the EC Council Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (the Habitats Directive), to protect internationally important natural habitats and species listed in Annexes I and II of the Directive. Part of Natura 2000 network.
Special Industry (Use Classes B4-B7)	Various chemical and metallurgical processes.
Special Protection Areas (SPAs)	A site classified under the EC Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds, to protect internationally important bird species, listed in Annex 1 of the Directive and other regularly occurring migrating species, along with their habitats. Part of the Natura 2000 network.
Sports Council	Government body responsible for promoting sport and advising on the provision of facilities.
S.S.S.I. (Sites of Special Scientific Interest)	Sites so designated because of their flora, fauna, or geological or physiographic features by English Nature under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as incorporated in the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.

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Stall - riser	That part of a traditional shopfront between the base of the window and ground level, usually constructed in timber, stone or brick, thereby providing a solid visual base to the building. The effect is to reduce the area of glass, and add interest to the elevation.
Statutory undertaker	Provider of an essential service such as gas, electricity, water or telecommunications.
Structure Plan	Strategic land use plan produced by County Councils. The Durham County Structure Plan 1991-2006 has been reviewed and was adopted in its current form in March, 1999.
Superstores (Use Class A1)	Single level self-service stores selling a wide variety of food or food plus non-food goods of over 2000 net square metres.
SUSTRANS	Charitable body working in partnership with local authorities and other public and private organisations to provide a network of cycleways.
T.P.O. (Tree Preservation Order)	Order made by the Council under Section 198 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to prevent the felling or pruning of trees of high amenity value without its consent.
T.P.P. (Transport Policies and Programme)	Document formerly prepared annually by the County Council, as local highway authority, and submitted to the Department of Transport, setting out the County's transport policies and proposed programme of works, with a request for capital allocation from the Government. Now replaced by Local Transport Plan (LTP).
Town Centre	That part of a town which provides a range of facilities and services and which fulfils a function as a focus for both the community and public transport. The two town centres in the District are at Seaham and Peterlee.
Traffic calming	Methods of slowing down traffic, usually in residential areas, by means of 'road humps,' narrowing the width of roads and other measures.
Traffic Management	Methods of managing the flow of, or routes taken by, traffic, such as minor road construction, alterations to junctions, signalling and one - way systems.
Traffic Regulation Order	An Order which can be employed, under the highway acts, to regulate the movement of traffic.

Travel To Work Area	Geographic pattern defined by the Department of Employment having regard to travel to work patterns and used for employment data publication purpose(e.g. unemployment rates)
Use Class/Use Classes Order	The Town and Country (Use Classes) Order 1987 places uses of land and buildings into a number of categories, or Classes. Planning permission is generally required for changes of use between classes but not within a class.
Warehousing (Use Class B8)	Storage or distribution warehouses including wholesale cash and carry.
Wildlife corridors	Linear areas of countryside or linear landscape features such as woods or rivers or, within built - up areas, corridors of open spaces. They provide important resources for wildlifeand links that allow movement of wildlife between town and country.
Windfall housing site	A site which becomes available for development during the Plan period which was not available when the Plan was being prepared or which it would be inappropriate to allocate for a specific use.



Local Plan 2001 - 2006

Adopted December 2001

District of **easington.**



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Environment

Summary of policies

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- 7 [Protection of Areas of High Landscape Value \(AHLV\)](#)
- 8 ~~Protection of the coastal zone environment~~ - This policy has lapsed
- 9 [Protection of the coastal zone environment](#)
- 10 ~~Protection of trees and hedgerows~~ - This policy has lapsed
- 11 ~~Tree Preservation Orders~~ - This policy has lapsed
- 12 ~~Protection of Agricultural land~~ - This policy has lapsed
- 13 ~~Protection of Watercourses~~ - This policy has lapsed
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- 3.86** In order that the character and appearance of conservation areas is preserved and enhanced, there is a need to give particular attention to the detail of development proposals. Outline planning applications do not normally enable this as there is usually insufficient detail to assess the impact of the proposal upon the character or appearance of the area.

Policy 22

The council will seek to preserve or enhance the character, appearance or setting of the district's conservation areas by:

- (i) Not allowing development which would detract from the character, appearance or setting of the conservation area;
- (ii) Only permitting development within, adjoining or affecting conservation areas where it is appropriate in terms of its siting, layout, site coverage, height, roof style, detailed design and materials
- (iii) Protecting important views into and out of the conservation area
- (iv) Protecting trees, hedgerows, open spaces and other landscape features which contribute to the character or appearance of the conservation area and its setting;
- (v) Maintaining a general presumption in favour of retaining buildings which make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area and only allowing complete or substantial demolition where a strong case in favour of the demolition as opposed to preservation can be made having taken into account alternative uses, the possibility of charitable or community ownership and any community benefits arising from the proposal, and
- (vi) Only granting consent to demolish buildings in conservation areas where there are acceptable detailed plans for any redevelopment. Any such consents shall be subject to conditions to provide that demolition shall not take place until a contract for the carrying out of the works of redevelopment and planning permission for those works has been granted

- (vii) Only considering outline planning applications in conservation areas if supported by sufficient details to enable the impact of the proposal upon the character, appearance or setting of the area to be assessed.

Control of advertisements in Conservation areas

- 3.87** Poorly sited and designed advertisements and signs in conservation areas can detrimentally affect the character of a group of buildings or an area of open space. Advertisements should, therefore, be sympathetic in scale and character to existing buildings and the surrounding area. The introduction of internally illuminated signs would generally be inappropriate to the historic and architectural environment of a conservation area although external illuminations will be encouraged where this is sympathetic to these aspects.

Policy 23 - This policy has lapsed

~~The location and design of advertisements in a conservation area should be appropriate both to the character of the buildings on which they are situated and the surrounding area.~~

Development affecting Listed buildings and their settings

- 3.88** A listed building is a building or structure which the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport considers to be of special architectural or historic interest. These buildings or structures are graded as Grade I, II* or II according to their relative importance and are statutorily protected. This means that in order to alter the character of, extend or demolish a listed building, listed building consent is required from the Council.
- 3.89** Development affecting listed buildings can comprise proposals to extend, alter or otherwise affect the internal and/or external character or appearance of the building as well as development adjacent to, or in the vicinity of them, which may affect their wider setting. In other cases there may be proposals to demolish a listed building either partially or completely. Where demolition or alterations to a listed building are proposed applicants may be requested to arrange programmes of recording so as to provide a record for future reference and research.
- 3.90** There is a small but important number of listed buildings in the District. They provide an important link with the past and make a significant contribution to the character of the area. Once lost, listed buildings cannot be replaced. They represent a finite and irreplaceable asset. For this reason and in line with government guidance in PPG15, there will be a general presumption in favour of retention and demolition will only be appropriate where either there is clear and convincing evidence that all reasonable efforts have been made to sustain existing uses or find viable new uses, and these efforts have failed or that preservation in some form of charitable or community use is not possible or suitable. Additionally, demolition may be appropriate where there are community benefits which outweigh the loss resulting from demolition.

- 3.90A** The character of listed buildings can be easily damaged and it is therefore important that the structures are maintained in a reasonable state of repair and their essential character is not adversely affected by alterations or new development. This is most likely to be achieved where original features, both internal and external, such as doors, windows and chimney stacks are retained and where the design and scale of the proposal and the materials to be used are complimentary to the existing building. Applications for listed building consent should therefore include fully detailed drawings at appropriate scales and clearly showing all proposed works. Finally, the setting of a listed building is often an

essential part of its character and this aspect will be given particular consideration in any assessment of development proposals

Policy 24

Any developments which adversely affect the character, appearance, special architectural features or setting of a listed building will not be approved. Proposals for the alteration or extension of a listed building should incorporate the retention of architectural or historic features which are important to the character of the building. The complete or substantial demolition of a listed building will only be approved in exceptional circumstances where either:

- (i) There would be substantial benefits for the community which would decisively outweigh the loss resulting from demolition; or
- (ii) All other options with regard to alternative uses including charitable or community uses have been reasonably explored and found not to be feasible or viable.

Pollution prevention

- 3.91** Pollution involves the release into the environment of energy or substances which are capable of causing harm to the health of living organisms and ecological systems. It can arise from a variety of sources, including particular industrial activities, power generation and agriculture, as well as from the construction of development itself. It can also arise from waste storage, treatment and disposal facilities and is present in contaminated land. Polluting substances can enter the environment through the media of air, water or land, or any combination of them.
- 3.92** The Government attaches great importance to controlling and minimising pollution. Pollution controls are partly administered by the Environment Agency, which came into effect in April 1996 and took over the functions previously operated by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Pollution, the National River Authority, plus the waste regulation functions of local Government. Local authorities administer controls in relation to air pollution and statutory nuisances. Planning controls can serve to complement this pollution control regime. Indeed, both regimes seek to protect the environment and the planning system has an important role to play in determining the location of development which may give rise to pollution.
- 3.93** The Council will seek to liaise closely with the Environment Agency in considering applications for relevant developments which have the potential to cause pollution. The role of the planning system focuses on whether the development itself is an acceptable use of the land rather than the control of the processes or substances themselves. It will be important to establish the extent to which the relevant pollution control authority can address potentially polluting developments through their own mechanisms in order to determine what weight these matters would have as planning considerations, over and above usual material considerations, where such issues have land-use implications.

Protection of Groundwater resources

- 3.94** Groundwater resources are an essential source of water for supplying domestic, industrial and agricultural needs. A large part of the District is underlain by one of the three major aquifers in the Northumbria region which are used extensively for local water supplies. The aquifer is overlain by a variable thickness of glacial material which affords some protection from pollution. Where this material is absent the aquifer and the groundwater resource is very vulnerable to contamination.
- 3.95** The pollution of the groundwater resource has serious implications for the water supply in the local area. Contamination of this resource has potential implications for public health, the local economy and the local environment. The disturbance of contaminated sites, the disposal of effluent in soakaways or the inappropriate storage of chemicals all have the potential to contaminate groundwater supplies. Also engineering works and dewatering can affect the groundwater flow and the quantities of the resource that is available. The cleaning of groundwater supplies is difficult and expensive and it is better to prevent or reduce the risk of groundwater contamination rather than deal with its consequences.

- 3.96** The Council will consult the Environment Agency on the potential threat to groundwater supplies posed by development proposals. In assessing the unacceptability of a particular risk to groundwater reserves arising from development proposals, other policies in the Plan will also be taken into account.

Policy 25 - This policy has lapsed

~~Developments which would pose an unacceptable risk to the quality and quantity of groundwater supplies will not be approved.~~

Waste water management

- 3.97** New development places additional demands upon the existing sewerage system which may not have sufficient capacity to serve any increased level of demand. Unless additional infrastructure is provided there is a risk that watercourses may become polluted as a consequence of the sewerage system being unable to cope. Such pollution threatens the quality of water and also has implications for water-based recreation, fisheries and nature conservation. In order to protect the quality of surface water there is a need to ensure that waste water is managed effectively through the provision of adequate sewerage infrastructure.

Policy 26 - This policy has lapsed

~~Development will only be permitted when foul and surface water sewers and sewage treatment works of an adequate capacity and design are available or will be provided in time to serve the development.~~

Control of potentially polluting developments

- 3.98** Pollution, in whatever form, can impair the quality of people's lives, particularly when it affects residential areas. It can also have adverse impacts upon the natural environment to the detriment of the use of land.
- 3.99** Developments with the potential to generate pollutants include certain industrial and business uses, intensive livestock units and outdoor leisure activities such as motorsports. The location of such developments should be sensitive to the potential impact of such uses upon the amenity and use of the local environment and the pollution sensitivity of adjacent land uses.

Policy 27 - This policy has lapsed

~~Planning permission for development that may generate pollutants of water, air or soil, noise, vibration, light, heat or radiation will only be approved where such pollution will not have a serious adverse effect upon:~~

- ~~(i) The amenity of local residents and/or the occupiers of nearby land and property;~~
~~or~~
- ~~(ii) The local environment, where such an effect would adversely affect the use of land.~~

Development for Public Utilities

- 3.100** Untreated sewage was previously discharged into the sea from eight outfalls along the

Durham Coast.

- 3.101** Northumbrian Water plc (NW) is now working towards meeting the requirements of the EC Urban Waste Water and Bathing Directives, as defined in the Urban Waste Water Treatment (England and Wales) Regulations 1994, which requires them to provide pre-treatment prior to discharge through sea outfalls of adequate length.
- 3.102** NW has constructed a sewage treatment plant on land to the west of the former colliery site at Dawdon, to serve the northern part of the District. An additional facility is being built on the northern outskirts of Horden to serve the southern part of the District. There are also a number of existing small sewage treatment works in the District which may require upgrading following implementation of the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive. Applications involving the erection of buildings and plant for the treatment, storage, processing or disposal, ending with the deposit of waste materials, are deemed to be the responsibility of the County Council.
- 3.102A** In considering proposals for infrastructure development for the public utilities including, water and electricity companies (either as a consultee in the case of County matter applications or as the determining authority), the District Council will take full account of the need to protect the amenity of residents and the quality of the local environment.

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Policy 28 - This policy has lapsed

~~The operational development of water, drainage, and other utility service providers will be approved provided that the development will not have an unacceptable effect upon:~~

- ~~(i) The amenity of local residents and/or occupiers of nearby land and property in accord with policy 34, or~~
- ~~(ii) The quality of the local environment or areas of nature conservation importance, in accord with policy 19.~~

Enhancement of the Environment Sites for recycling

- 3.103** Recovering re-usable materials from waste can help to reduce the demands made on finite natural resources. Through the recycling of waste, natural resources will be conserved, energy saved and the risk of pollution reduced. On the widest scale the recycling of waste materials contributes to the enhancement of the global environment.
- 3.104** The Government views the reduction of waste at source and the encouragement of the reuse or recycling of materials which would otherwise be thrown away, as a key priority. The Environment White Paper 'This Common Inheritance' expressed the intention that 25% of household waste will be recovered by the year 2000.
- 3.105** The Council is the waste collection authority for household waste. To help achieve the government's aims the Council has established a number of waste recycling reception points for specific types of waste materials. In addition to those sites provided by the Council developments which are accessible to and/or visited by the public can provide further sites for the location of recyclable waste collection facilities. Developments that could provide such sites include large retail, recreation and sports developments in addition to large housing developments, where they are appropriately sited.

Policy 29

Developments which are of a scale and nature such that they are accessible to and/or visited by the public will normally be required to provide sites for the collection of recyclable waste. Such sites should be designed and located where they are accessible and convenient for use by members of the public and do not have any serious adverse effect upon:

- (i) The amenity of local residents and/or the occupiers of nearby land and property; or
- (ii) The quality of the local environment; or
- (iii) Highway safety.

Reclamation of derelict land

- 3.106** Although much has been done in recent years to improve the appearance of the District, continuing efforts are needed if its image is to be changed from that of an out-worn industrial area to one which is both attractive for new investment and people to live in. It is widely recognised that improving the appearance of the District has a key role to play in its economic regeneration.
- 3.107** The reclamation of derelict land is also an important element of sustainable development in that it ensures that land, which is a non-renewable resource, is re-used. This can be beneficial in assisting the regeneration of the District and reducing pressure for development in the countryside. There may also be opportunities within degraded areas of the countryside to reclaim land and to create new features for recreation, leisure and nature conservation through the provision of landscaped amenity space and/or new wildlife habitats, including wetlands, ponds and species rich grasslands. Derelict land can itself be a significant nature conservation resource and opportunities should be taken to enhance this aspect where appropriate.
- 3.108** Derelict land can be reclaimed for a variety of uses, including both the hard and soft use of land, resulting in an overall environmental improvement and an enhancement of general amenity. It is also important to recognise that derelict land can be a nature conservation resource and, where appropriate, provision should be made to enhance this particular aspect in any redevelopment schemes.
- 3.109** Since the 1980s the District and County Councils have jointly reclaimed over 140 hectares of derelict land in the District consisting of former colliery sites at Horden, Blackhall, Murton and South Hetton, and land declared surplus to British Coal's requirements at Easington Colliery, Dawdon, and the former Haswell to Hart Railway line.
- 3.110** There is a continuing need for reclamation to tackle those areas of derelict land that remain. The settlement chapters contain specific proposals for the reclamation of the last colliery sites that closed during the early 1990s.

- 3.111** On other derelict sites the Council is able to utilise small clearance grants from English Partnerships to improve untidy sites in local authority or private ownership. Private agencies/individuals are encouraged to reclaim land in their ownership and both the Council and Groundwork East Durham are able to provide advice on grant availability where necessary.

Cleaning the beaches

- 3.112** The Easington coastline contains some of the most heavily polluted beaches in Europe. Eight of the eleven miles of the District's coastline have been grossly disfigured by the tipping of colliery waste and there is now estimated to be a residue of several million tonnes of accumulated spoil material on the beaches. The Durham coastline is, however, a significant resource, both nationally and locally, and efforts to seek its restoration and enhancement are to be encouraged.
- 3.113** With the realisation that, as a consequence of the colliery closures, the tipping would cease and the colliery waste on the beaches would begin to recede, the East Durham Task Force initiated the preparation of a management plan. The recommendations of the management plan that are capable of implementation under town planning legislation have

been incorporated into the Local Plan.

- 3.114** The management plan investigated the likely future evolution of the coastline once tipping had stopped. It concluded that erosion of spoil would not be as fast as originally anticipated as it would involve an initial phase of rapid erosion where the unconsolidated seaward edge of colliery spoil would be removed followed by a second slower phase of erosion of the consolidated waste. It is predicted that it may take at least 15 years and in some places over 50 years for the shoreline to recede to its position in 1896 (i.e. before tipping began).
- 3.115** The possibility of accelerating the rate of erosion in an attempt to restore the beaches to their 'natural' state has been considered. Artificial removal of the waste to sea by either dredging and dumping offshore or by agitating it to accelerate its erosion would pose major environmental problems and would be prohibitively expensive to implement. The even more costly option of disposal to land would also have significant environmental impacts, not least in terms of the disruption and hazards caused by the large number of lorry trips required to transport the waste to a suitable disposal site, if one could be found.
- 3.116** Whilst the management plan recommended that no major artificial intervention takes place to enhance the removal of colliery spoil from the beaches it recommended an examination of potential opportunities to tidy up small areas of the beaches. This issue was subsequently examined by a firm of consultants who recommended that the spoil heaps on the beach at Easington Colliery and Horden should be reclaimed. Both heaps are located outside the Coastal SSSI, on the upper beach and mask the natural limestone cliff face behind. The two heaps are alien and unsightly features on the landscape and contain approximately 1.5 million tonnes of spoil. Due to the nature of the heaps, they are likely to be eroded at a slower rate than the adjacent beach and would remain as sources of recontamination. In addition, it is considered that natural erosion would leave the heaps unstable and dangerous. It is proposed to utilise material from these heaps to recontour the Easington Colliery site, which is to be reclaimed and the former Horden Colliery (East) site which was reclaimed in the late 1980's. Any reclamation works will need to take into account the ecological sensitivity of the coast, reflected in its designation as a SSSI for much of its length, and will need to be considered in terms of Policy 15 (protection of SSSIs and NNRs).

Policy 30 - This policy has lapsed

~~The following sites are identified for reclamation, as detailed in the relevant chapters of the plan:~~

- ~~(i) Former Easington Colliery (policy E3)~~
- ~~(ii) Former Hawthorn Coke works (policy 50)~~
- ~~(iii) Former Seaham Colliery (policy S9)~~
- ~~(iv) Former Vane Tempest Colliery (policy S8)~~
- ~~(v) Former Easington Colliery spoil heap~~
- ~~(vi) Former Horden Colliery spoil heap~~

~~Planning permission for works to reclaim derelict land or despoiled beaches will be approved where there is no serious adverse effect upon:~~

- ~~(i) The amenity of local residents and/or the occupiers of nearby land and property; or~~
- ~~(ii) The quality of the local environment.~~

Urban fringe improvements

- 3.117** The urban fringe is the area where the countryside meets the town or village boundaries. It is an important area as it provides the setting for settlements. Because of its situation between town and country it can also suffer from problems of trespass, damage to footpaths, vegetation and crops and the dumping of rubbish.

Environmental improvements to this area, which could include the provision of landscaping, the creation of new wildlife habitats and the provision of open amenity space for outdoor recreation, would serve to enhance the quality of this area, upgrade the visual image of the edges of settlements and may serve as a buffer between urban areas and the open countryside.

- 3.118** In seeking to improve the quality of the urban fringe it is important that any existing wildlife value is not damaged or destroyed and that the use of native species in any landscaping scheme to enhance its nature conservation value is encouraged.
- 3.119** The view from transport routes running through the District, including the coastal rail line and the A19(T), gives an immediate visual impression of the District. Creating an attractive landscape alongside the major roads and the railway will improve and maintain the image of the District as an attractive place in which to live and work. Any works within trunk road boundaries will require the approval of the Department of Transport.
- 3.120** Throughout the District there are a considerable number of agricultural buildings, many of which do not require planning permission, occupying prominent locations along transport routes or in the urban fringe and which, by their sheer bulk, are visually intrusive. In a limited number of cases it would be possible to screen the buildings by selective tree planting. In other instances, farm buildings could be made less intrusive by painting in subdued colours.
- 3.121** It is proposed to launch an urban fringe improvement/management scheme to address the issues faced in the urban fringe and along transport corridors. It is intended that Groundwork East Durham will co-ordinate the initiative. It will approach the Countryside Agency, the Forestry Commission, and the Department of Environment, Farming and Rural Affairs for grant aid. The balance of the cost of schemes could be funded by the District Council/County Council/private landowners, as appropriate.

Policy 31 - This policy has lapsed

~~The council will seek to encourage the improvement of land in urban fringe areas and along principal transport routes. Encouragement will also be given to the improvement of buildings that are prominent in the countryside. Planning permission for the change of use of land on the urban fringe for the purposes of outdoor recreation and nature conservation will be approved subject to the criteria detailed in policy 19 (nature conservation) and policy 86 (countryside recreation). Other development proposals relating to this land will be considered in terms of policy 3.~~

~~Landscaping works are proposed in the following areas:~~

- ~~(i) Grass verge either side of B1283 at Grants Houses~~
- ~~(ii) Little Thorpe Quarry~~
- ~~(iii) Allotments, south of former named streets, Wheatley Hill~~
- ~~(iv) West of Mickie Hill housing estate, Blackhall~~
- ~~(v) East of Pesspool Terrace, Haswell~~
- ~~(vi) South of Windsor Terrace, Haswell~~
- ~~(vii) East of Gloucester Terrace, Haswell~~
- ~~(viii) Northern Edge Of Hesleden~~
- ~~(ix) East of Myra Avenue, Hesleden~~
- ~~(x) North of Hesleden County School~~
- ~~(xi) County Council Depot, A1086, South of Horden~~
- ~~(xii) Village Green, Monk Hesleden~~
- ~~(xiii) North of New Housing, Sheraton~~
- ~~(xiv) East of Scrap Yard, Front Street, East of Shotton~~
- ~~(xv) East of Shotton Colliery Industrial Estate~~
- ~~(xvi) South of Charters Crescent, South Hetton~~
- ~~(xvii) South of Craven Cottages, Station Town~~
- ~~(xviii) West of Newholme Estate, Station Town~~

- (xix) ~~West of Millbank Terrace, Station Town~~
- (xx) ~~South of Thornlaw South, Thornley~~
- (xxi) ~~North of Dunelm Road, Thornley~~
- (xxii) ~~South of Dunelm Road, Thornley~~
- (xxiii) ~~South of Gpo Site, Hartlepool Street, Thornley~~
- (xxiv) ~~West of Quetlaw Road, Wheatley Hill~~
- (xxv) ~~West of Bevan Crescent, Wheatley Hill~~
- (xxvi) ~~West of Market Crescent, Wingate~~
- (xxvii) ~~South of Woodlands View, Wingate~~
- (xxviii) ~~Castle Eden Brewery~~
- (xxix) ~~A179 Embankment At Its Junction With A19(T)~~
- (xxx) ~~Sheraton Cutting~~
- (xxxi) ~~Cutting West of Westlea, Seaham~~
- (xxxii) ~~Coastal Railway Corridor~~
- (xxxiii) ~~Allotments, North of Hutton Henry~~
- (xxxiv) ~~Davison Crescent, Murton~~
- (xxxv) ~~Churchyard, Monk Hesleden~~
- (xxxvi) ~~Former Railway Line South of Abbatoir, Haswell~~

Implementation

1. *These schemes will be implemented as part of the Urban Fringe Improvement/Management Scheme outlined in paragraph 3.121.*
2. *Works at the sites of (xxii), (xxx), (xxix) and (xxxi) would be within the trunk road boundary and would, therefore, require the approval of the Department of Transport.*

Community woodlands

- 3.122** Planting trees can create a more interesting and diverse countryside and can enhance the landscape setting of existing urban areas as well as providing opportunities for recreation and wildlife. The establishment of woodlands is also a means of diversifying an agricultural business, with the wood produced being used for timber or as a renewable energy fuel. On a global scale, trees also play a significant part in stabilising the atmosphere. It is important, however, that the planting of trees does not damage or destroy existing areas of nature conservation importance.
- 3.123** The Forestry Commission provides grant aid to encourage the planting of trees through a scheme called the Woodland Grant Scheme. Applications for grant aid should accord with the 'Indicative Forestry Strategy', which is a county-wide woodland planting strategy prepared by the County Council. Additional grant aid is also available to encourage the creation of community woodlands close to towns and cities which will be of value for informal public recreation.
- 3.123A** The Council has identified a number of sites which it considers are appropriate for the creation of community woodlands in accord with the specified criteria for grant aid. Tree planting would be undertaken with due regard to the preservation of existing habitats,

the potential for further regeneration and the views of landowners and other appropriate interests.

- 3.124** To be eligible for assistance from the Community Woodland Supplement proposed community woodlands must be capable of providing woodland recreation to centres of population within five miles and must guarantee free access for the public on foot, with appropriate car parking close at hand. The provision of recreational facilities proposed as part of a community woodland scheme should be in accord with Policy 86 (countryside recreation).

Policy 32 - This policy has lapsed

~~The council will encourage the planting of trees, where appropriate, to enhance the quality of the local environment and to provide a local recreational resource. The use of native species will be encouraged. Community woodlands are proposed in the following areas:~~

- ~~(i) North and east of Murton~~
- ~~(ii) North of the former Hawthorn Cokeworks site~~
- ~~(iii) South of Easington~~
- ~~(iv) Around the former Tuthill Quarry~~
- ~~(v) East of Wingate~~

Implementation

1. *Groundwork East Durham will seek agreement of the landowners of sites (1) - (v) with a view to the proposals being implemented. Development of the woodlands will have due regard to the impact of these proposals on the nature conservation importance of these sites*
2. *The Council will consider consultations from the Forestry Commission on ad-hoc applications for woodland grants, in the light of the criteria listed in paragraph 3.124.*

The Great North Forest

- 3.125** 'Forests for the Community' is a joint initiative between the Countryside and Forestry Commissions to enhance the environment around major built up areas by the creation of community forests. These forests will not only include areas of woodland but areas for sport, recreation and leisure, as well as agriculture.
- 3.126** The Great North Forest is to be created to cover 62 square miles of urban fringe countryside in south Tyne and Wear and north-east Durham. The forest extends into the north of Easington District to cover the area north of Lord Byron's Walk and north of the B1404 road, corresponding with the proposed Green Belt defined in policy 4. The provision of recreational facilities proposed as part of The Great North Forest should be in accord with Policy 86 (countryside recreation). Other proposals within the Great North Forest will need to accord with Policy 5 (uses permitted in the Green Belt).

Designation of Local Nature Reserves

- 3.127** Under the provisions of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act of 1949, local authorities are empowered to designate Local Nature Reserves (LNRs). Wingate Quarry, which is owned by Durham County Council, was designated as an LNR in 1980.

Three other sites have been identified as having potential for designation as Local Nature Reserves including Bracken Hill Woods, Blackhall Rocks and Blue House Gill.

- 3.128** For sites to become LNRs they must have a relatively high level of wildlife interest or provide a natural resource that is accessible for the purposes of education, research or informal recreation.
- 3.129** The designation of new LNRs provides the protection of a nature conservation resource under the terms of Policy 16 (protection of Sites of Nature Conservation Importance and Local Nature Reserves) and enables provision to be made for positive management, in addition to providing an educational and recreational facility.

Policy 33 - This policy has lapsed

~~The council will support the designation of new local nature reserves at:~~

- ~~(i) Brackenhill Woods~~
- ~~(ii) Blackhall Rocks~~
- ~~(iii) Blue house Gill~~

~~And at other sites shown to be worthy of designation~~

Settlement renewal initiatives

- 3.130** Many of the former colliery settlements are characterised by a poor physical environment, low levels of economic activity and deficiencies in both private and public amenities and facilities. This in turn has contributed to a poor quality of life for local residents and difficulties in attracting inward investment and new residents to the area.
- 3.131** To address the problem of economic, environmental and social malaise a rolling programme of village based regeneration projects has commenced. The Settlement Renewal Initiative seeks to target resources into a relatively small geographical area to maximise their impact through the implementation of a comprehensive range of co-ordinated improvements ranging from landscaping, the creation of recreation areas, housing and commercial refurbishment and the provision of community based facilities.
- 3.132** The first settlement to benefit from this initiative has been Wingate/Station Town. A project officer was appointed in 1990 to oversee implementation, generate local and national interest and resources and to co-ordinate improvements. Initially established for a three year period with sponsorship principally from Easington District Council, Durham County Council and the Rural Development Commission, the project partners agreed on a two year extension to the project which has enabled it to complete it's work.
- 3.133** Settlement Renewal Initiatives (SRIs) are now being undertaken to other settlements in the District. An SRI commenced in Murton in 1995, in Easington Colliery in 1996 and in Horden in 1997. An SRI in Blackhall will commence in the 1997/98 financial year. Details of the proposals being undertaken as part of the SRIs are contained in the relevant settlement chapters. The remaining settlements will be subsequently prioritised following the completion of the existing programme. Seaham will be subject to a separate regeneration initiative as detailed in the relevant settlement chapter.

Environmental Improvements programme

- 3.134** The Council has previously operated a comprehensive rolling programme of environmental works in all of the District's towns and villages. Sites in need of improvement are identified in the settlement chapters. The Council has also operated a separate initiative to upgrade its industrial estates (Policy 61, Industry and Business Chapter). Since 1996 both programmes have been in abeyance as the Council has focused its financial resources in the Seaham Regeneration Initiative and the four Settlement Renewal Initiatives. Where appropriate, environmental schemes identified in these settlements will be funded from the relevant regeneration initiatives. Projects outside these settlements will be considered for funding after the completion of the regeneration initiatives.
- 3.135** There is also a need to encourage other public bodies and private owners to improve sites or buildings in their ownership. In particular, the Council will be looking towards Groundwork East Durham to play a leading role in undertaking or initiating improvements on privately owned sites by utilising small clearance grants and other sources of finance at

its disposal. Sites that are in need of environmental improvement but which are not in Council ownership are also identified in the settlement chapters.

Allotments and garage sites

- 3.136** Most of the District's settlements have large areas of allotments and several garage sites. These are often prominently located adjacent to main roads, or in the case of allotments, on hillsides. Although the majority are well used, many would benefit from rationalisation and screening to improve their appearance.

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Those in need of improvements are identified in the settlement chapters.

Policy 34 - This policy has lapsed

~~Unightly allotment and garage sites should be improved in the settlements of Easington Colliery, Haswell, Seaham, Shotton, Thornley, Trimdon Station, and Wheatley Hill. Priority should be given to the improvement of sites which are visible from main traffic routes. Those allotments identified for improvement are detailed in the relevant settlement chapters.~~

Implementation

1. *The Council will encourage other bodies such as parish councils to undertake appropriate improvements to other allotments.*

Overhead wires

- 3.137** The presence of overhead electricity and telephone wires severely detracts from the appearance of many of the settlements in the District. Their removal from the streetscape by placing them underground would dramatically improve the local environment.
- 3.138** Unfortunately schedules to place these cables underground are determined by the utility companies. The Council will seek to secure the removal of overhead wires where opportunities arise. As finance for such schemes is likely to be severely restricted it is considered that priority should be given to existing conservation areas in accord with the objective of Policy 22 (preservation or enhancement of conservation areas). Priority should also be given to schemes undertaken as part of the settlement renewal initiatives.

Environmental Design

Impact of development

- 3.139** If the demand for non-renewable fossil fuel resources is to be reduced and if individual lifestyles are to become more environmentally sustainable it is imperative that the energy efficiency of new development is enhanced. Attention to the height, mass and density of the built form together with considerations of siting, orientation and landscaping can directly influence the energy efficiency of development. Developments should be sited and designed with the aim of conserving energy by making the maximum use of solar radiation and minimising the cooling effects of the wind.
- 3.140** The appearance of proposed development and its relationship with the surroundings are

material considerations in the determination of a planning application. New development should be well related to the local environment and should be in keeping with, but not necessarily mimic, the scale, character and appearance of the surroundings. The distance between buildings, the treatment of spaces around them, their size, shape, features and method of construction can all have an effect on the appearance of the area and the quality of life for people who live and work in the area. Extensions to existing buildings should also be designed to reflect the scale and character of the existing structure.

- 3.141** New development should not only be in keeping with the buildings in the area but it should also respect existing landscape features. The retention and integration of trees and hedgerows into development proposals should be an initial and basic design objective, in accord with Policy 10 (protection of trees and hedgerows). Where a development site is lacking in landscape features the quality of development can often be enhanced through the provision of landscaping as an integral part of any scheme. For larger sites, landscaping should provide the framework within which the development is designed to provide an attractive setting and to soften the impact of the development. It also helps to lessen air pollution, reduce the effect of noise on neighbouring uses and provide shelter, thus helping to conserve energy. Encouragement will be given to the provision of native tree and shrub species and the incorporation of wildlife habitats, where this is appropriate to the setting of the development.
- 3.142** Good neighbourliness and fairness are among the yardsticks against which development proposals can be measured. There is a need to consider whether any development proposal would unacceptably affect the amenity of people living or working within the vicinity of any proposed development site and the existing use of land and buildings. Matters such as overlooking, overshadowing, visual intrusion, noise and the emission of pollutants such as smell may have the potential to affect the general amenity of an area as may the attraction of additional vehicles to a site.
- 3.143** In order to encourage good practice in the design and layout of new development the District Council has produced further guidance to assist applicants for planning permission covering residential layouts, residential extensions, shop fronts / advertisements /security and energy conservation. These are reproduced in Appendices 6,7,8 and 9.

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Policy 35

The design and layout of development will be required to:

- (i) Embody the objective of energy conservation and the efficient use of energy where possible;
- (ii) Reflect the scale and character of adjacent buildings and the area generally, particularly in terms of site coverage, height, roof style, detailed design and materials;
- (iii) Provide adequate open space (policies 66 & 90), appropriate landscape features and screening, where required;
- (iv) Have no serious adverse affect on the amenity of people living and working in the vicinity of the development site and the existing use of adjacent land or buildings in terms of privacy, visual intrusion, noise, other pollutants and traffic generation;

Design for Access and the means of travel

- 3.144** Good accessibility is essential if development is to fulfil its potential. Developments should be designed to ensure that all potential users can reach them and move about them easily and safely, to encourage environmentally benign forms of transport such as walking and cycling, and to promote alternative means of travel to the private car, in accordance with the standards contained in Appendix 5.
- 3.145** Walking and cycling are forms of transport that do not harm the environment. More short journeys by foot or by bike are likely to be made if safe and attractive routes between

residential areas, shopping facilities, schools, public transport facilities, leisure facilities and places of employment are provided. Consideration will need to be given to the provision of pedestrian and cycle routes as an integral part of major development proposals. To be successful these routes should be designed so that they are as direct as possible and do not have a difficult gradient. To enhance safety these routes should not be isolated from the road or other activity and they should be well lit.

- 3.146** The level of car ownership in the District is considerably below the national average and for longer journeys public transport is an important mode of travel. The use of public transport is to be further encouraged in order to improve accessibility to those without their own means of transport and to improve the choice of transport for others. To effect this the Council will seek to ensure that new development is located where the capacity of the existing road infrastructure is sufficient to accommodate the levels of traffic likely to be generated, where it is well served by public transport and/or that major developments facilitate the provision of a public transport service through the provision of roads of adequate design and through facilities which encourage the use of public transport such as lay-bys, shelters and safe and accessible footpath links in accordance with the standards contained in Appendix 5.
- 3.147** In the interests of personal safety it is important that all accesses to development are designed so that they are both safe and adequate to serve the amount and nature of traffic that will be generated by that development. Footpaths and cycle routes should be designed to ensure minimum potential conflict with motor vehicles. The nature and width of access roads for vehicular traffic should be designed to so that they can safely accommodate the type of vehicles that will be using them and attention should be given to the advice on highway design standards provided in Appendix 5. Attention should also be given to achieving standards of junction visibility and sightlines in accord with Government guidance contained within PPG13.
- 3.148** Fast-travelling traffic and 'rat-running' (the use of residential and other inappropriate routes as short-cuts to avoid more congested roads) lead to both real and perceived danger for pedestrians and cyclists, to a loss of local environmental amenity and to more severe accidents. There is a wide variety of design solutions that can be employed in new developments to 'calm traffic' by forcing drivers to reduce their speed.
- 3.149** Buildings, footpaths and open spaces should be designed to be accessible to all people, including people with access difficulties, to ensure that development can fulfil its purpose. The Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1976, the Disabled Persons Act 1981 and the Building Regulations 1991, Part M Access and Facilities for Disabled People require, where reasonable and practical, that all new buildings which are to be used by the public allow access by disabled persons and provide facilities for them. Consideration needs to be given to the range of access problems faced by people with different difficulties including people in wheelchairs or with walking difficulties, people who are blind or partially sighted, deaf or hard of hearing or who have a mental handicap, as well as people with young children in pushchairs when development is designed. Further advice on facilitating access for the disabled is contained in Appendix 10.

Policy 36

To ensure good access and to encourage alternative means of travel to the private car, the design and layout of development will be required to provide:

- (i) Safe, attractive and convenient footpath and cycleway links between residential areas and shopping facilities, schools, public transport facilities, leisure facilities and places of employment as an integral part of any major development proposal, where appropriate;
- (ii) Facilities and/or a design capacity which enables the provision of public transport, where appropriate;
- (iii) Safe and adequate access capable of serving the amount and nature of traffic to be generated;
- (iv) Physical measures to exclude or reduce the impacts of motor traffic, particularly through the reduction of vehicle speeds, where appropriate;

- (v) For the access needs of its users and to allow access by people with access difficulties, which can include people with disabilities, elderly people and people with children, where appropriate.

Implementation

1. *In determining planning applications the Council will consult user groups, such as the Easington District Association for the Disabled.*

Design for parking

- 3.150** Government guidance places more and more emphasis on promoting sustainable travel choices. Yet it is increasingly acknowledged that the availability of car parking is a major factor in determining people's means of travel, and this is particularly true in relation to journeys to work. Even in locations well served by public transport, there is a tendency to rely on private car use if generous car parking is available. Such parking consumes space, may be expensive to provide, is frequently not essential to the smooth operation of businesses, and reduces the potential density of development. It is therefore an objective of government policy to minimise the amount of parking in new and revised developments and to promote sustainable travel choices. The Local Plan follows this approach.
- 3.151** In particular, encouragement will be given to less damaging, environmentally friendly forms of transport such as cycling. The provision of good quality cycle parking at development sites, transport interchanges, town centre and educational institutions is important and will be increased to promote more cycle use. Indeed, such promotion is a fundamental aspect of the Plan's attitude to transport and accessibility.
- 3.152** In the determination of planning applications, Durham County Council, as local highway authority, provides advice relating to the parking requirements of development based on a set of parking standards. These are currently under review, to align with and reflect more closely the advice given in PPG 3 and 13, and are expected to be adopted by the County Council towards the end of 2001. The County Council is carrying out a wide-ranging consultation exercise on the appropriateness of the standards, and will take views put forward into account in formulating parking standards. Once adopted, the revised parking standards will be incorporated into the Local Plan as supplementary planning guidance.
- 3.153** The standards in prospect are derived from PPG 3 and 13; policies 37, 43, 44 and 44A of the County Structure Plan; and policies LTP 37, 50 and 59 of the Local Transport Plan. Account will also be taken of Regional Planning Guidance, district local plans and the County Durham Cycling Strategy. Whilst the standards are intended as a guide, and are not expected to be applied rigidly, the emphasis will be on minimising parking provision.
- 3.154** There will thus be no minimum standard of parking for development, except to ensure provision for people with disabilities. Maximum levels of parking will be set for broad classes of development, designed to be used in a wider context with other measures aimed at promoting sustainable transport choice, reducing land take for development, easing the 'fit' of projects within constrained central area sites, promoting linked trips, and enabling developments to be accessed by those who do not have the use of a car. All of these measures should in turn help to reduce congestion. Developers should not therefore be required to provide more spaces than they themselves wish, other than in exceptional circumstances. Once more detailed guidance has been prepared by the County Council, this will be adopted by the District of Easington as supplementary planning guidance. However, the basic requirements are indicated by Policy 37.

Policy 37

The design and layout of new development should seek to minimise the level of parking provision (other than for cyclists and disabled people) which, other than in exceptional circumstances, should not exceed the maximum levels set out in appendix 5.

Implementation

1. *This will be implemented through development control requirements*

Designing out crime

- 3.155** The government has advised local authorities that crime prevention is one of the social considerations to which regard should be given in development plans. The design and layout of development can make crime more difficult to commit and/or increase the risk of detection for potential offenders.
- 3.156** Developers will be encouraged to adopt an approach to design which gives crime prevention the same degree of importance as function and appearance. To help create a safer environment attention should be given to aspects of lighting, design and layout and landscaping. Appendix 11 provides supplementary guidance on crime prevention.

Policy 38

The design and layout of development will be required to have due regard to personal safety and the security of property, particularly in the hours of darkness.

Implementation

1. *In determining planning applications the Council will consult the Architectural Liaison Officer at Durham Constabulary.*

Design for art

- 3.157** To assist with the environmental and economic regeneration of the District and to maintain and enhance the sense of community identity, spirit and sense of place, the Council operates a 'per cent for art' policy. The inclusion of art in the environment will be encouraged wherever possible and the provision of artistic elements in developments of a significance scale, nature or location such as industrial developments, public buildings, retail developments, leisure facilities, housing developments and environmental improvements will be supported.
- 3.158** Developers will be requested to allocate a proportion of the capital cost of any such scheme to commission work by artists and crafts people in accord with the 'per cent for art' policy. The incorporation of artistic elements into the design of buildings, spaces and landscapes can contribute greatly to local identity and can facilitate public involvement in art whilst enhancing the quality of the environment. It can also have economic benefits through the employment of artists and crafts people in the design and implementation of a development scheme.
- 3.159** The most successful incorporation of art into new developments occurs when the artist is able to work alongside the designer of the building, space or landscape from an early stage in the design of the scheme. To promote art that has some local significance and to assist with community development the involvement of local people in the creation of art is also supported.
- 3.160** Artistic elements may take many forms and may include integral features of a building such as stained or etched glass, floor and wall tiles, carved stonework, wrought iron railings, flooring design, murals or roof tiles or comprise independent features such as sculpture or water features.

Policy 39

The council will encourage the provision of artistic elements in the design and layout of development and, in the determination of planning applications, will give due regard to the contribution made by any such elements to the appearance of the scheme and to the amenities of the area.

Control of advertisements

- 3.161** Signs and advertisements that are well designed and appropriately sited can contribute to the character and vitality of an area. Poorly designed and/or inappropriately sited signs and the proliferation of advertisements can detract from a particular building and/or harm the appearance of an area. This is particularly pertinent to illuminated signs.
- 3.162** Advertisements may also cause danger to road users and pedestrians by being located in positions which conflict with traffic signs or signals to the detriment of highway and public safety and attention needs to be given to their scale, design and siting in this respect.

Policy 40

The location and design of advertisements should be appropriate both to the character of the buildings on which they are sited and to the surrounding area and should not conflict with existing traffic signs or signals.

Control of Non-agricultural buildings in the countryside

- 3.163** Many agricultural buildings and operations benefit from permitted development rights which means that such development does not require planning permission. Under the terms of these rights development proposals must be on agricultural land, which means land in use for agriculture for the

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purposes of a trade or business, and they must be reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture within the unit. The development proposal must not also give rise to, or alter or extend, a dwelling. Development proposals which do not satisfy these requirements are not deemed to be truly 'agricultural' and, therefore, would be subject to planning control.

- 3.164** There has been a marked increase in the number of proposed buildings around the urban fringe for purposes which are strictly non-agricultural, under the terms outlined above, such as animal shelters, feed stores and stock-rearing units that are proposed for use in association with a part-time or hobby activity. These are not felt to be essential countryside developments as they are not part of an agricultural trade or business and are unlikely to relate to enterprises which would become viable in their own right.
- 3.165** Experience has shown that the cumulative effect of permitting such sporadic development has been to produce a pronounced detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the countryside, particularly on the fringes of settlements, thereby undermining the Council's wider aim of improving the appearance of the District. Furthermore, once established, such developments can lead to pressure for further development, including residential accommodation for security/supervisory purposes, thereby compounding this adverse effect in visual terms and leading to a clear conflict with established settlement, housing and countryside policy.
- 3.166** Appeal decisions have acknowledged these effects and have emphasised the need for very strict control to be exercised over developments of this type in order to protect the District's countryside areas and to prevent unsightly development on the urban fringe. In the circumstances, such non-agricultural buildings should be part of an existing grouping, well designed and sympathetic to the character and appearance of the area.

Policy 41 - This policy has lapsed

~~Development, such as animal shelters, feed stores and stock-rearing units to be used in association with a hobby or part-time activity, that is not on agricultural land and/or is not necessary for the purposes of agriculture within an agricultural unit, will only be approved where it is directly adjoining an existing grouping, is well designed and located where it would not otherwise adversely affect the character or appearance of the countryside.~~

Location of Noise sensitive development

- 3.167** Noise can have a significant effect on the environment and on the quality of life enjoyed by individuals and communities. Certain forms of development such as housing, hospitals and schools, amongst others, are particularly sensitive to noise and, wherever practicable, they should be separated from major sources of noise such as road, rail and air transport and certain types of industrial development.
- 3.168** It is equally important that new development involving noisy activities should, if possible, be sited away from noise-sensitive land uses. Developments of this nature need to be considered in terms of Policy 27 (control of potentially polluting development).
- 3.169** Government guidance, in the form of PPG24, has introduced the concept of noise exposure categories (NECs), which can be used by local planning authorities in the determination of planning applications for residential development near a source of noise generated principally by various modes of transport. Development proposals can be assessed to establish which of the four noise exposure categories apply, taking account of day and night-time noise levels, to assist in the determination of whether the proposed noise-sensitive development would be subject to unacceptably high levels of noise. Consideration will need to be taken of both the likely level of noise exposure at the time of the application and any increase that may be reasonably expected in the foreseeable future. Details of noise exposure categories are given at appendix 12.
- 3.170** Developments such as offices, hospitals and schools may also contain buildings and activities which are sensitive to noise but it is unlikely that this will be the case throughout such a development. The NEC principle cannot be applied to these developments and they will need to be considered on their own merits.

Policy 42 - This policy has lapsed

~~Residential or other noise sensitive development will not be approved on sites subject to or likely to be subject to unacceptably high levels of noise.~~

Implementation

1. *Noise exposure categories, as detailed in appendix 12, will be used as a guide in the determination of planning applications for residential development.*

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Development affected by Hazardous substances installations

- 3.171** Development proposals may come forward for sites which are in close proximity to existing hazardous substances installations in the District. There is presently one such existing installation in the District located on the North West Industrial Estate, Peterlee (Cookson Laminox). This involves the storage of chlorine in notifiable quantities.
- 3.172** The Council will consult the Health and Safety Executive in respect of proposals, where appropriate, and development will need to be satisfied that there will be no significant risk to the health and safety of the occupiers and visitors to the proposed development.

Policy 43 - This policy has lapsed

~~Development near to notified hazardous installations will be permitted only when following consultation with the health and safety executive the council is satisfied there would be no significant risk to the health and safety of persons living, working or otherwise~~

Development on or near Landfill sites

- 3.173** Landfill gas, which principally comprises methane and carbon dioxide, is produced by the decomposition of waste. It has the potential to give rise to a variety of hazards if it migrates and accumulates in property or confined spaces. Leachate from waste may also migrate and generate gas some distance from the landfill.
- 3.174** There is a significant number of known landfill sites in the District and these are shown on the proposals map. The sites shown do not necessarily represent a comprehensive list and there may be other sites in existence. Developers should consider the possible risk of danger from landfill gas as part of site investigation works undertaken prior to the submission of planning applications.

Policy 44

New development will only be allowed on or near landfill sites if it is proved that there is no risk to that development or its intended occupiers or users from migrating landfill gas, or that satisfactory remedial measures can be undertaken.

Implementation

1. *The Council will liaise with the Environment Agency and other bodies as appropriate, to determine the extent of any potential source of landfill gas and any necessary remedial measures.*

Development on or near Colliery sites

- 3.176** Former colliery sites may be subject to problems of mine gas and where the redevelopment of these sites is proposed the possible effects of mine gas must be assessed.
- 3.177** Problems of mine gas may take some time to arise and the migration of mine gas into structures depends on a variety of factors such as the local geology, hydrology and the presence of artificial conduits underground. Development of land may effectively seal land preventing a widely dispersed escape of methane from the earth and deflecting it to places where it may accumulate. Mine gas may, therefore, migrate some distance away from colliery sites and nearby land may be affected.
- 3.178** The responsibility for determining whether land is suitable for a particular purpose rests with the developer and it is not the responsibility of the local authority to investigate the qualities of a site unless they intend to develop it themselves. A prospective developer would need to undertake detailed site investigations into the effects of mine gas upon the proposed development, in support of any planning application. This should include a detailed feasibility study, in consultation with the Coal Authority, incorporating a geological and structural survey.
- 3.179** Should there be any possibility of difficulties from migrating gas the developer will be required to

propose remedial measures as part of the planning application. These include making provision for the direct venting of gas from the ground and from mineshafts, and for ensuring that adequate measures have been taken to limit the ingress of gas into buildings. It may be necessary to avoid the construction of ancillary structures, such as

porches and garden sheds, on sites so affected in which case permitted development rights would need to be withdrawn as part of any planning approval.

Policy 45

New development will only be allowed on or near colliery sites if it is proved that there is no risk to that development or its intended occupiers or users from mine gas, or that satisfactory remedial measures can be undertaken.

Implementation

1. *The Council will liaise with the mineral planning authority, the Coal Authority and other bodies as appropriate, to determine the extent of any potential source of mine gas and any necessary remedial measures.*

Development on Unstable land

- 3.180** The effects of ground instability vary in their nature, scale and extent. At their most extreme, they may threaten life and health or cause damage to buildings and structures. Whilst such risks are small there is a need to ensure that development is suitable and that the physical constraints on the land are taken into account at all stages of planning.
- 3.181** Instability may be caused through the effects of underground activities, unstable slopes or ground compression. Where instability is known or suspected the developer will be required to provide a specialist investigation and to propose adequate remedial measures, where appropriate, as part of a planning application.

Policy 46 - This policy has lapsed

~~Development on unstable or potentially unstable land will only be allowed if it is proved that there is no risk to that development or its intended occupiers or users from such instability or that satisfactory remedial measures can be undertaken.~~

Implementation

1. *The Council will liaise with the mineral planning authority, the Coal Authority and other bodies as appropriate, to determine the existence of any potential source of ground instability in the determination of planning applications.*

Control of Unauthorised development

- 3.182** The planning system is designed to regulate the development and use of land in the public interest. Where unauthorised development takes place which is unacceptable on planning merits it is the government's view that, to maintain the integrity of the planning system, local planning authorities should be prepared and able to take effective action to enforce planning control when required, to prevent serious harm to amenity.
- 3.183** Whilst the use of enforcement action remains discretionary, the Council has consistently employed planning enforcement powers to resolve breaches of planning control. The Council will continue to exercise its enforcement powers, using the legislation available to it, where considered necessary, to secure a good quality local environment for those who live and work in the District.

Policy 47

Where unauthorised development occurs which is of serious harm to the locality the council will where considered necessary:

- (i) Consider the use of appropriate enforcement action; or,
- (ii) Resolve to apply for an injunction, whether or not it has exercised or proposes to exercise any other powers to enforce planning control;

Where an enforcement notice full compliance period has expired and compliance has not occurred the council will consider what steps, including the possibility of prosecution, are appropriate to ensure full compliance.

Proper maintenance of Land and buildings

- 3.184** Whilst much has been done to improve the image of the District it still retains an outworn industrial appearance characterised by run-down, decaying areas of land and buildings in the settlements, indicative of a lack of investment and maintenance. Such areas can adversely affect the amenity of the local environment and can seriously detract from initiatives to regenerate the District.
- 3.185** Under section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 the local planning authority can, at its discretion, impose a positive duty on a landowner to ensure the proper maintenance of land where it appears that the condition of land or buildings is adversely affecting local amenity.

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Policy 48

Where the condition of land and/or buildings is considered to adversely affect the amenity of the area the council will consider whether to serve a notice under section 215 of the town and country planning act 1990 to effect an environmental improvement. Where a section 215 notice full compliance period has expired and compliance has not occurred the council will consider what steps, including the possibility of prosecution, are appropriate to secure full compliance.

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