



GOVERNMENT OFFICE
FOR THE NORTH EAST

The North East of England Plan Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021

July 2008



The North East of England Plan - Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021

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Introduction and Consultation Arrangements

Introduction

The North East of England Plan (The Plan) is the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the North East of England.

The Plan sets out a broad development strategy for the region for the period up to 2021. It covers Northumberland, County Durham, Tyne and Wear and the Tees Valley and addresses matters such as the scale and distribution of provision for new housing, priorities for the environment such as countryside and biodiversity protection, transport, infrastructure, economic development, agriculture, mineral extraction and waste treatment and disposal. The Plan incorporates the Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) to ensure the integration of land use and transport planning.

The Plan is part of the statutory Development Plan, as described in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Local planning authorities prepare the other components of the Development Plan, Local Development Frameworks (LDFs), which should be in general conformity with the RSS. Local Transport Plans (LTPs) should also reflect the Regional Transport Strategy.

The North East of England Plan and accompanying documents are available for public inspection at local planning authority offices across the region, and in local branch libraries, during normal opening hours. They can also be viewed and downloaded on the Government Office web-site at www.go-ne.gov.uk and on the North East Assembly website at www.northeastassembly.gov.uk

National planning policy and procedure for regional planning is set out in a national Planning Policy Statement (PPS11). This, and the Planning Policy Statements on other subjects, can be viewed on the Communities and Local Government website at www.communities.gov.uk

How the Plan was developed

Existing Regional Planning Guidance for the North East (RPG1) became the statutory RSS in September 2004 when the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act came into force. The Plan replaces RPG1.

In line with its statutory responsibilities, the North East Assembly (NEA) prepared a draft revision to the initial RSS called VIEW: Shaping the North East, which was issued for consultation in December 2004.

The Draft Revision was submitted to Government by the North East Assembly in June 2005 and, following public consultation, an Examination in Public was held before an independent panel in 2006 to test the soundness of the draft RSS. The report of the Panel was published in August 2006. This report recommended a number of changes to the submission draft.

Two rounds of consultation then followed in 2007 and 2008 and the Plan has been finalised after careful consideration of responses to those consultation exercises.

Introduction and Consultation Arrangements

Sustainability Appraisal and Environmental Assessment

The region has over 30 nature conservation sites of European importance. In order to assess the potential impact of development proposals on these sites preparation of the Plan has been informed by Sustainability Appraisals and Habitat Regulations Assessments and by a Strategic Environmental Assessment. These reports are available on the CD-Rom accompanying this document and on the Government Office web-site at www.go-ne.gov.uk

Further Information

For further information about the North East of England Plan please contact the Government Office Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) team on 0191 2023528 or e-mail strategy@gone.gsi.gov.uk

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Shaping the Region 1

Role of RSS

1.1 The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) sets out a long-term strategy for the spatial development of the North East Region of England. The RSS is part of the statutory Development Plan, as described in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Local planning authorities prepare the other components of the Development Plan, Local Development Frameworks (LDFs), which should be in general conformity with the RSS. Local Transport Plans (LTPs) should also reflect the Regional Transport Strategy (RTS), which is integrated within the RSS to ensure the integration of land use and transport planning.

1.2 Previously, Regional Planning Guidance for the North East (RPG1) became the statutory RSS in September 2004 when the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act came into force. RPG1 is now replaced by this RSS.

1.3 Part of the North Yorks Moors National Park extends into the southern part of Redcar & Cleveland district. This area is covered by the Yorkshire & Humber RSS and is identified on the Key Diagram.

1.4 In accordance with Government guidance, this revised RSS contains a range of policies that are intended to guide and be delivered through the preparation of LDFs and LTPs; strategic development control policies, which are to be implemented directly through the grant and refusal of planning permission; and policies to be delivered through other means as agreed with the bodies concerned.

1.5 Some of the policies in the RSS have an end date of 2021, but the overall vision, strategy and general policies are intended to guide development over a longer timescale. The RSS also provides the spatial context for the delivery of other regional strategies, in particular the Regional Economic Strategy (RES), Regional Housing Strategy (RHS) and the Integrated Regional Framework (IRF).

1.6 In preparing Local Development Frameworks and considering major planning applications, local planning authorities are required to have regard to all the policies contained in this RSS.

1.7 This RSS replaces all of the policies in the Tees Valley Structure Plan (2004), the Durham County Structure Plan (1999) and the Northumberland County and National Park Joint Structure Plan First Alteration (2005), with the exception of policy S5 (Green Belt) in the Northumberland County and National Park Joint Structure Plan First Alteration. This is not being replaced in the interests of maintaining a satisfactory strategic planning framework for the preparation of Local Development Document(s).

RSS Structure

1.8 Section 1 outlines the RSS vision for the Region; the Region's main characteristics; the key challenges facing the Region; and the international and national context for the RSS.

1 Shaping the Region

1.9 Section 2 introduces the main planning principles and four main themes under which the locational strategy for the Region is developed. It sets out overarching policies, and the locational strategy on which the rest of the RSS is based. It introduces broad, high level policies on sustainable development, climate change, the sequential approach, connectivity and the environment. It then amplifies the locational strategy by setting out information and policies on the Region's two city-regions and the rural areas. Policies in this section show how the thematic policies in Section 3 are to be applied to sub-regional areas.

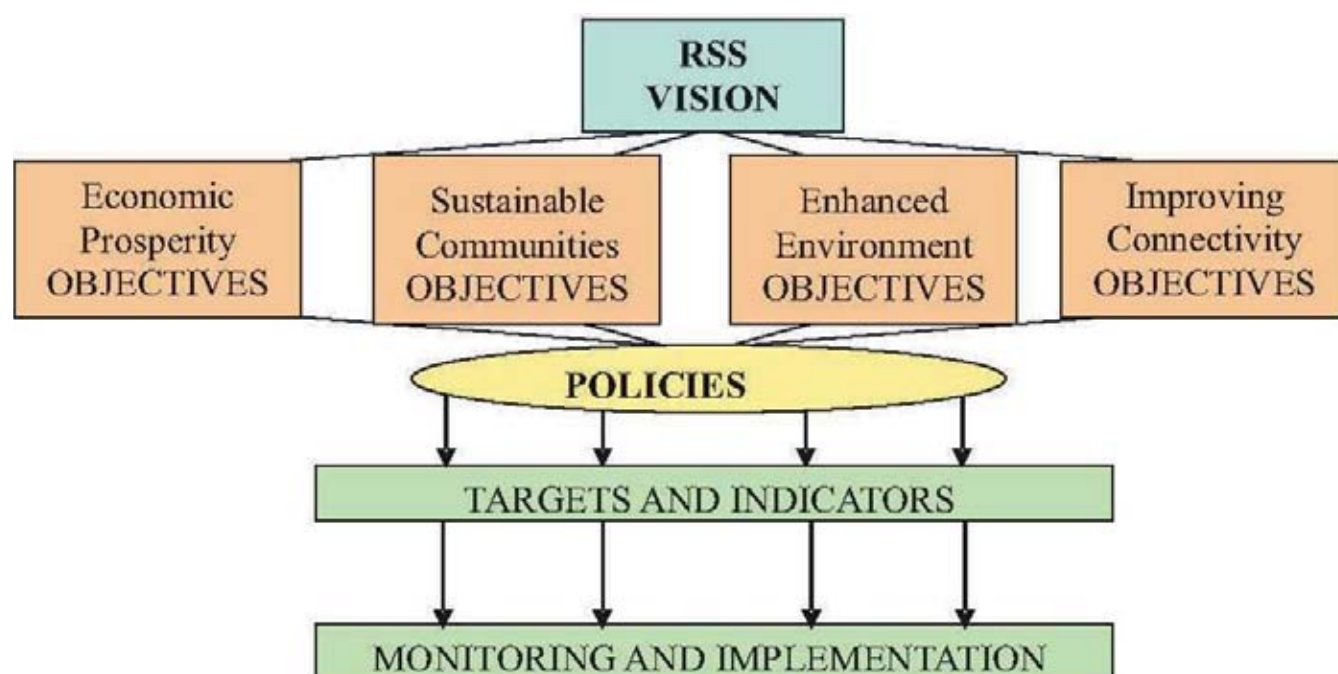
1.10 Section 3 contains thematic policies on matters such as Sustainable Communities, Environment and Transport.

1.11 Section 4 provides a Monitoring Framework incorporating targets and indicators, and introduces elements of the RSS Implementation Plan, which is a separate but related document. A monitoring report will be prepared each year by the Regional Planning Body (RPB) to assess progress; update the assumptions; assess changes in other strategies and consider the need to revise the RSS policies.

1.12 Section 5 contains the key diagram and other maps.

1.13 The relationship between the vision, objectives, policies, targets and indicators, is illustrated below in Figure 1.

1.14 FIGURE 1: RSS Structure



Shaping the Region 1

Vision

1.15 One of the strengths of the North East is that there is a broad consensus amongst public and private sector organisations about the main challenges which the Region faces; the opportunities for improvement; and the general approach that should be adopted. There are many different strategies for the Region (see Figure 2) but the common theme is the need to reduce the economic and social disparities between the North East and other regions, whilst protecting and enhancing the Region's environment. This approach has been endorsed by the Government and forms the basis for *'Moving Forward: The Northern Way A Strategy for Growth'*. It will require accelerated economic activity and a renaissance throughout the Region.

1.16 Following discussions between the North East Assembly, One NorthEast and Government Office for the North East it was agreed that the three main regional strategies – the RSS, the RES and the IRF - should share a common vision for a better North East and a set of common values to guide decisions:

Single Regional Vision

'The North East will be a Region where present and future generations have a high quality of life. It will be a vibrant, self reliant, ambitious and outward looking Region featuring a dynamic economy, a healthy environment, and a distinctive culture. Everyone will have the opportunity to realise their full potential.'

Values

In everything we do we will integrate the principles of:

- *nurturing the human, cultural and environmental assets of the Region;*
- *accelerating the renaissance of communities in urban and rural areas;*
- *recognising global responsibilities;*
- *raising the aspirations and profile of the Region; and*
- *promoting leadership, good governance and corporate responsibility.*

A Vision for the North East of 2021

1.17 PPS 11 sets out the requirement that the RSS should "articulate a spatial vision of what the region will look like at the end of the period of the strategy and show how this will contribute to achieving sustainable development objectives. This vision is set out below

"The economy of the North East in 2021 is stronger, having experienced accelerated GVA growth averaging 2.8% per annum (2004-21). There is a healthier and more participative workforce with more jobs focused particularly in the knowledge based industries in the conurbations and main settlements. The Region's thriving universities continue to provide the catalyst for emerging economies and have strong links with business and pioneering new technologies.

1 Shaping the Region

The Region's population has increased with fewer people leaving and more people living in urban areas taking advantage of jobs, services, and better quality housing and living environments. There is more balanced demand for housing as a result of regeneration and housing market restructuring initiatives. Dwelling vacancy rates are at or below 3% across the Region. The majority of high trip generating uses are focused within town and city centres and other sustainable locations.

New developments minimise the consumption of energy and natural resources to contribute to reductions in greenhouse gas and improved energy efficiency. Developments incorporate mitigation and compensation measures to minimise environmental harm and reduce the effects on climate change. In this way the Region's natural resources have been harnessed without compromising the quality of the environment. Successful waste minimisation has de-coupled the link between economic growth and waste generation and also led to more recycling and re-use of waste materials. New businesses and facilities have been established in this growth sector and also within the renewable energy sector, where the Region is a world leader.

The Region's transport network is modern, effective and reliable, which combined with a larger urban population has led to increased public transport use and no significant increase in car-based commuting. The North East is internally and externally more accessible than previously. This has contributed to more tourists visiting the Region to experience its culture, business and environment and a more inclusive society. The Region's ports and airports handle more passengers and freight and have a key role in the economic growth of the Region".

Achieving the Vision

1.18 The RSS has an important role in setting out the spatial requirements needed to achieve this Vision. Other strategies set out complementary policies, proposals and initiatives.

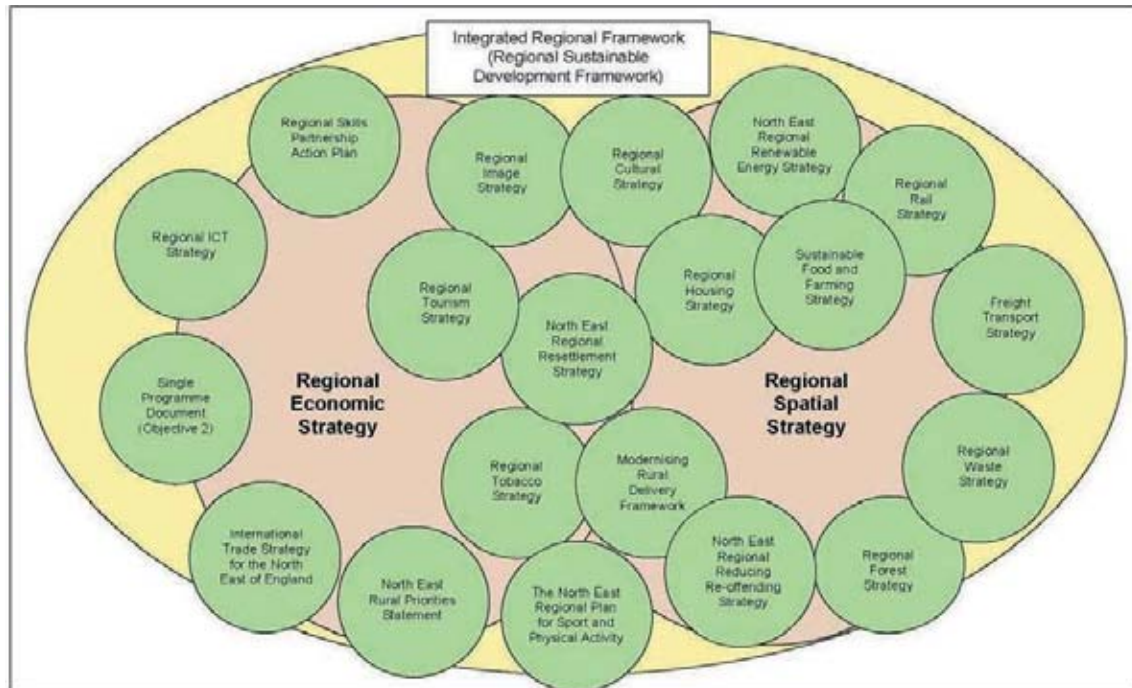
1.19 The Regional Economic Strategy (RES) is a primary partner strategy to this RSS. It sets out proposals to deliver greater and sustainable prosperity to all the people of the North East over the period to 2016.

1.20 The Integrated Regional Framework (IRF) underpins all the main regional strategies by identifying broad objectives to ensure that activities are sustainable and that the interests of future generations are considered.

1.21 Some of the other regional strategies are illustrated on the following diagram.

Shaping the Region 1

1.22 Figure 2: Regional Strategies Structure



1.23 The themes set out in the main regional strategies will be developed further in sub-regional strategies and vision statements. Many of the regional strategies recognise their contribution to improving health and reducing health inequalities, for example. The complex social, economic and environmental problems related to multiple deprivation require joint action by a range of organisations and agencies in accordance with agreed strategies and action plans.

1.24 To achieve the regional vision, it will be important that all other plans, strategies and programmes at all levels seek to engage all members of the community to ensure that their views are incorporated and inform strategy preparation and development.

1.25 In 2006 the North East Assembly, One NorthEast and other regional partners provided advice to the Government on the priorities for expenditure on economic development, transport and housing as part of the Regional Funding Allocations exercise. The results of that exercise have been taken into account in this strategy.

Sustainability Appraisal, Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment

1.26 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and European Directive 2001/42/EC respectively make Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) mandatory procedures in the preparation of RSS. The requirements to carry out each of these are distinct but it is possible to satisfy both through a single appraisal process.

1 Shaping the Region

1.27 Environmental Resources Management (ERM), an independent consultant, was commissioned by the North East Assembly to carry out the first Sustainability Appraisal of the draft RSS, which integrated the requirements of SEA. The IRF formed the basis for the Sustainability Appraisal, which incorporated a Health Impact Assessment, and was overseen by a steering group comprising Government Office North East, Environment Agency, English Nature, and One NorthEast and included local planning authority and Local Agenda 21 representation. Sustaine (the Regional Roundtable for Sustainable Development) oversaw the process. The Sustainability Appraisal Report was published for consultation alongside the submission draft RSS.

1.28 A new requirement is the need for RSS to be subject to an Appropriate Assessment, as required by Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of the Wild Flora and Fauna (the Habitats Directive), and emerging regulations. The directive and emerging regulations provide a framework to assess the potential effects of the RSS on European sites of nature conservation importance. The Region has over 30 sites of this kind, amounting to around 91,200 hectares, which are an important component of the environment.

1.29 Following the Examination in Public of this RSS and the publication of the Panel Report, Government engaged Environ and Treweek consultants to carry out a Sustainability Appraisal of the proposals to make changes to the RSS, and a full Appropriate Assessment of the RSS. The results of this were taken into account in the preparation of the Proposed Changes (May 2007), Further Proposed Changes (February 2008) and also final amendments to RSS.

Regional Characteristics

1.30 The North East covers an area of around 850,000 hectares lying between the Scottish Borders to the north, Yorkshire & the Humber to the south and the North-West Region to the west. As shown in figure 3, the Region is located within the European Union (EU) North Sea Region, as identified in the European Spatial Development Perspective.

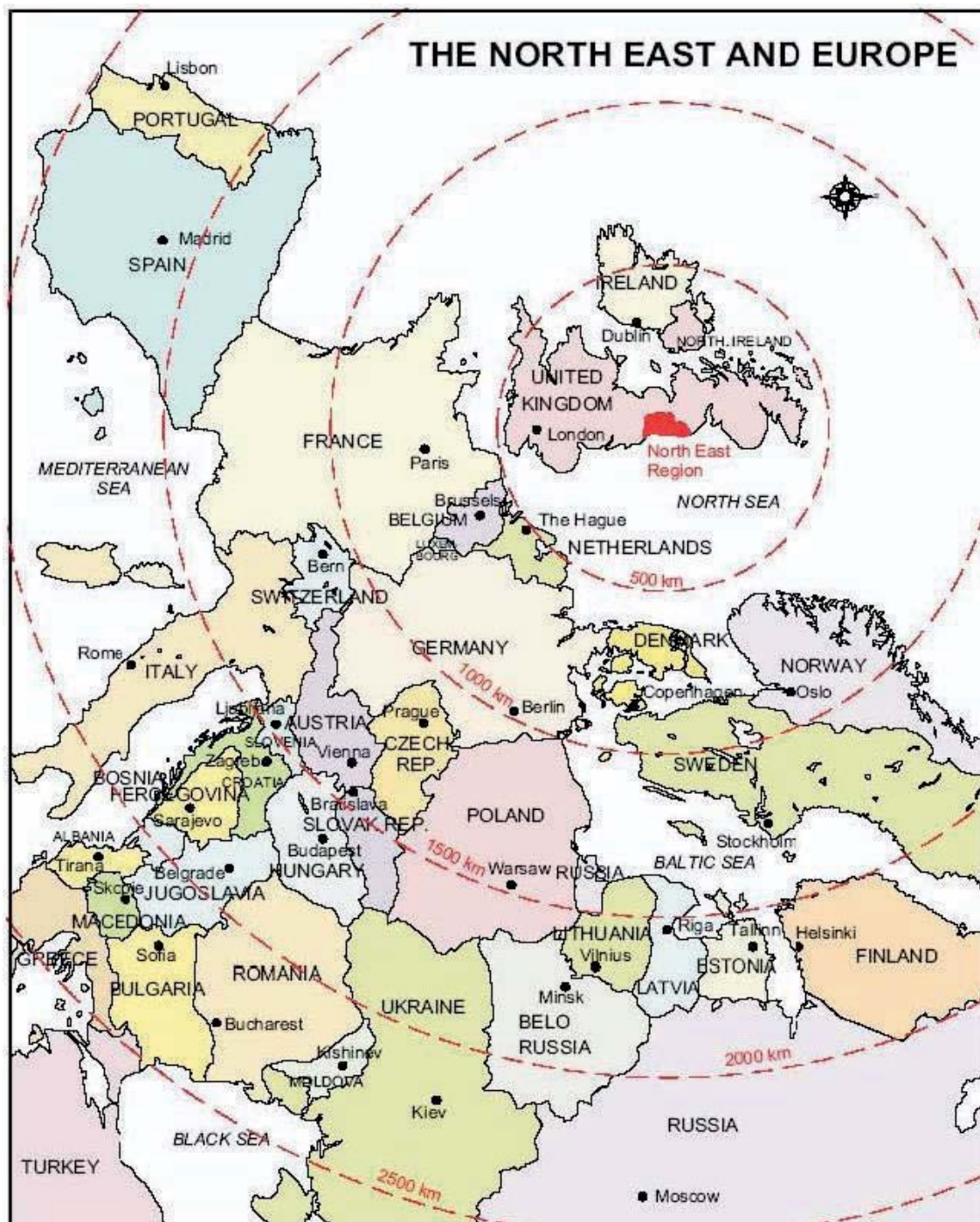
1.31 The North East is a clearly defined region both geographically and culturally. The Region has a population of close to 2.5 million, primarily concentrated in the two conurbations of Tyne & Wear and Tees Valley. Two-thirds of the Region, primarily to the north and west, are rural in character, sparsely populated with large tracts of attractive upland and coastal countryside. Economic activity is focused within the Region's two conurbations and its main settlements. Key characteristics of the Region include:

- two main conurbations, in Tyne and Wear and Tees Valley
- other major centres, such as Durham City and Darlington
- a regional network of rural service centres which serve surrounding hinterlands;
- some of the UK's finest high quality, diverse countryside, and natural and built heritage including a varied coastline ranging from extensive sandy beaches, dunes, and inter-tidal flats to spectacular cliffs, islands and rocky outcrops, and two World Heritage sites;
- six ports (Teesport being the 2nd largest port in England) and two international airports (Newcastle International and Durham-Tees Valley) providing access to mainland Europe and beyond;
- an improving and increasingly diverse and knowledge based economy with a decreasing emphasis on traditional industries such as mining, steel, shipbuilding, chemicals and heavy engineering;

Shaping the Region 1

- a housing stock characterised by geographical areas of high and low demand.
- continuing problems of multiple deprivation in some areas

1.32 FIGURE 3: North East Europe



1.33 For the past few decades the North East has had a falling population, mainly due to net out-migration, and long term projections suggested that this trend would continue. The latest projections from the Office of National Statistics suggest that this trend has changed, and that the Region can expect to grow to about 2.64 million people by 2028

1 Shaping the Region

1.34 The North East is moving towards a more knowledge-based economy. The Region is starting to experience the effects of an accelerated rate of economic growth and the RSS has been prepared on the basis of this growth continuing over the next 15 years.

1.35 However, parts of the North East currently experience high levels of socio-economic deprivation and dereliction. These are concentrated within the two conurbations and former coalfield and heavy industrial areas in South East Northumberland, County Durham and Redcar & Cleveland. Both urban and rural areas are also characterised by pockets of poor quality housing exhibiting low demand and abandonment. The economic, social and environmental regeneration of these areas is essential to the Region's continued growth and quality of life.

Key Challenges

1.36 The conclusions of the work carried out to prepare the various strategies is that the key challenges facing the Region if it is to realise the Vision are:

1.37 *Reducing Regional Disparities* – the need to re-skill and increase economic participation within the workforce to enable the Region's population to share in the growth of the economy and improved quality of life and help reduce deprivation.

1.38 *Managing Structural Economic Change* – continuing the transition of the economy from the industrial heritage of coal mining, shipbuilding, chemicals and steel production to a more broadly based economy centred on information-based 'knowledge' industries and the service sector.

1.39 *Maximising Productivity* – employment growth in the Region is increasingly concentrated in the sectors with the highest productivity levels, particularly in knowledge intensive business services. To maximise sustained economic growth and competitiveness, the expansion of these best performing sectors is essential.

1.40 *Linking with Universities and Colleges* – harnessing international networks, research, technology and the learning capacity of the Region's universities and colleges, and improving links with business.

1.41 *Increasing Participation Rates and Entrepreneurialism* – closing the skills and education gap requires measures to increase participation rates to help stimulate economic growth and social inclusion using the Regional Skills Partnership and other partners. Efforts are also under way to reduce worklessness and support employers and other agencies in initiatives that help reduce long-term illness. Participation in sport and recreation can also contribute to workforce health and reducing worklessness.

1.42 *Stemming and Reversing Population Decline* – if the Region is to have a sustainable future, more people need to be attracted to the Region than choose to leave. People will only want to stay if the Region offers them economic stability, good quality housing and living environments that meet their aspirations, and a good quality of life.

1.43 *Stemming Urban-Rural Migration* – urban areas will need to provide the housing and living environments that people aspire to, in order to reduce the trend of urban-rural migration.

Shaping the Region 1

1.44 Tackling Low Demand and Regenerating Deprived Areas – creating equilibrium in the housing market requires housing market restructuring and regeneration projects that provide a more diverse dwelling stock and better living environments that meet people's needs and aspirations.

1.45 Providing an Inclusive Range of Housing – policy frameworks and management tools need to be implemented that guarantee good quality housing, recognising issues of affordability, fuel poverty and access to work and facilities in both urban and rural areas.

1.46 Improving Health and Tackling Health Inequalities – it is important that people have good access to services and facilities by modes other than the private car. The provision of health, sport and leisure facilities in new communities and the improvements of housing quality can also contribute to a better and healthier quality of life and can help reduce illness that contributes to worklessness.

1.47 Tackling the Impacts of and Adapting to Climate Change – it is now a national policy priority that preventative action is needed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the likely impacts of climate change. Preventative measures require increased efficiency of energy and resource use and a shift to more renewable energy production. Adaptation measures will need to recognise the increased risk of extreme weather events such as flooding, drought and sea level rise.

1.48 Protecting and Enhancing Key Environmental Assets – it is imperative that development and growth are managed to protect and enhance the environment.

1.49 Harnessing the Environment's Economic and Regeneration Potential – the establishment and growth of new innovative industries such as waste recycling and renewable energy should be supported within the capacity limits of the environment. Setting targets and developing holistic strategies to achieve them will be important to provide shared goals and joined up approaches. Improving the physical environment within built-up areas needs to be a key part of all regeneration schemes, including 'greening' over areas where appropriate.

1.50 Capitalising on Tourism – the qualities of the Region's built heritage and natural environment need to be conserved and enhanced by improving both the quality and range of facilities and destinations, as well as improving accessibility by non-car transport modes.

1.51 Improving Accessibility – focusing development in the conurbations and main settlements can help maximise access to facilities and jobs by non-car modes and by improved public transport services and infrastructure.

1.52 Changing Travel Behaviour – integration of land use and transport policy is needed to reduce the need to travel and focus development in locations easily accessible by non-car modes. Consideration will need to be given to demand management measures; public transport infrastructure and service improvements; and the promotion of non-car passenger and freight transport.

1.53 Addressing Transport Constraints – investing in tackling transport constraints; dealing with inadequate transport infrastructure and services to tackle congestion hotspots; improving overall accessibility and social inclusion; and reducing the environmental impacts of transport; are critical to ensuring that the Region's transport networks enable the North East to remain competitive and serve the interests of all members of the community.

1 Shaping the Region

1.54 Community Involvement – all members of communities should be involved to ensure that their views are heard to inform the preparation and development of all plans, strategies and programmes.

International Planning Context

European Spatial Development Perspective

1.55 The Territorial Agenda of the European Union was agreed in May 2007. It builds on the European Spatial Development Perspective and also on the CEMAT Guiding Principles for Sustainable Development of the European Continent (2002). The Territorial Agenda aims to promote polycentric territorial development of the EU, with a view to making better use of available resources in European regions. It has six priorities:

- to strengthen polycentric development and innovation through networking of cities and regions.
- new forms of partnership and territorial governance between Rural and Urban areas.
- to promote regional clusters of competition and innovation in Europe.
- to support the strengthening and extension of Trans-European networks.
- to promote Trans-European risk management including the impacts of climate change.
- to require the strengthening of ecological structures and cultural resources as the added value for development.

National Planning Context

Securing the Future – Delivering the UK Sustainable Development Strategy

1.56 The new UK Sustainable Development Strategy was launched in March 2005 and replaced the previous Strategy published in 1999. It aims to enable people to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life without compromising the quality of life of future generations. It sets out a vision of sustainable development to 2020, including a new common purpose developed across central, regional and local Government. The focus of the new strategy is on moving from words into action.

1.57 The Strategy sets out a set of shared UK principles for sustainable development:

- living within environmental limits;
- ensuring a strong, healthy and just society;
- achieving a sustainable economy;
- promoting good governance; and
- using sound science responsibly.

1.58 For any policy to be sustainable, it must respect all five of these principles, although some policies, by their nature, will place more emphasis on certain principles than others. The RSS as a whole aims to adhere to all of these principles in an integrated manner.

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1.59 The national Strategy also sets out four agreed priorities for action – sustainable consumption and production, climate change and energy, natural resource protection and environmental enhancement, and sustainable communities. The Strategy contains a new indicator set which is more outcome focused.

1 Shaping the Region

Sustainable Communities in the North East

1.60 ‘*Sustainable Communities: Building for the future*’, which sets out a national plan of action, marks a step change in building and maintaining sustainable communities in all the English regions. It is an action plan to build successful, thriving and inclusive communities where people want to live.

National Planning Guidance

1.61 The Government prepares national guidance on planning issues which should be taken into account in preparing development plans. This guidance is set out through Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs)/Planning Policy Statements (PPSs); Minerals Planning Guidance Notes (MPGs) /Minerals Planning Statements (MPSs); Government Circulars; Statutory Instruments and White Papers.

The Rural Strategy

1.62 The Rural Strategy (2004) proposed a radical agenda of devolving decisions and funding to ensure that the needs of rural people are addressed in mainstream regional-level strategies and delivery plans, by a smaller number of organisations. The Strategy highlighted the need for greater development of regional and local decision making and delivery arrangements through Regional Development Agencies, Regional Assemblies, local government and the voluntary and community sectors. DEFRA requires each region to bring forward proposals on the processes it wishes to put in place to achieve prioritisation and decision making in relation to rural areas, through the development in this region of a Rural Priorities Statement.

1.63 The strategy also proposed a streamlined and focused Countryside Agency (Commission for Rural Communities) and the creation of a new Integrated Agency for the countryside – Natural England (incorporating Countryside Agency, English Nature and the Rural Development Service). These changes came into effect in 2006.

Northern Way Growth Strategy

1.64 Following the publication of the Sustainable Communities Plan, in February 2004, the Deputy Prime Minister invited the three northern Regional Development Agencies to prepare a Northern Way Growth Strategy setting out how the North could unlock the potential for faster economic growth and bridge the £29 billion output gap between the North and the rest of the UK. The Northern Way Growth Strategy, published in September 2004, envisages that ‘*the North of England (covering the North East, Yorkshire & Humber and the North West) will become an area of exceptional economic opportunity, combining a world class economy and a superb quality of life*’. To realise this, the Northern Way demonstrates how the disparity in regional performance can be narrowed by building on assets and strengths such as cultural and ethnic diversity; strategic east-west and north-south transport corridors; and some of the country's best universities.

1.65 The Northern Way growth strategy seeks to bring 100,000 people currently on Incapacity Benefit back into work across the North; achieve better connectivity; enable the renaissance of the North; attract research and development funding; raise the quality and availability of housing; attract major cultural events; promote the North as a single tourist destination; and attract public sector jobs.

Shaping the Region 1

1.66 The Northern Way focuses on eight city-regions as key to the economic re-birth of the North and narrowing the output gap. These are the areas where most people live and work, and where most businesses are located. Within the North East the Northern Way identified two city regions based around the Tees Valley and Tyne & Wear conurbations, and these have been reflected in the Regional Economic Strategy and this RSS. The Northern Way concluded that these city regions are economically central to the future of a wide area, not just the city centres at their core. They have a mutually inter-dependent relationship with the hinterland around them. Key assets of the wider North such as National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) were also considered to be resources which could help market the North as a tourism, business and relocation destination.

Regional Planning Context

Integrated Regional Framework

1.67 The Integrated Regional Framework (IRF) for the North East (2008) provides a framework for a co-ordinated plan of action to work towards sustainable development in the Region. It emphasises the importance of good quality employment opportunities available to everyone; conditions that enable businesses success; building the skills and capacity of the population and vibrant communities. The IRF underpins all regional strategies and its 10 objectives are discussed in Section 2 of the RSS.

Regional Economic Strategy

1.68 One NorthEast, the Regional Development Agency for the Region, has prepared a series of Regional Economic Strategies (RES) which set out long term proposals to transform the North East economy. The latest, “Leading the Way” is a strategy for the period from 2006 to 2016. This was published in September 2006, and was available in draft form when the RSS was considered at the Examination in Public. The new RES built on the Shaping Horizons in the North East (SHINE) initiative, which looked at ways in which the Region could anticipate and respond to scenarios of future economic and social change. It analysed the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the North East realising its potential within the next 20 years. SHINE identified priorities for intervention, which were used in preparing the revised RES, and was an important source during the preparation of the RSS.

1.69 The RES focuses on making progress on broad themes of leadership, business, people and place to achieve sustainable and inclusive economic growth. It emphasises the need to increase GVA per capita, create new businesses, and increase employment levels. To do this will require encouraging enterprise, supporting business start-ups and survival, boosting productivity, promoting science and innovation, enhancing the skills of the workforce, and investment in regeneration. The RES includes an emphasis on investment in the urban cores of the city-regions, together with a rural programme primarily focused on market towns and rural service centres.

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Regional Housing Strategy

1.70 The Regional Housing Strategy (RHS) is prepared by the Regional Housing Board (RHB), which, since 2006, has been part of the North East Assembly. The current version of the RHS was published in July 2007.

1.71 The RHS sets out the strategic aims and objectives of the RHB and provides a framework for policy and proposals at all levels in the Region. It seeks to influence public and private investment decisions, largely through the Single Housing Investment Pot (SHIP) process.

1.72 The strategic objectives of the RHS are:

- rejuvenating housing stock and markets;
- providing choice through a better mix of types of new homes;
- improving and maintaining existing homes;
- meeting specific housing requirements within our communities.

Neighbouring Strategies

National Planning Framework for Scotland

1.73 The '*National Planning Framework for Scotland*' guides the spatial development of Scotland to 2025, but also provides a context for other plans and strategies with a spatial dimension. The Framework highlights the economic importance of road and rail links to England as of prime economic importance, and notes that a lack of infrastructure outside Scotland can have an adverse impact on access to Europe and other parts of the UK. It says that the economic benefits of tourism could be spread more widely if more of Scotland could be brought within three hours of major English cities. The Framework emphasises that reducing journey times on routes between Aberdeen and Newcastle would improve the connectivity of knowledge economy clusters in the North East and spread economic benefits. The impact of development in the Edinburgh City-Region, which extends into the Scottish Borders, will also influence activity in Berwick-upon-Tweed and other locations within the northern parts of the North East Region.

1.74 A National Transport Strategy for Scotland was published in December 2006.

Regional Planning Guidance for the North West

1.75 Regional Planning Guidance for the North West (RPG13) was published in 2003 and became the RSS for the region in September 2004. A revision of the RSS is due to be published in 2008.

Regional Spatial Strategy for Yorkshire and the Humber

1.76 A revised version of RSS "The Yorkshire and Humber Plan" to 2026 was published in May 2008.

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RSS Growth Assumptions

1.77 In line with national policy and regional aspirations, the RSS aims to enable continued accelerated growth in economic performance in order to reduce the disparities in economic performance between the regions.

1.78 The RES sets out to move the Region towards 90% of the national average GVA per head by 2016. The RES makes it clear that this implies a higher average growth rate than that used in the RSS; this reflects the different purposes of the two strategies.

1.79 On the basis of material provided in the draft RSS revision submitted by the North East Assembly and the recommendations of the EiP Panel, the Proposed Changes version of the RSS published for the first stage of consultation was based on an initial working assumption of a 2.8% annual average growth of GVA over the plan period. At the same time, the approach proposed by the Assembly to be more cautious in linking dwelling provision to growth, because less robust housing markets in the Region are sensitive to the risk of over supply, was retained. This approach also planned for other aspects of that change, which includes an older population, a reduction in average household size and the need to retain and attract more young people of working age. The basis for housing provision was therefore taken to be an annual average GVA growth of 2.5% pa over the plan period.

1.80 In October 2006, ONS issued revised population projections and in March 2007 the Department for Communities and Local Government issued updated projections for household growth in England. These new projections suggested that the population of the region would continue to grow throughout the plan period, and that there would be a sustained growth in household numbers. A report commissioned by the Government Office for the North East to assess the implications of the revised population projections showed that the main factor driving an increasing population was international migration. The analysis showed that in a number of districts the projected increases in population and households were likely to exceed the dwelling allocations recommended by the EiP Panel. This report was published with the Further Proposed Changes. A further revision of the population projections published in September 2007 suggested that the region would still grow to 2021, although at a slower rate.

1.81 An updated set of household projections published in February 2008 translated these population figures into household projections for the region.

1.82 As part of the first stage consultation the North East Assembly was asked to provide further information on housing numbers in the region, and invited to take account of the latest population and household projections. In its formal response the Assembly said that the ONS 2004-based projections and the CLG Household Projections did reflect the recent growth in North East population. However they were trend based, and did not deliver the RSS locational strategy or offer a local authority distribution and phasing which delivered RSS objectives.

1 Shaping the Region

1.83 The Assembly pointed out that the region had seen increased levels of economic growth and there had been evidence of positive net inward migration to the region. They recommended a new set of housing figures for the region and for local authorities. This would be based on a net addition to the region's housing stock of 128,900 dwellings over the period 2004-2021. This figure would replace the figure of 112,000 recommended by the EiP Panel and included in the first Proposed Changes consultation. They advised that sufficient land had been identified in recent urban capacity studies to accommodate this scale of growth, and that no major greenfield allocations would be required with this level of growth. In each sub-region the previously developed land targets set out in the RSS could be met or exceeded.

1.84 The approach set out in PPS3 is to move away from a "predict and provide" approach to housing to one that guides the trajectories of housing change in each local authority. Although there has been some variation in the projected population levels in the region, the scenario is now one of population growth. In the light of the Government's Housing Green Paper and the need to substantially increase the supply of affordable housing, the North East Assembly's recommended figures have been adopted as a Further Proposed Change for this RSS revision and are reflected in the tables in the section on "Improving and Increasing the Housing Stock".

1.85 The actual growth rates and related indicators will be monitored, and the Plan, Monitor and Manage approach will be used to make adjustments to the Strategy through further reviews.

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2.1 The main issues discussed in Section 1 and the agreed broad vision for a better North East represent a challenging agenda. There is consensus that past trends should not continue. The steady out migration of the Region's younger, better-educated people is unsustainable. The economy has been improving but the gap between the North East and other regions is increasing and must be reduced. There is a growing confidence within the Region and already there are some encouraging signs of progress. However, serious social and economic problems remain to be addressed.

2.2 This RSS sets out the spatial planning framework, which will enable the vision for a better North East to be achieved and the problems to be resolved. The following four themes provide a framework for the detailed policies in Section 3. The achievement of the Vision will require a step change in activity and a renaissance throughout the Region by:

- delivering sustainable and inclusive economic prosperity and growth;
- delivering sustainable communities;
- conserving, enhancing and capitalising upon the Region's natural and built environment, heritage and culture; and
- improving connectivity and accessibility within and beyond the Region

Planning Principles

2.3 The spatial strategy for all future development in the North East is based on the following principles:

- to promote an urban and rural renaissance;
- to contribute to the sustainable development of the Region;
- to reflect a sequential approach to land allocations; and
- to include appropriate phasing and plan, monitor, manage mechanisms for planning and implementation of new development.

Renaissance in the North East

2.4 The central theme throughout the Strategy is the need to achieve and maintain a high quality of life for all, both now and in the future. This will require a major economic, social and environmental renaissance throughout the Region, as well as measures to protect the North East's existing strengths and assets. This renaissance will be achieved through the successful implementation of and progress in each of the four themes.

2.5 In recent years major development and redevelopment schemes have been completed in the conurbations and elsewhere with new, high quality buildings and designs. It is important that high quality development should continue to be encouraged and poor environments be improved.

Policy 1

NORTH EAST RENAISSANCE

Strategies, plans and programmes should support a renaissance throughout the North East by:

2 Development Principles and Locational Strategy

- delivering sustainable and inclusive economic prosperity and growth;
- delivering sustainable communities;
- conserving, enhancing and capitalising upon the Region's diverse natural and built environment, heritage and culture; and
- improving connectivity and accessibility within and beyond the Region.

Sustainable Development

2.6 Sustainable development is essentially concerned with providing for development which delivers environmental, social and economic objectives to improve the quality of life for all without threatening, either now or in the future, the viability of the natural, built and social systems on which the deliverability of these objectives depends. This principle has been expanded in the Government's national strategy for sustainable development, as outlined in Section 1. This broad principle should not only underpin all strategies but should also form the basis for individual decisions, which people take about where to live and work; how to travel; how to dispose of waste; and how to use energy and other natural resources efficiently.

2.7 Those decisions can impact on the people of the North East and those further afield. In order to deliver sustainable development within the Region, Policy 2 embeds the sustainability principles of the ten IRF objectives within it. It is essential that all of the elements of sustainable development are integrated to deliver social, environmental and economic policy within a holistic framework.

2.8 In 2003, a partnership of organisations and authorities within the Region produced the report 'Building-in Sustainability: a Guide to Sustainable Construction and Development in the North East'. This offers many practical suggestions to local authorities and private developers for promoting sustainability through design, construction and location. Local authorities are encouraged to adopt the principles set out in these guides.

2.9 The Government has published the Code for Sustainable Homes (2006). The Code will be supported in the Region by a 'Checklist for Developments' - a practical toolkit which is targeted at the construction industry, and in particular developers, architects and planners. It aims to ensure that new housing developments in the Region incorporate as many facets of sustainability as possible at the earliest opportunity and that different plans can be initially compared in terms of sustainability. All those involved in developments and the planning process are encouraged to use this tool.

Policy 2

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Planning proposals and Local Development Frameworks should support sustainable development and construction through the delivery of the following environmental, social and economic objectives:

2.1 Environmental Objectives

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- a. to ensure good local air quality for all;
- b. to protect and enhance the quality of the Region's ground, river and sea waters;
- c. to protect and enhance the Region's biodiversity, geodiversity and soil quality;
- d. to reduce the amount of waste produced and increase the amount recycled;
- e. to make better use of our resources, including the built fabric;
- f. to mitigate environmental and social costs of developments, and encourage efficient resource use;
- g. to protect and enhance the quality and diversity of the Region's rural and urban land and landscapes;
- h. to prevent inappropriate development in flood plains;
- i. to reclaim and reuse derelict land to make more productive use of land;
- j. to protect and enhance the Region's cultural heritage and diversity; and
- k. to promote the concept of green infrastructure, a network of linked, multifunctional green space in and around the Region's towns and cities;

2.2 Social Objectives

- a. to tackle the social, economic and environmental impacts of multiple deprivation;
- b. to raise educational achievement across the Region and improve the skills of the workforce and of adults who are currently economically inactive, through training and skill development;
- c. to ensure everyone has the opportunity of living in a decent and affordable home;
- d. to improve the quality and choice of housing through market renewal and new development;
- e. to reduce crime and the fear of crime, particularly through good design;
- f. to improve health and well-being while reducing inequalities in health;
- g. to ensure good accessibility for all to jobs, facilities, goods and services in the Region particularly by public transport, walking and cycling;
- h. to reduce the need to travel by private car; and
- i. to increase public involvement in decision-making and civic activity;

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2.3 Economic Objectives

- a. to ensure high and stable levels of employment so everyone can share and contribute to greater prosperity;
- b. to achieve high and sustainable levels of economic growth by focusing on the Region's strengths and alleviating weakness; and
- c. to reduce adverse impacts of economic growth on global communities by supporting the use of local labour, materials and produce.

Climate Change

2.10 The RSS recognises that climate change is the single most significant issue that affects global society in the 21st Century. Although climate change can occur for a variety of reasons, scientific evidence indicates very strongly that recent change can be attributed to the influence of human activities, particularly global warming caused by greenhouse gas emissions, primarily from fossil fuel energy use.

2.11 Nationally, the Climate Change Programme, published in 2006, sets out policies and priorities for action in the UK and internationally. In December 2007 Government published "Planning and Climate Change" a supplement to Planning Policy Statement 1. This set out proposals for how spatial planning should contribute to reducing emissions and stabilising climate change (mitigation) and take into account the unavoidable consequences (adaptation).

2.12 The Government seeks to reduce energy use, increase efficiency and increase the proportion of energy generated from renewable and low carbon technologies. The Energy White Paper 'Meeting the Energy Challenge' (May 2007) sets out a framework for action to meet these objectives. The Government has agreed to a legally binding target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 12.5% below 1990 levels over the period 2008-2012 (the UK's Kyoto obligation). The UK also has domestic goals for 2010 and 2050 to cut carbon dioxide emissions. These goals aim to contribute to and go beyond the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Kyoto Protocol and the North East Region will need to play its part in meeting these national commitments.

2.13 The government published the draft Climate Change Bill in March 2007 which proposed UK targets to reduce carbon dioxide emissions through domestic and international action by at least 60% by 2050 and by at least 26% by 2020 against a 1990 baseline. In addition to carbon reduction targets the draft Bill makes provision for climate change adaptation. The aim is for the Bill to receive Royal Assent by autumn 2008.

2.14 It is difficult to predict exactly how the climate will change because of the many uncertainties involved in modelling our climate. However, changes to weather patterns leading to more intense rainfall and a rise in sea levels are amongst the potentially significant effects. In November 2003 Sustaine produced 'And the Weather Today is...'. This report set out the key challenges facing the Region in responding to the impacts of climate change. It presented four scenarios of how the Region's

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climate might change based on the projections from the Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change; for example by the 2080s on a low emissions scenario, sea levels would be expected to rise by 6cm, compared to a rise of 66cm on a high emissions scenario. Government has included guidance on possible sea level rises from 1990 to 2115 in PPS25 “Development and Flood Risk”, which was published in December 2006.

2.15 The North East England Climate Change Adaptation Study, published by Sustaine in 2008, projects climate changes across the region to the 2050s. Key findings from those projections show that the projected climate impacts will threaten human health, our quality of life, economic activities, biodiversity, soil and water resources, landscape and agricultural land uses. For example:

- increased flood risk, from rivers, flash flooding, and rising sea levels
- increased likelihood of storms and other severe weather events that may affect buildings, transport infrastructure and business activities
- changes in the growing season, affecting biodiversity and agriculture
- changes in winter and summer temperatures and the patterns of rainfall, affecting agriculture, forestry, biodiversity, tourism and leisure
- changes in suitability of habitats for plants and animals, with some areas becoming less suitable for existing species, and the possibility that new species will move in as conditions change.

2.16 The challenge is to reduce emissions and adapt to the impacts that will result from climate change.

2.17 There is a need to change attitudes and behaviours to energy use; to move people and goods in ways that minimise emissions; to reduce energy consumption; to generate energy from renewable resources; to minimise water consumption and to deal with waste in accordance with the principles of the waste hierarchy. Improvement to communications which do not involve movement – for example telecommunications – can also help in this.

2.18 Adaptation to climate change will include measures to help the region cope with potential changes such as those illustrated above. This may include changes in development layout and building design, land management practices and infrastructure design and operation. Adopting construction techniques that benefit the local environment can help. For instance Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) can help us adapt to changing rainfall patterns. Natural systems and habitat networks also play an important part in adapting to the consequences of climate change. There is a need to increase the resilience of these systems so that they can accommodate and respond to a changing climate. Our peatlands are a vital resource, acting as both carbon store and mitigating the effects of heavy rainfall, by reducing the rate of run off in catchments and the intensity of flood events thereby protecting people, homes and businesses. Green infrastructure can moderate higher temperatures in urban areas.

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2.19 Objective 2 of the IRF is “Adapting to and mitigating against climate change”. Progress towards meeting this objective is measured by a number of indicators, including consumption based and place based carbon dioxide emissions. While there are currently no regionally specific targets for reductions in carbon dioxide emissions, the North East must play its part in helping to meet national targets set out in the Energy White Paper.

2.20 The RSS supports, and provides a positive contribution to the achievement of this Objective. Effective planning to reduce emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change will require the implementation of a range of policies in the RSS. For example, policies on the location of development, encouraging sustainable forms of transport, sustainable construction, waste management and flood risk. The following policy provides a context for these.

Policy 3

CLIMATE CHANGE

All strategies, plans and programmes in the Region shall contribute to mitigating climate change and assisting adaptation to the impacts of a changing climate by:

3.1. Helping the Region to contribute to meeting national policy as set out in the Energy White Paper to put ourselves on a path to cutting the UK’s carbon dioxide emissions by some 60% by about 2050, with real progress by 2020, by including policies and proposals that:

- a. focus substantial new development on locations with good accessibility by sustainable transport modes, particularly public transport, walking and cycling;
- b. reduce road traffic growth and promote sustainable alternatives to the private car;
- c. increase renewable energy capacity;
- d. seek opportunities for and encourage the use of decentralised energy supply systems based on renewable and low-carbon forms of energy ;
- e. seek opportunities to maximise the energy efficiency of new developments through planning and design;
- f. recognise the potential of, and encourage, land uses and land management practices and related infrastructure that help capture or store carbon;
- g. integrate climate change considerations into all spatial planning concerns, including transport, housing, economic growth and regeneration, water supply and sustainable drainage, and waste management.

3.2 Planning for the successful adaptation to the impacts of climate change in the Region by:

- a. locating and designing new development for the climate, and climatic impacts, it is likely to experience over its intended lifetime;
- b. considering the desirability of avoiding new development in those areas likely to be vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, particularly in situations where measures to provide resilience are not viable. Options should be brought forward for adapting existing development in areas that are, or are likely to become, vulnerable to such impacts;

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- c. taking into account and assisting adaptation to the impact of climate changes on the natural environment, ecosystems and biodiversity, agriculture, water resources, economic activities, transport, built environment and energy supply;
- d. maximising opportunities from positive impacts of climate change in the Region.

3.3 Helping the Region mitigate and adapt to climate change. The Regional Planning Body will work with regional and local partners to ensure that:

- a. A regional greenhouse gas emissions inventory is developed, and regional trajectories are set out for the expected carbon performance of new residential and commercial development planned for by the RSS
- b. Mechanisms are established to coordinate a programme of data collection and monitoring on climate change that will enable future revisions of the RSS to fully take this into account. This will include development of a regional Climate Change Action Plan, and updating the regional climate change impacts report, 'And the Weather Today is', in line with the most recent scenarios available from the UK Climate Change Impacts Programme and updates to the national Climate Change Programme.

The Sequential Approach to Development

2.21 National advice and the first RSS for the North East advocated a sequential approach to the identification of sites for development, recognising the need to make the best use of land and optimise the development of previously developed land and buildings in sustainable locations. This includes planning authorities working together to maximise the development of previously developed land, for example through joint studies to support evidence base and through monitoring arrangements. Policy 4 sets out a regional sequential approach to guide the location of new development in the North East. However, this policy does not apply to renewable energy development, as wind and water energy, and to a lesser extent biomass, can only be harnessed where it is found in sufficient quantity. It also does not apply to minerals as they can only be won where they are found.

Policy 4

THE SEQUENTIAL APPROACH TO DEVELOPMENT

Local Development Frameworks should adopt a sequential approach to the identification of land for development to give priority to previously developed land and buildings in the most sustainable locations. All sites should be in locations that avoid areas at the highest risk from flooding, having particular regard to the vulnerability of the proposed development to flooding. Locations should be selected in the following priority order:

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- a. Suitable previously-developed sites and buildings within urban areas, particularly around public transport nodes;
- b. Other suitable locations within urban areas not identified as land to be protected for nature or heritage conservation or recreational purposes;
- c. Suitable sites in locations adjoining urban areas, particularly those that involve the use of previously-developed land and buildings; and
- d. Suitable sites in settlements outside urban areas, particularly those that involve the use of previously-developed land and buildings.

For the purposes of this policy, urban areas are defined as the Conurbations, Main Settlements, Regeneration Towns and Rural Service Centres, as defined in this RSS, and Secondary Settlements identified in Local Development Frameworks as providing a significant opportunity in terms of previously developed land and buildings.

All sites should be in locations that are, or will be, well related to homes, jobs and services by all modes of transport, particularly public transport, walking and cycling.

Phasing and Plan, Monitor and Manage

2.22 The widespread application of the plan, monitor and manage and phasing approaches are essential to the effective delivery of the RSS and to ensuring that the RSS and the local planning processes are responsive to changing circumstances. They enable up-to-date information on the delivery of policies to be kept continually under review, which will help indicate when changes to policy and implementation are required. In particular, the phasing approach allows the planning process to prioritise the order in which development takes place, such as prioritising previously developed land before greenfield development, in order to ensure planning objectives are realised.

2.23 PPS3 seeks that RSS should set out the approach to coordinating housing provision across the Region in a sustainable manner. For the RSS to be responsive to changing circumstances over time, policy approaches are required at the strategic level to provide a consistent framework for its application at the local level, which will ensure all planning processes and decisions contribute to delivering the RSS.

2.24 Policy 5 sets out a regional policy approach, providing guidance on the application of the plan, monitor, manage and phasing approaches both at the regional and local level. The RPB will, in liaison with stakeholders, prepare further supporting guidance to outline how the approach is to be practically applied regionally, city-regionally and locally. The RSS Implementation Plan also provides details of when and by whom key policy elements will need to be delivered throughout the RSS period.

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2.25 The key strategic issue for the RSS in terms of these approaches is the integral link between economic growth and the RSS. The anticipated regional economic growth, measured in Gross Value Added (GVA), has directly influenced policies throughout the Strategy, particularly local authority housing and employment land provision. Policy 5 therefore focuses primarily on these elements of the Strategy, with annual average GVA growth being the key trigger mechanism at the strategic level. However, up-to-date GVA figures are not produced and are only available with a time-lag of 2 years. Therefore, GVA can only realistically be used as a trigger in relation to a general trend, and any changes in RSS policy will also need to be informed by more detailed up-to-date economic and demographic information.

2.26 If the economy were to expand at a faster rate than anticipated, it might be necessary to bring forward additional housing land. Alternatively, if a slower rate were to occur it might be appropriate to delay the release of housing to ensure that regional housing provision keeps pace with demand, as excessive development could threaten the successful delivery of housing market restructuring initiatives, such as the Bridging NewcastleGateshead, and exacerbate housing low demand and abandonment. The effects of over-provision are potentially as serious as of under-provision and in these circumstances the plan, monitor, manage and phasing approaches become particularly important.

2.27 The RSS provides for the release of land in three phases (2004-11, 2011-16 and 2016-21). It is important that LDFs, LDF monitoring systems and Annual Monitoring Reports throughout the Region are also developed on this basis to ensure a consistent policy and data collection framework.

2.28 The application of the phasing approach to the release of development sites requires a much more integrated development control system, which can also be more responsive to changing regional and local policy. In particular, developing an approach that ensures that planning decisions can take account of wider regional and city-regional objectives is critical; for example to ensure that the release of major greenfield housing developments takes account of the impacts on the delivery of regional housing market restructuring initiatives, which is a key objective of the RSS. The plan, monitor and manage approach will inform planning authorities as to whether it is appropriate to accelerate, delay or proceed with the phased release of further land for development.

2.29 The North East Assembly is leading on identifying housing markets within the Region. This work is being taken forward by sub regional partnerships. Whilst activity across the Region is at different stages, all areas have now conducted analysis to identify existing housing markets. In addition to identifying current housing demand and socio-economic trends, these Housing Market Assessments will also take a long term strategic view. These will transcend administrative boundaries and will be important in helping to identify the areas within which a complementary approach to housing provision and development is required. In relation to employment land in the Region, research has emphasised the need for local authorities to develop a phasing policy approach for the release of employment land to better prioritise key employment sites and economic investment.

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Policy 5

PHASING & PLAN, MONITOR AND MANAGE

5.1 The Regional Planning Body will produce an Annual Monitoring Report assessing the delivery of the RSS locational strategy and policies by the end of February each year. A significant change in the key indicators below could necessitate a partial or full review of the RSS:

- GVA growth;
- population growth and migration;
- housing provision, take up and phasing requirements;
- delivery of housing market restructuring areas;
- employment rates;
- employment land provision and take up; and
- development on previously developed and greenfield land.

The Regional Planning Body will prepare guidance on the application of the phasing and plan, monitor and manage approach in the light of Government guidance.

5.2 Local Development Frameworks shall plan for the managed release of land for development in the periods 2004-11; 2011-16; and 2016-21, based on:

- a. prioritising previously developed land in accordance with the sequential approach;
- b. up-to-date monitoring information provided through Local Development Frameworks' Annual Monitoring Reports;
- c. up-to-date population and housing provision requirements at the housing market / city-region level, as indicated through the RSS Annual Monitoring Reports and Strategy;
- d. a recognition of the phasing requirements in relation to the effects of new development on the delivery of wider strategies and programmes within the city-regions and rural areas, particularly housing market restructuring initiatives; and
- e. an employment land supply that is prioritised in order of its phased release.

Local planning authorities shall review the phasing approach and priorities set out in Local Development Frameworks every five years, or earlier if the RSS or Local Development Frameworks' Annual Monitoring Reports or plan reviews indicate a need for this.

5.3 In determining new planning proposals and the renewal of lapsed planning consents, local planning authorities should:

- a. take into account changing circumstances and needs as identified through the RSS and Local Development Frameworks, Annual Monitoring Reports and RSS reviews;
- b. ensure that major developments to be developed over a long timeframe are phased over the three periods 2004-11; 2011-16; and 2016-21, and are capable of being responsive to changes in phasing as identified from monitoring processes; and

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c. ensure that major greenfield housing developments proposals are accompanied by an assessment of the impacts of the development on the successful delivery of the housing market restructuring areas.

Locational Strategy

2.30 The North East is a compact, well-defined region. The settlement structure evolved to reflect the requirements of an industrial economy based on mining, chemicals, agriculture, steel making, shipbuilding and heavy engineering. As the modern economy developed and private transport became more accessible, new and complex spatial relationships evolved, which are reflected in commuting patterns, supplier networks, shopping catchment areas and leisure activities. The RSS recognises and addresses this complexity. A simple hierarchy of settlements is not an appropriate model for the North East, which exhibits a polycentric settlement pattern based on two city-regions. A polycentric settlement pattern is one with many centres or nodes, albeit with different characteristics and scales, rather than one key centre dominating everywhere, where their functions are interconnected.

2.31 'Moving Forward: the Northern Way', introduced the concept of city-regions in the three Northern Regions of England, with two in the North East. City-Regions are based on flexible geographies and have no defined boundaries. The RSS has incorporated this approach, and uses the city-region approach to present sub-regional analysis and policies.

2.32 The city-regions and other key areas are defined below. Research carried out since the publication of the original Northern Way strategy has questioned whether Alnwick District should be considered to be part of the Tyne and Wear City-Region, and whether Wear Valley and Teesdale should form part of the Tees Valley City-Region. Representations made during the first stage of consultation suggested that it was accepted that Alnwick town should be included in the Tyne and Wear City-Region, and it would be helpful that for the districts that are only partly in the city-region this be clarified in the text. As well as the northern parts of Alnwick District, it is clear that the more remote parts of Tynedale are less likely to be under the direct influence of the conurbation. Likewise, the original Northern Way Growth Strategy recognised that the Tees Valley housing market extends well into North Yorkshire and County Durham, and the RSS submission version referred to rural service centres such as Barnard Castle, so it is suggested that parts of Weardale and Tees Valley should also be mentioned.

2.33 Research indicates that the conurbations and main settlements will continue to be the economic drivers within the city-regions, as these will be where the majority of existing and new employment opportunities will be located. The principles of sustainable development and the sequential approach set out above lead to the conclusion that the RSS should support the focusing of the majority of new housing economic and infrastructure development in these areas and settlements.

2.34 Also within the city-regions are areas that have been affected by major industrial changes, particularly the decline of the coal mining industry. These areas suffer from significant long standing problems that require investment and approaches appropriate to each area. It is of benefit to the whole Region that these regeneration areas fulfil their potential and contribute to regional economic growth and social inclusion.

2 Development Principles and Locational Strategy

2.35 Job creation and retention is a particular priority in the regeneration areas. As opportunities will arise through continued economic restructuring and diversification, there is a need to focus investment particularly on business support to improve productivity, local entrepreneurialism, and education and training to increase the skills of the local workforce and tackle worklessness. The regeneration areas also suffer from wider environmental problems and poor quality housing. These areas will require associated environmentally and socially led regeneration initiatives to improve their image and business confidence of an area, as well as its quality of life and housing stock.

2.36 The long term aim will be to achieve a balance between employment and housing in each local area and to reduce the need to commute, particularly by private car. However, as the majority of new jobs will continue to be created in the conurbations, this economic transition will only realistically be achieved over a long timescale. It is therefore important in the short to medium term that sustainable connectivity from the regeneration areas outside the conurbations (the “other Regeneration Areas”) into the conurbations, main settlements and regeneration towns is improved, to ensure that people living in the regeneration areas have access to a range of future employment opportunities. This implies that there will continue to be commuting between these areas. The challenge is to ensure that as far as possible this is by sustainable means, and that improvements to public transport and other measures encourage public transport use for a higher proportion of total journeys.

2.37 There is more work to be done by the RPB and Local Planning Authorities to further develop and refine the approach to regeneration both in the Conurbations and in the Other Regeneration Areas in local development frameworks and future revisions of the RSS, in line with the broad approach identified above.

2.38 Within and beyond the city-regions, the majority of the land area of the North East is rural in nature and issues related to accessibility, economic diversification and affordable housing are particularly relevant. The Region’s rural areas are active contributors to the regeneration of the Region. The development of ICT is particularly important in the more remote areas. With improvements to communications, particularly the introduction of broadband, there is an increasing number of businesses that can locate sustainably in rural areas. These and an expanding but sustainable tourism industry will provide opportunities to diversify and strengthen the rural economy. Access to services for people living in the rural areas is an important issue.

2.39 The Region has extensive areas of high quality natural environments, illustrated through the designation of much of the Pennine area as National Park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB); stretches of the Coast designated as Heritage Coast and AONB; and the extent of designated nature conservation resources. The protection and enhancement of the environment and related resources in these areas is important for many aspects of life in the Region, as well as for national and international interests.

2.40 The Appropriate Assessment has identified a number of issues of potential effects of development on nature conservation sites of European significance, and these are referred to at various points in the text.

2.41 For clarity, the following definitions of city-regions will apply throughout this RSS:

Development Principles and Locational Strategy 2

2.42 The Tyne and Wear City-Region is the area which looks primarily to the Tyne and Wear conurbation for access to jobs and services. There is no formal boundary to the city-region for policy purposes, however it could be considered to include the following districts:

- Blyth Valley
- Castle Morpeth
- Chester Le Street
- Derwentside
- Durham City
- Easington
- Gateshead
- Newcastle upon Tyne
- North Tyneside
- South Tyneside
- Sunderland
- Wansbeck

2.43 The city-region can also be considered to include parts of Alnwick and Tynedale Districts.

2.44 Within the Tyne and Wear City-Region, the Tyne and Wear Conurbation comprises the contiguous built up area of Gateshead, Newcastle, North Tyneside, South Tyneside and Sunderland City. Washington New Town lies within this area. The City of Durham is the Main Settlement in this city-region.

2.45 “Tees Valley” normally refers to the five administrative districts of Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland, and Stockton on Tees.

2.46 The Tees Valley City-Region is the area which looks primarily to the Tees Valley Conurbation and Main Settlements for access to jobs and services. There is no formal boundary to the city-region for policy purposes, however for statistical purposes it could be considered to include the following districts:

- Darlington
- Hartlepool
- Middlesbrough
- Redcar & Cleveland
- Sedgefield
- Stockton on Tees

2.47 The city-region can also be considered to include parts of Teesdale and Wear Valley Districts and to influence the northern parts of North Yorkshire, including the rural service centres of Northallerton and Richmond.

2.48 Some parts of County Durham may be considered to relate to both city-regions.

2.49 Within the Tees Valley City-Region, the Tees Valley Conurbation comprises the contiguous built up areas of Stockton, Middlesbrough and Redcar.

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2.50 Also within the Tees Valley city-region are the Main Settlements of Darlington and Hartlepool.

2.51 Sub-Regional Centres. Sunderland, Darlington and Middlesbrough are defined as sub-regional centres in terms of retail and leisure uses.

2.52 Other Regeneration Areas. These comprise the Rural Coalfields Regeneration Area in South East Northumberland; South East Northumberland North Tyneside Regeneration Initiative (SENNTri); Durham Coalfield Communities Area; and the East Cleveland Regeneration Area.

2.53 These are towns identified in policies within this RSS which lie within the Other Regeneration Areas and are:

- Amble
- Ashington
- Bishop Auckland
- Blyth
- Brotton
- Chester-le-Street
- Consett
- Cramlington
- Crook
- Hetton-le-Hole
- Houghton-le-Spring
- Loftus
- Newton Aycliffe
- Peterlee
- Saltburn
- Seaham
- Shildon
- Skelton
- Spennymoor
- Stanley

2.54 Rural Service Centres. These are towns identified in policies within this RSS which have a role in terms of the services which they provide to surrounding primarily rural areas. They are:

- Alnwick
- Barnard Castle
- Berwick-upon-Tweed
- Guisborough
- Haltwhistle
- Hexham
- Middleton-in-Teesdale
- Morpeth

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- Prudhoe
- Stanhope

2.55 Secondary Settlements are towns and villages that are smaller in scale or function than Rural Service Centres.

2.56 For the purposes of Policy 4, Urban Areas are defined as the Conurbations, Main Settlements, Regeneration Towns and Rural Service Centres and secondary settlements identified in Local Development Frameworks as providing a significant opportunity in terms of previously developed land and buildings.

Policy 6

LOCATIONAL STRATEGY

Plans, strategies and programmes should support and incorporate the locational strategy to maximise the major assets and opportunities available in the North East and to regenerate those areas affected by social, economic and environmental problems. This will be done by the following means, which should also be delivered by planning proposals:

- supporting the polycentric development and redevelopment of the Tyne & Wear City-Region and the Tees Valley City-Region by concentrating the majority of new development in the two Conurbations and the Main Settlements;
- allowing development appropriate in scale within the Regeneration Towns and Rural Service Centres to meet local needs and achieve a balance between housing, economic development, infrastructure and services;
- maintaining vibrant rural areas with a diversified economy and sustainable market towns, service centres and villages whilst preserving their historic fabric and character;
- conserving and enhancing biodiversity, geodiversity, heritage resources, tranquillity and the high quality landscapes, including the Northumberland National Park, the North Pennines and Northumberland Coast AONBs and the Durham, Northumberland and North Yorkshire and Cleveland heritage coasts and protecting them from development that would endanger these qualities; and
- improving sustainable internal and external connectivity and accessibility, including sustainable accessibility from Other Regeneration Areas to the Conurbations and the Main Settlements.

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Connectivity and Accessibility

2.57 Improving connectivity and accessibility within and beyond the Region is one of the four key themes of the RSS, which will contribute towards the delivery of a North East renaissance. In addition, connectivity is also instrumental to the successful integrated delivery of the other three themes outlined in Policy 1. Throughout the RSS plan period it will be important to ensure that the North East has a high quality, integrated, safe and robust network of transport infrastructure and services that will support the Region's regeneration and economic growth. The transport network will also play a key role in providing access to jobs and facilities for all sections of society and in promoting sustainable patterns of activity, development and movement within the Region and beyond to the rest of the United Kingdom and Europe.

2.58 The Locational Strategy sets the spatial framework for the RSS that supports the development and redevelopment of the Tyne & Wear and Tees Valley City-Regions by concentrating the majority of new development in the Conurbations and Main Settlements. Other strands of the Locational Strategy include allowing development that is appropriate in scale within Regeneration Towns and Rural Service Centres, maintaining the vibrant rural areas in the North East, conserving and enhancing biodiversity, geodiversity and high quality landscapes and also improving internal and external connectivity and accessibility.

2.59 The Transport Strategy has considered these factors and has been developed to help deliver the Locational Strategy by recognising that the international gateways and efficient key transport corridors will help improve internal and external connectivity by offering fast high quality links within the North East, to other regions and European neighbours. This will help facilitate economic growth in the Region and improve the sphere of influence for the North East labour market catchment area. However, the other major aspect of the transport strategy is the recognition that demand management will have a key role in addressing the transport issues in the Region. It is recognised that more sustainable modes of travel need to be used for some journeys, and in other cases the strategy advocates reducing the need to travel, particularly by car, and also the use of IT to encourage the use and growth of home-working. The sequential approach to development, with the focus upon prioritising development within the conurbations, can help improve accessibility and connectivity by non-car modes.

2.60 It is important that the strategy for managing and improving the transport network is sustainable, affordable and deliverable, and safeguards the environment of the North East, as well as promoting the health of local people. Consequently, the strategy is based on both making best use of the transport network first, before justifying investment in additional capacity, and on rebalancing the structure and use of the transport system towards more sustainable forms of transport, especially for travel within the Region. Demand management measures will support making best use of existing resources, through the 'softer' transport policy measures such as travel plans, individualised marketing, providing information that makes public transport easier to use and car sharing schemes. Policy 53 provides more detail about the demand management measures advocated in RSS.

2.61 Central to the 'seamless journey' approach that supports the RSS and the Northern Way is the focus on investing and supporting growth in the most accessible centres and corridors, to reduce the need to travel in the first instance, particularly by the private car, and to support wider urban and rural renaissance objectives.

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2.62 The North East does not suffer as severely from as many transport problems as other regions in the country, for example, congestion in the South East. The North East benefits from having two international airports that are rapidly expanding; several ports (the dominant ones being Teesport and Port of Tyne); and regional transport corridor connections (road and rail) that provide direct access to London and Edinburgh and beyond. There is also an extensive bus network within the Conurbations and Main Settlements of the Region, together with a high quality light rail system that serves Tyne & Wear.

2.63 However, the North East still has to tackle a number of challenging transport problems. There is a need to investigate options for investment in transport infrastructure in the Region to tackle transport barriers that are briefly described below, but covered more explicitly in section 3D, to assist in the delivery of accelerated growth in the regional economy. Such investment could also help to reduce regional disparities. Several sections of the strategic network require upgrading to improve connectivity and accessibility, to improve social inclusion, reduce the environmental impacts associated with road traffic and to ensure that these links will attract businesses and workers to the Region, to enable the North East to remain and become more competitive.

2.64 There are various transport barriers that are affecting the competitiveness of the Region. Car ownership – and use - in the North East is increasing at one of the fastest rates in the country and is contributing to increasing levels of congestion. There are also increases in distances travelled, particularly for commuting purposes, and pollution emitted from vehicles. These are contributing to environmental and social problems for the Region. These trends have resulted in an increasing need to travel to and from various destinations which cannot be adequately provided for by public transport, especially to and from the more rural locations.

2.65 There is also an issue for those people, who do not have access to a car; who are increasingly being excluded from accessing employment opportunities, essential services and facilities. This is more prevalent in the Region's more disadvantaged communities and also the more remote rural areas, where public transport accessibility is poor. Policies in section 3D, most notably 50, 51, 55 and 56, seek to address these issues.

2.66 The reliability and frequency of buses is being affected by congestion at certain locations and at certain periods of the day, most notably in the conurbations and urban areas during the morning and evening commuting hours. Patronage on buses has been steadily declining in the Region over a period of years, as evidence shows in 'Technical Paper No. 10: Transport'. This has been attributed to many factors including rising fares, unreliability of services, a loss of frequency and reduced services outside peak hours. This needs to be addressed and policies 49, 50, 51, 53, 55 and 56 seek to provide measures on developing the role of public transport and buses in helping to deliver the wider spatial strategy.

2.67 Congestion is becoming an increasingly widespread problem on the Region's strategic corridors but also in the conurbations and other towns. Congestion adversely affects the economic growth of the Region and also the movement of people and goods; it also has a harmful effect upon the environment through exhaust emissions from vehicles. Local traffic using the strategic highway network is adding to operating difficulties on the A1 and A19 in particular. In order to address these

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issues, demand management measures may be required. Demand management studies will be required to ascertain the best tailored solutions for particular locations in order to plan for the longer term; for example, access to key employment sites will be required by a range of modes, but priority should be given to an integrated package of measures that manages demand, makes best use of existing facilities and accommodates more trips by sustainable modes.

2.68 It is important to understand how the Region's transport networks affect the Region's growth and its ability to interact and access other markets. The strategic regional transport corridors should provide direct and high quality access to other areas of the country and also link to the international gateways (airports and ports) that provide access to wider national and international markets. These corridors are vital links between the North East's two city-regions (via A1/ECML and A19/Durham Coast Line) but also to other city-regions in the North, as described in the Northern Way, and to Scotland too. The polycentric pattern of the settlements across the North requires that transport connections between them should be of high quality. These strategic routes are where future major transport investment and other measures should be focused to overcome any identified barriers:

- North South Corridor of the A1/East Coast Main Line
- East West Corridor of A66/Tees Valley Rail links
- North South Corridor of the A19/Durham Coast Line
- East West Corridor of A69 /Tyne Valley Line

2.69 Businesses that are located in the North East have a smaller accessible market than those in other parts of the country such as the South East. To increase the Region's competitiveness, greater accessibility is required through road and rail but also through air and sea.

2.70 To overcome barriers the RSS has sought to identify key transport outcomes in order to bring the most benefit to the Region. Good accessibility and connectivity is not only required at a national and international level. It is important that there are good quality connections between the two city-regions in the North East, to enable people and goods to travel easily. Policy 55 provides more details on how accessibility within, and beyond city-regions, can be improved.

2.71 The North East's airports and ports are important economic drivers for the Region, acting as key Gateways into the Region for business, tourism and leisure purposes. They play an essential role in maintaining and attracting new development and investment in the Region and are significant sources of employment in their own right. Policies 21, 22 and 48 provide more detail and emphasis regarding the role of airports and ports in economic and accessibility terms.

2.72 The Region's airports have to remain competitive both nationally and internationally in order to continue to contribute to the Region's economic growth. As both airports expand and offer more international destinations, surface access improvements may be required to cater for increased numbers of passengers using the airports, particularly by public transport. Other demand management measures may have to be considered alongside surface access improvements as part of Airport masterplans.

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2.73 There may be an opportunity to develop the Region's ports as alternatives to congested southern ports. Diverting some of the port traffic destined for the South to the North East could have economic benefits as well as national environmental benefits. Rail loading gauge enhancements from Teesport to the East Coast Mainline would be important to enable 9' 6" containers to be more efficiently moved to and from the port by rail. The aspirations of Teesport to develop a new deep sea container terminal would reflect ambitions for a greater share of southern ports' traffic.

Policy 7

CONNECTIVITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

Strategies, plans and programmes, and planning proposals should seek to improve and enhance the sustainable internal and external connectivity and accessibility of the North East by:

- a. Reducing the impact of travel demand particularly by promoting public transport, travel plans, cycling and walking;
- b. reducing the need to travel long distances, particularly by private car, by focusing development in urban areas that have good access to public transport and for cyclists and pedestrians, and by encouraging home-working and improving electronic communications;
- c. minimising the impact of the movement of people and goods on the environment and climate change;
- d. making best use of resources and existing infrastructure;
- e. ensuring safe transport networks and infrastructure;
- f. maximising the potential of the International Gateways of the ports and airports and strategic transport infrastructure in supporting regional economic growth and regeneration; and
- g. improve and enhance the sustainable internal and external connectivity and accessibility of the North East region by improving accessibility and efficiency of movements with emphasis on promoting sustainable modes and reducing travel demand along the four key transport corridors set out in Policy 49.

Protecting and Enhancing the Environment

2.74 The Region's built and natural environment together are recognised as one of the key assets of the Region. Creating and retaining high quality and attractive environments should be integral considerations in decisions on development.

2.75 The North East is rich in biodiversity and geodiversity. It contains many of the UK's most important habitats, species and geological features. It is important that these areas and designated sites are not seen in isolation but are considered as an integral part of the nature conservation resource across the Region.

2.76 Policy 8 sets out high level objectives and principles for protecting and enhancing the environment. These are developed further in Policies 31-34.

2 Development Principles and Locational Strategy

2.77 In pursuit of a more effective and sustainable use and management of the Region's environment, the main objectives are to:

- integrate environmental considerations into decision making at every level, ensuring that plans, strategies, programmes and development options are assessed for potential positive contributions as well as negative effects on the environment;
- promote high quality design in all development and redevelopment;
- promote the benefits of a quality environment as complementary to measures aimed at urban and rural renaissance;
- ensure that development does not cause significant environmental harm;
- harness the Region's natural resources and ensure that the Region optimises the broad range of benefits presented by a quality, accessible environment, without compromising its value;
- ensure that decisions on proposed development affecting the natural beauty of internationally and nationally designated sites and areas, such as National Park AONBs, World Heritage Sites, Ramsar Sites, Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, do not compromise their statutory purposes;
- measure and record the biodiversity heritage of the Region;
- effectively tackle the causes and effects of climate change in the Region;
- successfully adapt to any resulting impacts of climate change and maximise the potential economic, environmental and social opportunities;
- reduce the risk and impacts of flooding;
- achieve the sustainable management of existing woods and forests;
- promote sustainable construction and design principles;
- maximise energy generation from a broad range of renewable sources;
- reduce demand for energy and increase energy efficiency;
- reduce the amount of waste produced and treat and dispose of that which is generated in the most sustainable manner;
- ensure the sustainable use of natural resources such as soil and water; and
- encourage public access to the Region's natural and built environment.

2.78 A number of environmental and other features have an important role as "green infrastructure". Green Infrastructure can be defined as "... the sub -regional network of protected sites, nature reserves, green spaces, and greenway linkages. Such linkages include river corridors and floodplains, migration routes and features of the landscape of importance as wildlife corridors. Green Infrastructure has many uses, not only benefiting wildlife, but also enhancing recreational and cultural experiences and delivering ecological services such as flood protection and microclimate control. It operates on all spatial scales from urban centres to open countryside" ('Biodiversity by Design', Town and County Planning Association, 2005).

2.79 At a strategic level this can be considered to comprise the highest priority areas, sites and routes of the Region's strategic environmental capital, many of which are officially designated. It is the main water and habitat infrastructure, including those alongside main transport corridors; carbon sinks; and main landscape, amenity and recreation areas, such as National Parks and Heritage Coasts.

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2.80 The urban fringe and the open areas in and around towns are often characterised by new development, derelict brownfield sites, retail and industrial parks and landfill sites. Further from the urban edge it becomes the “rural fringe”, featuring a mix of farms, horticulture businesses, horse paddocks and country parks. The combination of these two fringes is often termed the rural urban fringe. The character of open areas in and around towns varies considerably. The Countryside Agency document ‘The Countryside in and Around Town – A Vision for Connecting Town and Country in the pursuit of Sustainable Development’ promoted ten key functions designed to stimulate new approaches to producing multifunctional landscapes that are visually pleasing, environmentally vibrant, functionally productive and socially useful and accessible. The principles set out in this vision can be used to guide strategies, plans and programmes related to the management and use of the Region’s rural fringe landscapes.

2.81 RSS recognises that greater emphasis needs to be placed on the positive use of the open areas in and around towns, by creating networks of new and improved parks, woodlands and other green spaces which are linked to the urban centre and the wider countryside by footpaths, bridleways and cycle ways. This will also improve the appearance, accessibility and biodiversity in and around towns. Green Belt and other open areas are important target locations for the delivery of community woodlands and an associated range of sustainable leisure opportunities for urban dwellers and tourists, such as walking, cycling, equestrianism and environmental education. Equestrian activity, for example, is an important activity in the rural-urban fringe that contributes more towards GVA and local economic activity than agriculture. However, the sustainable strategic access infrastructure of the Region, in the form of bridleways and the public rights of way system upon which the industry depends, is neglected in some areas. The importance of the strategic network in the context of leisure and tourism should be recognised so that LDFs, Local Action Forums and Public Rights of Way Improvement Plans may deliver improvements at more local levels.

2.82 At the same time tourist and recreational activities can put pressure on some of the more sensitive environments in the region. High quality landscapes, nature conservation sites and heritage features can be adversely affected in terms of erosion, damage and disturbance to species, and the reduction of tranquillity. Careful planning and management is needed to integrate economic, environmental and social objectives, and particular care is needed to ensure that the integrity of internationally designated sites is protected. In some instances it may be necessary to develop a strategic approach to managing the protection of internationally designated sites.

2.83 Policies 2, 9, 10 and 12 address the role of Green Infrastructure, particularly in and around the main urban areas.

2.84 An issue which has recently been recognised as of increasing importance is that of “coastal squeeze”. This is a result of rising sea levels, which are in turn a consequence of climate change. Coastal squeeze occurs when rises in sea level affect areas where the landward side of the coast comprises hard infrastructure such as coastal defences, and land uses which depend on these. As sea levels rise the coastal strip becomes narrower and is in effect squeezed between the sea and the land. This can be important to natural processes of erosion and deposition on the coast, and to any sites of nature conservation importance which include the coastal strip. This is addressed in Policy 34.

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2.85 The Habitats Regulations Assessment which accompanies this RSS has identified potential risks to internationally designated nature conservation sites, including potential adverse effects from air pollution and disturbance. In preparing strategies, plans and programmes and considering planning proposals Local Authorities will need to consider avoidance and mitigation of potential impacts on these sites identified in the HRA which accompanies this RSS.

2.86 Many of these sites are sensitive to airborne pollutants such as Nitrous Oxides (NO_x), which are produced by land-based developments and vehicle movements. It is important to ensure that, first, the general downward trend in the production of these pollutants is sustained, and second that any increases that do occur in any part of the region do not have an adverse effect on the integrity of designated sites, or that any potential adverse effects can be mitigated.

2.87 This issue is partly addressed in the Air Quality policy (Policy 37). At the same time many of the policies being put in place in the RSS to address sustainable development issues, and climate change in particular, are likely to contribute to dealing with this issue.

2.88 The RSS contains policies which set broad principles to guide the strategic planning of the region and the preparation of Local Development Frameworks. These include, for example policies which aim to guide development to sustainable locations, reduce the need to travel, and to reduce the use of private motorised transport in favour of public transport, which is likely to be increasingly energy efficient and low emission.

2.89 Policy 3 aims to manage trends in the emissions from the burning of fossil fuels. This is currently aimed primarily at CO₂ but it seems a reasonable presumption that NO_x emissions would be similarly affected .

2.90 A range of other policies would contribute to the achievement of policy 3 by concentrating development in central parts of the city-regions, where it can be serviced by public transport, lead to relatively short journeys and is generally at a distance from designated sites.

2.91 The RSS contains policies which aim to increase the proportion of energy generated from renewable sources (and thereby reduce reliance on fossil fuels for energy generation). A number of specific policies would contribute to the achievement of policies 2, 3, 4 and 6 in terms of air pollution

2.92 There are also policies which would aim to ensure that in developing LDFs and considering planning proposals, potential impacts of development on environmental features are taken into account.

2.93 Finally, the RSS contains policies that can help to mitigate the impacts of development on environmental features.

Policy 8

PROTECTING AND ENHANCING THE ENVIRONMENT

Strategies, plans, programmes, and planning proposals should seek to maintain and enhance the quality, diversity and local distinctiveness of the environment throughout the North East by:

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- a. promoting a high quality of design in all development and redevelopment;
- b. promoting development that is sympathetic to its surroundings;
- c. protecting the special qualities of the environment in the nationally designated areas of the Northumberland National Park, and the North Pennines and Northumberland Coast AONBs and upholding their statutory purposes, while recognising their role in a living, working and vibrant countryside. Major development should not take place in these areas other than in exceptional circumstances when it can be demonstrated that there is an overriding national need and it could not be located elsewhere;
- d. seeking to conserve and enhance historic buildings, areas and landscapes;
- e. identifying and giving an appropriate degree of protection to historic parks and gardens, battlefields, ancient field systems, green lanes trackways, industrial monuments and other unscheduled archaeological sites, which reflects their national or regional importance;
- f. identifying and giving appropriate protection to the Region's internationally and nationally important sites for biodiversity and geodiversity, including full assessment of the potential impacts of development on Internationally Designated Nature Conservation Sites;
- g. identifying and protecting existing woodland of amenity and nature conservation value, particularly ancient woodlands;
- h. encouraging and facilitating the implementation of the Regional Forest Strategy, Great North Forest and Tees Forest community forestry strategies, related biodiversity initiatives and other woodland planting;
- i. paying due regard to the needs of the aquatic and marine environment including taking into account the potential risk of coastal squeeze, and considering measures to address this; and
- j. encouraging and supporting the establishment of green infrastructure including strategic wildlife corridors.

City-Regions and Rural Areas

2.94 This section amplifies the locational strategy to describe the current situation in each of the two city-regions, and set out policy for the main features of development and movement within each.

Tyne and Wear City-Region

The City-Region

2.95 With a population of around 1.6million people (65% of the North East population), the Tyne & Wear City-Region is a key feature of the economic and cultural life of the North East. Crossing municipal boundaries, it includes the sub-regions and districts as set out in paragraph 2.42, although there is no definitive boundary due to the numerous overlapping inter-relationships throughout the Region. The city-region offers a distinctive quality of life embracing contemporary urban and rural living and business environments, with regional and sub-regional shopping centres, four of the Region's universities, a major teaching hospital, and high quality countryside and coastline.

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2.96 The city-region exhibits a polycentric settlement pattern based around two core areas within the Tyne & Wear conurbation – Newcastle and Sunderland; a further major centre for population and employment – Durham City; and a wide hinterland encompassing both a range of rural towns and villages and three areas, in South East Northumberland and Wearside and County Durham, which were formerly coalfield areas. Different parts of the Region have different relationships with each core area. Tyne & Wear, and Durham City to a lesser extent, provide the major urban living environments and centres for employment, services and facilities; towns such as Blyth, Cramlington, Peterlee and Consett, provide employment opportunities and improving living environments to stimulate regeneration in some of the most deprived areas in the Region; and historic towns and villages provide the services and facilities for wider rural hinterlands within a high quality rural setting. Together, these contribute to the economic growth of the city-region; the quality and diversity of living and working environments; and housing opportunities.

2.97 Newcastle has a wider sphere of influence over the whole city-region and beyond, acting as a regional centre for employment, retail, health, cultural, leisure and tourism facilities. This is demonstrated by its net inflow of over 57,000 commuters on a daily basis, which is by far the most significant employment location in the Region. Its housing market also stretches beyond the Tyneside boundary, into Northumberland and County Durham, encompassing settlements as far afield as Hexham and Morpeth. Sunderland is more self-contained, with a relatively balanced local population and employment structure. 72% of the resident population also work in Sunderland. Consequently, the City also exhibits a relatively local housing market that is mainly limited to Wearside, South Tyneside and north east County Durham.

2.98 The centres of Newcastle; Sunderland; and Durham City are identified as Strategic Public Transport Hubs, as they exhibit the highest levels of public transport accessibility by a range of transport modes, and provide key links into wider regional, national, and international transport networks. Infrastructure investment may be needed to improve their interchange facilities, particularly at Newcastle Central Station, and support development growth and their central public transport role.

2.99 Although having important links to the Tees Valley City-Region, Durham City lies within the Tyne & Wear City-Region. Durham City is one of the Region's major assets with its Cathedral and Castle World Heritage Site; a university with an international reputation for research; a retail centre serving the surrounding settlements; a popular tourist destination in its own right; and a service sector including important public sector employers. This role is demonstrated by the large net inflows of commuters into the City (over 10,000) from surrounding areas, primarily Derwentside, Chester-le-Street and Sedgefield. In terms of commuter outflows, Sunderland, Sedgefield and Newcastle are the main destinations. The City will continue to contribute to the Region's future prosperity. There are opportunities for redevelopment within the City but the relatively small city centre restricts it providing a wider sub-regional retail role, and the City's outward expansion will continue to be contained by the Green Belt. However, the Green Belt contributes in part to the quality and attractiveness of the City as a place to live and work. The Durham City master plan is seeking to ensure a stronger and more vibrant city, whilst celebrating and respecting the City's unique historical assets.

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2.100 Outside the conurbation there are three areas which have been identified as in need of regeneration and in which action is being taken by various partnerships and agencies. The Durham Coalfield Communities Area, SENNTRI, and the Rural Coalfields Regeneration Area in South East Northumberland play an important role within the city-region, and require investment and action to tackle some major long standing problems. The main centres within these Other Regeneration Areas, such as Cramlington, Blyth, Chester-le-Street and Peterlee, and to a lesser extent other smaller settlements, provide key hubs for employment, services and facilities for surrounding hinterlands. These areas also have strong links with the conurbation and core areas within the city-region, which provide a broader range of job opportunities and facilities.

2.101 There are significant rural areas both within and surrounding the city-region. Towns including Hexham, Prudhoe, Alnwick, Morpeth and Crook are important service centres for local people and visitors in the rural areas, and fall within the sphere of influence of the city-region. They therefore extend the quality of life options of the city-region and are the gateways to the rural economy, providing employment and tourism opportunities, supporting in particular the growth of micro businesses, and serving as support hubs for key industrial sectors such as agriculture and food & drink. Many rural settlements have dual roles as service centres for their wider rural hinterlands, whilst maintaining strong links with urban areas.

2.102 Retail and leisure development is a key component of economic prosperity and regeneration. Newcastle City is by far the most significant shopping and leisure centre within the city-region and the Region generally, and is expected to continue to act as a natural hub for retail and leisure activity. Sunderland is also an important location for retail activity. It will be important to ensure a balance between future growth in Newcastle and other centres within the city-region, in line with objectives of sustainable shopping patterns. Retail-led regeneration may also be important within the regeneration centres, not only in terms of physical regeneration but also in terms of employment generation.

Labour Market

2.103 The city-region has a complex labour market, with some areas exhibiting high labour mobility and others, such as South Tyneside, exhibiting low levels of mobility. Travel to work data demonstrates the complex land use patterns that exist in the city-region. Each day there is a wide range of multi-faceted journeys that criss-cross the city-region, particularly concentrated within the Tyne & Wear conurbation. These reflect the overlapping series of labour markets within the city-region and the diverse population and employment origins and destinations that exist. These include city and town centres, as well as industrial and commercial estates, which are often located more on the periphery of urban areas where there is better access to strategic highways and where land values are lower. Examples are Team Valley in Gateshead; Newburn Riverside, Newcastle; Doxford Park in Sunderland; and the Aykley Heads Business Park in Durham City.

2.104 Rural areas within the city-region demonstrate strong inter-relationships with the main urban areas. Many settlements clearly have overlapping areas of influence, performing dual roles serving both as population centres providing a workforce in the urban areas, but also serving a wider rural hinterland in terms of the provision of services and facilities, public transport access and employment. In some rural areas within the city-region, particularly in Northumberland, the rising cost of homes has resulted in local people being priced out of the housing market, has led to reverse commuting into rural areas.

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2.105 Newcastle, in particular, draws in by far the greatest number of commuters from throughout the city-region and beyond, with 62% arriving from adjacent areas of Tyne & Wear, but with other significant in-flows from the Tyne Valley, Durham City and South East Northumberland. This reflects the central role that Newcastle city centre provides as a regional retail centre and employer; a centre for higher order business services and higher education; and a national and international cultural and leisure destination.

2.106 Sunderland has a small net in-flow of commuters, originating primarily from South Tyneside and Easington, journeying not only into the city centre for retail and higher order business services employment, but also to the surrounding industrial and commercial estates within the City's urban area. Sunderland also has large out-flows accessing jobs primarily in Gateshead and Newcastle. These significant flows reflect the key economic driver role that the conurbation and, in particular, the urban cores play within the city-region. Elsewhere in Tyne & Wear, Gateshead experiences a net inflow of around 5,000 commuter journeys and North and South Tyneside have large net outflows with the main employment destinations for residents therefore being Newcastle, Gateshead and Sunderland.

2.107 However, not all journeys are focused on the conurbation. Durham City also experiences a large net in-flow of commuters primarily from surrounding former coalfield areas, demonstrating both the close inter-relationships between Durham City and its rural hinterland, and its role as a focus for employment, education, services and facilities. In South East Northumberland, Newcastle and North Tyneside are a significant source of employment opportunities, accounting for nearly 65% of all commuter journeys from Blyth, and nearly 50% from Castle Morpeth. Conversely, Castle Morpeth in particular exhibits a net inflow of commuter journeys, with around 1,700 of these daily journeys originating from Newcastle, demonstrating the reverse commuting effect that is occurring in rural areas.

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Connectivity

2.108 Complex land use issues, rapidly increasing car ownership and improving personal mobility are putting increasing pressure on the transport network. Increasing delays are being experienced in the city-region, particularly into and around the core areas and wider conurbations. Although public transport use accounts for around 30% of journeys into Newcastle, elsewhere, public transport use is very low. Car journeys take particular advantage of the relatively good strategic transport networks in place in the city-region, particularly the A1 and A19 trunk roads.

2.109 However, there are already signs that these networks are reaching capacity limits at certain times, particularly on the A1 Newcastle Gateshead Western Bypass and the A19 Tyne Crossing, as well as feeder roads into the urban cores and Durham City. The river bridges in Tyne & Wear are pinch points for congestion. Within Tyne & Wear, congestion on the A1 and A19 is affecting their ability to perform their strategic function. Much of the congestion is related to local traffic within and around the conurbation (rather than longer distance travel) much of which has the potential to be served by reliable and improved public transport services. Journeys to the MetroCentre also contribute to congestion on the A1. Addressing the congestion on these strategic transport corridors is a priority. A new Tyne crossing is scheduled to be open to traffic in 2011. Similar capacity enhancements such as this, if justified, should be integrated with public transport service and interchange improvements along with demand management measures, to maximise the benefits of investment and to facilitate a greater proportion of journeys, especially local ones, to be made by public transport.

2.110 The Tyne & Wear Metro is an important part of the integrated public transport network in the city-region, but it is in need of major maintenance and upgrade, with the potential in the long term to extend its coverage to serve a much wider catchment, such as through the Project Orpheus proposals. Similarly, improvements in the rail network, including with the Tees Valley city-region; the upgrade of the East Coast Mainline; and improved services along the Durham Coast line would provide public transport alternatives that would have the potential to help to relieve congestion on the A1 and A19 strategic road corridors. With this in mind it is important that the Leamside Line be protected from any development that would restrict its reinstatement either for freight or possibly passenger services in the longer term. Similarly, there is a need to achieve greater integration between the existing public transport networks in Northumberland and County Durham and the wider strategic transport network in the conurbation, to ensure that a higher proportion of journeys to work are undertaken by public transport.

2.111 The city-region possesses relatively strong connections to the rest of the UK and beyond, illustrated by Newcastle International Airport; north-south and east-west rail and road links; a number of ports; and several national cycle routes. Firms operating in the global economy are dependent on international connectivity for access to markets and the supply chain. It is therefore important in accelerating the growth rate in the city-region that these connections operate efficiently. Recent figures show that Newcastle International Airport is the fastest growing major regional airport in the UK with 4.75 million passengers in 2004. Inbound tourists increasingly account for the growth in passenger numbers at the Airport. The Port of Tyne is the only passenger and major freight facility in the city-region, and there are smaller port operations at Sunderland, Blyth and Seaham.

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The Economy

2.112 Over the last 25 years the city-region's economy has undergone a striking transformation, with businesses, agencies and people in the city-region demonstrating an ability to adapt to radically changing economic circumstances. Following the demise of traditional industries, such as shipbuilding and coal mining, a transition continues towards a more knowledge based economy. The manufacturing sector retains a strong presence in the area, with knowledge based manufacturing particularly in the automotive industry, being at the forefront of technical innovation and efficiency. The city-region now accounts for approximately three quarters of the North East's Gross Value Added.

2.113 Evidence suggests that there is significant growth in the service sector, particularly leisure, retail and tourism. There are emerging strengths in the professional services sector, biotechnology and digital media, based at university knowledge campuses. The city-region therefore has an increasingly diverse economic base and the challenge in the future is to further develop the knowledge sectors that are critical to future growth potential, whilst supporting productivity improvements in the manufacturing sectors.

2.114 Good internal linkages around the city-region are critical to enabling the efficient movement of people, goods and services and supporting economic growth, and external linkages to other city-regions and beyond, given its relatively small regional economic base and market. Transport links to London, Edinburgh, Leeds and Manchester are particularly important to the city-region's economy as well as trade and supply chain links with Tees Valley; Scotland; parts of Europe such as Scandinavia; China and Japan.

2.115 The city-region is a world leader in several emerging industries including nanotechnology, photonics and Microsystems (Sunderland); bioscience (Newcastle) renewables and environmental technologies (Blyth), chemicals, maritime/offshore industries and high value-added engineering, particularly automotive. The Nissan automotive plant west of Sunderland City, for example, is the most efficient car plant in Europe and one of the major employers in the city-region, which has benefited from £2 billion of direct investment from Nissan and around £300 million from investment in related activities, such as supply chain activities. As the economy has evolved and diversified over time, the city-region's workforce has responded through retraining and re-skilling. However, there is still a strong need to continue to create a responsive workforce to the changing economy or the city-region will become less competitive internationally and nationally.

2.116 Four of the Region's five universities are based in the city-region, accounting for most of the region's research and development income and a major economic asset in the Region as a whole. This critical mass means the city-region is a net importer of undergraduates and collectively and individually, the economic impact of the four universities in the city-region is significant. As major international businesses in their own right, they employ around 8,000 staff with 55,000 full-time equivalent students and this is set to grow. The vibrancy and quality of life of the city-region helps attract both academics and students. The universities and other higher education establishments make a major contribution to innovation capacity in the Region, being a significant source of innovation and enterprise and contributing to the development of science clusters. Supporting better links between universities and business, and developing appropriate campus facilities will be important in order to fully capitalise on the higher education's potential.

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2.117 The North East Strategy for Success is underpinned by ‘three pillars of innovation’:

- healthcare and life sciences;
- energy and environment; and
- process technologies and industries.

2.118 A key knowledge economy initiative to deliver these ‘pillars’ is the emerging ‘Science City Newcastle’, which will be at the heart of science and technological development within the city-region. Initial activity will concentrate on the western area of Newcastle City, in a triangle between the university campuses, the General Hospital and the Centre for Life, incorporating the Discovery Quarter. It will include development of activities such as research, teaching, translational research, incubation, support services, public engagement and related social interaction, and the facilities to accommodate these, in a form which maximises work and information flows.

2.119 Science City will act as a hub and encompass a network of nodes at various locations. These include the Knowledge Campus Gateshead which will provide a focus for design and product innovation, with major opportunities for targeted inward investment; the design focus at Northumbria University (Manors development); the Centre for Renewables at Blyth; and developments at Durham University and at NetPark in Sedgefield which aims to provide a location for science and technology businesses, providing a combination of University Research Centres, spin-out businesses and high tech companies with knowledge based business support.

2.120 These emerging growth sectors as well as the creative and digital industries and business and professional services, which tend to be small-medium sized enterprises (SMEs), will tend to require smaller high quality premises either within or adjoining existing city and town centres close to their clients and suppliers, or in more rural areas with good ICT networks. Northumberland and County Durham, for example, have experienced rapid employment growth in knowledge intensive business services over recent years.

2.121 Manufacturing, engineering and automotive industries will continue to have significant land requirements for expansion and growth, located close to their existing bases and labour markets, primarily around the Tyne & Wear conurbation. Similarly, contact centres, which are primarily based in Sunderland, Newcastle and East Durham are significant employers in the cit- region and continue to show strong signs of growth, although this is expected to be driven by growth in existing rather than new centres.

2.122 The city-region therefore requires a portfolio of land and premises fit for purpose across the city-region to cater for varying growth needs, but with the focus on urban and rural centres to support their service centre/hub role. Investment in transport will continue to be needed to support ongoing investment programmes. The RES outlines the broad spatial pattern of economic activity over the next ten years, and this is reflected in the policies set out here.

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Sustainable Communities

2.123 A key aim of the city-region strategy is to deliver sustainable communities. In the city-region, this will involve not only nurturing the growth of the economy and enabling access to opportunities as discussed above, but also improving and broadening the housing stock; tackling housing market failure; creating quality living environments where people have adequate access to services and facilities; and reducing adverse impacts of development and travel on the environment.

2.124 Whilst regeneration of all parts of the city-region is supported so that they can fulfil their potential and contribute to regional economic growth and social inclusion, research has indicated that the conurbation will continue to be the economic driver in the city-region, where the majority of existing and new employment opportunities will be located. It is therefore important that the focus for growth is centred on the conurbations and Durham City where the majority of jobs, services, facilities exist and accessibility is greatest.

2.125 Different approaches and solutions will be needed in different areas, and these may not necessarily be related to growth, particularly outside the conurbation and Durham City. The priority in all areas will be to create and maintain sustainable communities and the scale of development will be different in different areas. The Regional Housing Strategy makes it clear that in the housing market restructuring areas and the regeneration centres, improvement and renewal of the existing housing stock will be a key objective. Individual housing authorities and housing partnerships prepare strategies for individual circumstances; for example, the Bridging NewcastleGateshead strategy involves substantial demolitions, whereas in Wansbeck the priorities are rebalancing the housing stock through primarily housing restructuring and improvement.

2.126 Importantly, new development and particularly housing proposals will need to take into account the wider objectives of the city-region strategy, including potential effects on the successful delivery of Bridging NewcastleGateshead and other housing market restructuring programmes.

2.127 Within Tyne & Wear a key growth corridor essentially follows the River Tyne from Newburn/Blaydon, through central NewcastleGateshead to the mouth of the Tyne at North and South Shields. It provides a range of opportunities to cater for business growth close to some of the most disadvantaged communities in the city-region. It includes the centres of Newcastle and Gateshead, the Key Employment Locations of Newburn Riverside, Newcastle Great Park, Baltic Business Park, Gateshead; the Port of Tyne and regional brownfield mixed use sites of the Discovery Quarter and the Tyne Gateway. A major issue along this corridor is accessibility, with the river forming a major barrier and the bridges acting as the only relief points. Consequently, they too can become barriers themselves at key peak traffic times, and therefore improved public transport accessibility along the corridor is an important aim, particularly to support the many journeys that criss-cross Tyne & Wear.

2.128 In Newcastle and Gateshead a consequence of decades of population out migration to adjacent urban areas, elsewhere in Tyne & Wear, Northumberland and County Durham, has been significant housing market failure. Bridging NewcastleGateshead aims to help reverse this historical trend by improving the housing stock and living environments and creating viable, sustainable communities. This will involve a combination of housing improvement complemented by significant demolitions and replacement of housing. Tackling the problems in these areas will have benefits that

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stretch beyond the conurbation itself, which is why Bridging NewcastleGateshead has been recognised as a national regeneration priority. Importantly, adopting the sequential approach to the phased release of sites within the wider Tyne & Wear City-Region will help to ensure that Bridging NewcastleGateshead, as well as other housing market restructuring areas within the city-region, are successfully delivered.

2.129 Sunderland Arc is undertaking a major regeneration programme along the River Wear corridor in Central Sunderland. Proposals will focus on significant brownfield mixed use developments capitalising on the central location, along the Wear river bank, with good public transport access including via the Tyne & Wear Metro. Iconic projects, along with improved housing will be important to move towards emulating the regeneration successes that have been experienced along the Tyne corridor in Newcastle and Gateshead, improving the image and business confidence in the area, and the quality of housing and facilities on offer. The redevelopment of unused parts of the Port of Sunderland will complement these regeneration proposals. A new crossing of the Wear in Sunderland is part of the Sunderland Strategic Transport Corridor proposals.

2.130 Job creation and retention is a particular priority in the Other Regeneration Areas. Opportunities will arise through continued economic restructuring and diversifying local economies. The RES says that enabling these communities to benefit more from – and contribute more to – sustainable economic growth is an essential element of economic inclusion. Efforts are to be focused on improving access to employment, raising economic participation in deprived communities, and promoting equality and diversity. Furthermore, many of the former coalfield areas suffer from wider endemic environmental problems and poor quality housing. These areas will also require associated environmental and social led regeneration initiatives to improve the image and business confidence of an area, as well as its quality of life and housing stock.

2.131 However, strengthening local economies and realising this economic transition, will only be achieved over a long timescale. Therefore, it is important in the shorter-term that connectivity from the regeneration areas into the conurbation and Durham City is improved to maximise access to opportunities throughout the city-region. This approach therefore accepts that there will continue to be levels of commuting between the conurbation/Durham City and the regeneration areas. The onus is on managing travel in a more sustainable way, by ensuring that public transport is sufficiently improved and other measures implemented to encourage greater use of public transport.

2.132 Whilst undergoing radical and fundamental restructuring, the Durham Coalfield Communities Area (covering parts of County Durham and Sunderland District) continues to suffer from problems of severe economic decline as a result of the demise of the deep mining industry. Substantial parts of this area are in need of improvement and major investment. Improving the housing stock is a particular priority and housing market intervention programmes are currently being developed. The towns of Peterlee, Seaham, Houghton-le-Spring and Hetton-le-Hole are well located in relation to the A1 and A19 strategic corridors and offer attractive locations for economic investment to cater for both North East City-Regions. In north and west Durham, Chester-le-Street, Consett, Crook and Stanley provide the principal centres for employment, retailing and other services. The Derwent Valley

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is a particular pressure area for commuter development because of its attractive nature and proximity to the Tyne & Wear conurbation. Green Belt prevents the potential outward expansion of the conurbation and assists the urban regeneration of Consett and Stanley. It is therefore important that regeneration focuses on Chester-le-Street, Consett, Crook and Stanley, providing for indigenous growth, justified by local needs, and does not fuel increasing levels of commuting.

2.133 SENNTRi is a regeneration initiative that is seeking to address a range of challenges including creating full employment; reducing disadvantage; developing quality jobs; and improving the property market. At the core of the SENNTRi strategy are ambitious proposals for the Blyth Estuary area including the relocation of Port activity to a more efficient site north of the river, to open up a series of attractive riverside sites for commercial and residential development. This would be complemented by environmental improvements to transform the image of the area and make it an attractive setting for new private sector investment. Other proposals are that new housing development on previously developed land within the Quayside and Riverside areas of Blyth should complement neighbourhood renewal initiatives in areas of social housing to rebalance the housing stock and provide increased housing choice; and that in Ashington, an integrated approach should be adopted towards the provision of new housing and the renewal of social housing to rebalance the housing stock and meet local housing needs.

2.134 The 'Corridor of Opportunity' that extends from Woodhorn in the north through South Tyneside and on to Doxford Park via the A189 and A19 will increasingly create local jobs and economic growth opportunities. The corridor will play a major strategic role for the movement of people and goods in the city-region and provide for some of the future economic expansion needs of the Tyne & Wear conurbation, including development of the Prestige Employment Sites of West Hartford in Cramlington and TyneWear Park in South Tyneside, as well as the sub-regionally important Northumberland Business Park and North Seaton Business Park. It will also increasingly provide jobs for populations in the towns of Ashington, Blyth and Cramlington, which will seek to reduce the significant commuting into Tyne & Wear that currently, takes place. However, improved public transport may be needed to cater for some of the increased movements that these developments will create along the Corridor.

2.135 Cramlington will continue to provide a sustainable community close to the economic heartland of the city-region, catering in particular, for some of the long-term economic expansion of the conurbation and economic regeneration needs of South East Northumberland. Historically, population growth in the town has risen at a rate above jobs growth and therefore, more local jobs are needed to cater for local and sub-regional needs. Economic growth should be focused within the town centre and on the West Hartford Key Employment Location and existing employment areas. Regeneration of the town centre would provide a much improved retail, leisure and residential location. New housing provision in the town should be of a scale that allows local needs to be met and is consistent with its role as an area of employment growth. However, any proposals for housing growth should be considered in the wider context of the city-region and its effects on the successful delivery of housing market restructuring areas, particularly the Bridging NewcastleGateshead initiative.

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2.136 The Rural Coalfield Regeneration Area lies to the north of South East Northumberland. Amble is a key service centre within the area, although Morpeth, which lies just outside the area, provides a much greater service centre role for the wider hinterland. A strategy to address significant rural deprivation and the diversification of the economy of the coastal towns and villages is being developed through the East Northumberland Regeneration Initiative (ENRgi). The economic needs are particularly important due to the recent closure of the Ellington Colliery, which has resulted in significant unemployment in the area. Improved public transport links into the SENNTRI area and the conurbation will be particularly important to enable access to wider job opportunities.

2.137 The Durham Coalfield Communities Housing Market Renewal initiative identifies the need for housing market restructuring to deal with the mismatch between the nature of supply and demand and high levels of obsolete housing in some communities, which are amongst the most deprived in the Region in terms of the Index of Deprivation 2004. The programme focuses on interventions to revitalise priority smaller coalfield settlements, where need has been identified, to achieve sustainable communities linked to physical regeneration of the housing stock. English Partnerships is currently examining the appropriate mechanisms for the agency to contribute to this process.

Environment

2.138 The Region's Green Belt and other countryside in and around towns, in addition to checking the unrestricted sprawl and coalescence of settlements have important roles in sustaining urban communities. These areas can be made readily accessible to most people; contribute to the health, wealth and well being of the city-regions and rural communities; underpin more sustainable living and strengthen biodiversity in both town and country. The development of Green Infrastructure - open spaces, woodlands, wildlife habitats, parks and other natural areas will play a key role in the Region's competitiveness and economic strength.

2.139 The general extent of the Region's Green Belt, as shown on the Locational Strategy Diagram, forms a band of protected land around Tyne & Wear, including adjacent areas of Northumberland and County Durham, and should be maintained. The detailed boundaries around Morpeth and to the north of Consett, Stanley and eastwards to Chester-le-Street have not yet been defined; Revised Green Belt boundaries should be brought forward in relevant LDFs.

2.140 A number of environmental and other features can be considered as "green infrastructure" as defined earlier in this Section. As well as contributing to the quality of areas of undeveloped land that separate or surround built up areas, it has an important role in supporting biodiversity and nature conservation.

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Tourism and Culture

2.141 The city-region encompasses many of the Region's most important cultural and tourism assets, ranging from the Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art and The Sage Gateshead through to the World Heritage Sites of Hadrian's Wall, Durham Cathedral and Castle, coastal resorts and the Tyne & Wear river estuaries. NewcastleGateshead is a key national and international tourist destination, with a wide ranging cultural and leisure offer. These have been built on the momentum developed through the Capital of Culture bid and taken forward through Culture10, which has resulted in significant increases in tourist visits, particularly related to weekend city breaks, and which will continue to require additional facilities and initiatives to increase the tourist offer and cater for tourists' needs.

2.142 Durham City is also a significant tourist destination, with the Cathedral and Castle being the centre point for visitors. Its profile is also raised by the renamed former Teesside Airport to the Durham Tees Valley Airport, and public transport links to the Airport will need to be improved to ensure better tourist accessibility to Durham City. The market towns of Morpeth and Hexham have significant tourist potential, and contribute to the wider city-region tourist offer.

2.143 The ecological and environmental diversity of the city-region is a major asset to the Region. The rivers and coastline provide a diverse range of leisure opportunities and there are several stretches of designated heritage coast and high quality beaches and bathing waters in the city-region. To the north and west of the city-region there are large areas of attractive high quality countryside including within the Northumberland National Park, the North Pennines AONB in the south west of the city-region, and attractive coastline; three sections of which are identified as Heritage Coast. Effective management plans and strategies are being prepared, such as for the North Tyneside-Sunderland section of coastline and in County Durham. These will enable coastal communities to become some of the most attractive places in the Region to invest and live.

2.144 A focus on quality in the built environment and harnessing the iconic impact of world-class design have also been major factors in renaissance of the city-region. Along with the many tourist facilities and specific visitor destinations within the rural and urban areas, the city-region's high quality environment is a significant asset attracting significant numbers of visitors as well as being a major source of employment and investment in the city-region, in both its urban and rural areas, and contributing to its quality of life.

2.145 Newcastle International Airport provides connections to many other city-regions across Europe. New routes are being added on almost a monthly basis and now include Paris, Copenhagen, Prague, Barcelona, Brussels, Dublin, Düsseldorf, Amsterdam, Nice and Berlin. The Airport is important for both business access and tourism. It is estimated that the Barcelona, Alicante, Belfast and Dublin air routes alone will bring around 160,000 inbound passengers each year to the city-region.

2.146 Similarly, the Port of Tyne brings significant numbers of inbound tourists to the city-region, providing a major international link particularly to Holland and Scandinavia. Ensuring good surface access links to both the airport and port, particularly by public transport, will be important to facilitate their passenger growth in a sustainable manner.

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2.147 The challenge for the city-region is to maximise the tourist and business related offer through capitalising on opportunities such as a new major regional conference facility in Newcastle and a new World Heritage Site at Jarrow and Monkwearmouth, as well as improving links to develop the city-region as a comprehensive integrated visitor destination. Tourism centres such as NewcastleGateshead, Durham City, Whitley Bay and Seaham have good accessibility by a range of transport modes, and others such as Hadrian's Wall have benefited recently from bus-based schemes to improve access from surrounding urban centres. However, other tourist destinations such as Beamish, the rural countryside, and heritage coastal areas would benefit from improved public transport from a range of destinations within the city-region, to improve accessibility for tourists and assist wider social inclusion.

Policy 9

TYNE AND WEAR CITY-REGION

Strategies, plans and programmes, and planning proposals should support the polycentric development and redevelopment of the Tyne & Wear City-Region by:

9.1. Regeneration

a. giving priority to the regeneration of the following areas:

- the central parts of the Tyne River Corridor, extending over including the Bridging Newcastle Gateshead area, Newcastle City Centre, Teams, Gateshead Quays and town centre, and North Felling, both banks of the river Tyne including Hebburn, Jarrow, South Shields, Wallsend and North Shields, and the town centre of South Shields forming the Tyne Gateway, for appropriate mixed-use development;
- the River Wear Corridor in Central Sunderland;

b. ensuring a scale and quality of development to reflect Durham City's unique character and its role as a major service and employment centre for its surrounding hinterland;

c. supporting the regeneration and development of Amble, Ashington, Blyth, Cramlington, Chester-le-Street, Consett, Stanley, Crook, Seaham, Peterlee, Hetton-le-Hole and Houghton-le-Spring, for sustainable growth without adversely impacting on the regeneration initiatives within the Tyne and Wear Conurbation;

9.2 Economic Prosperity

a. focusing the majority of new economic development on the city centres of Newcastle and Sunderland and the Key Employment Locations of West Hartford, Blyth Valley; Newcastle Great Park; Newburn Riverside, Newcastle; and Baltic Business Quarter, Gateshead (as set out in Policy 20);

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- b. supporting the Science City Newcastle initiative, focusing development on the western area of Newcastle for science and technological development and developing a network of complementary nodes including Baltic Business Park, Gateshead; Northumbria University (Manors development); the Centre for Renewables, Blyth; Durham University and NetPark, County Durham;
- c. continuing to support the influential economic role of the four universities in the city-region, enabling better links between universities and business, and campus expansions where appropriate;
- d. focussing new knowledge based Small Medium Enterprise accommodation and offices within and adjacent to Newcastle and Sunderland city centres, with provision in regeneration centres and rural service centres to meet local needs;
- e. developing manufacturing and logistics based accommodation in line with Policies 18 and 20;
- f. focusing on the creation of local jobs and retraining and up-skilling of local workforces in the Other Regeneration Areas;
- g. broadening and better integrating the city-region's tourism offer by building on the success of the Newcastle-Gateshead Initiative including a major regional conference facility; sustainably developing the tourism potential of Hexham, Morpeth, Alnwick, Durham and the region's World Heritage Sites; and improving sustainable accessibility between tourist facilities and destinations;

9.3 Sustainable Communities

- a. supporting the integrated housing market renewal initiatives and programmes of:
 - 1. Bridging NewcastleGateshead, and Sunderland Arc areas, including large scale housing demolitions, and
 - 2. the SENNTRi area, Rural Coalfield Regeneration Area, and Durham Coalfield Communities Area, with particular emphasis on rebalancing the housing stock and meeting local housing needs;
- b. locating the majority of new retail and leisure development in the regional centre of Newcastle and the sub-regional centre of Sunderland. Additional development in other town centres should be consistent with their scale and function to maintain and enhance their vitality and viability;
- c. developing housing to support the economic growth strategies in sustainable locations, mainly on previously developed land in areas where it does not undermine existing housing markets, particularly housing market restructuring areas;

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d. encouraging high standards in the layout, design and energy efficiency of new development and redevelopment, which improve the quality of the environment and promote sustainability;

9.4 Connectivity

- a. strengthening international air connections from Newcastle International Airport, and encouraging the development of 55 hectares of undeveloped allocated land for airport-related uses (as defined in this RSS), to enable its potential as an economic driver to be realised and cater for its anticipated passenger growth;
- b. improving public transport links from throughout the city-region to Newcastle International Airport, and from Durham Tees Valley Airport to Durham City in particular;
- c. supporting the sustainable growth of the Port of Tyne, Blyth Harbour, Port of Sunderland and Seaham Docks, and ensuring good public transport links to the Port of Tyne are maintained to facilitate and cater for its passenger growth and tourism potential;
- d. promoting a further crossing of the River Wear and improved transport connections along the river in Sunderland;
- e. investigating the modernisation of the Metro system and improvements to the Newcastle/Gateshead Western Bypass; supporting improvements to the A19 junctions in North and South Tyneside and Northumberland;
- f. promoting the improvement of rail services between the two conurbations and to destinations outside the region, especially Edinburgh, Manchester, Leeds and London, particularly on the Durham Coast and East Coast Main Line.
- g. improving interchange facilities at the Strategic Public Transport Hubs of Newcastle, Sunderland and Durham City, particularly Newcastle Central Station;
- h. promoting bus based public transport improvements between the regeneration centres and Tyne & Wear and, for the longer term, investigating enhanced rail passenger services;
- i. protecting the Leamside rail line from development that would restrict its reinstatement in the longer term;

9.5 Green Belt

Ensuring that the Green Belt continues to safeguard the countryside from encroachment and check the unrestricted sprawl of Tyne & Wear.

The Green Belt should:

- a. prevent the merging of:
- b.
 - Sunderland with Seaham, Houghton-le-Spring, Washington or Tyneside;
 - Gateshead with Hebburn, Washington, Birtley or Whickham;

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- Washington with Chester-le-Street;
 - Newcastle upon Tyne with Ponteland, Newcastle International Airport, or Cramlington;
 - North Tyneside with Cramlington or Blyth; and
 - Durham City with Chester-le-Street.
- c. preserve the setting and special character of Durham City, Hexham, Corbridge and Morpeth;
 - d. assist in urban regeneration in the city-regions by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land; and
 - e. maintain the broad extent of the Green Belt with detailed boundaries to be defined in relevant Local Development Frameworks, around Morpeth and the area to the north of Consett and Stanley and eastwards to Chester-le-Street.

9.6 Environment

- a. supporting the establishment of strategic networks of green infrastructure that links existing and proposed greenspace with green corridors running through urban, suburban and urban fringe areas to the countryside and coast
- b. subjecting development proposals in or likely to affect internationally designated sites of nature conservation importance and the Heritage Coast to rigorous examination;
- c. encouraging the development of renewable energy whilst carefully considering the local impacts of proposals.

Tees Valley City-Region

The City-Region

2.148 The Tees Valley City-Region has a population of 875,000 people, almost half of whom live within the Teesside conurbation – Stockton, Middlesbrough and Redcar.

2.149 The city-region displays a polycentric settlement pattern, based around the Conurbation, with the Main Settlements of Darlington and Hartlepool, the two “Other Regeneration Areas” of East Cleveland and Durham Coalfield Communities Area, and a rural hinterland, which contains market towns including Barnard Castle and Guisborough.

2.150 At the centre of the Tees Valley City-Region lie the towns of Middlesbrough and Stockton. Middlesbrough is the largest retail centre in the Tees Valley and a major cultural and service employment centre serving the city-region. It also contains the University of Teesside and is developing its cultural role through the construction of the Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art, the refurbishment of the Town Hall Complex and the creation of a digital multi-media cluster around ‘Digital City’. It has been designated as a Strategic Public Transport Interchange. It has potential to develop new city scale leisure, cultural, office and retail development in the town centre and Middlehaven.

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2.151 Stockton is a major employment and retail centre in the Tees Valley. It contains the Queen's Campus of the University of Durham and is an historic market town. Developments such as Wellington Square have enhanced its retail function and the development of the Teesdale area has provided the city-region with financial and business services. The development of the Tees Barrage has transformed Stockton Riverside and provides a focus for attracting further office, employment uses, housing and the expansion of the university at the North Shore. There is also a major opportunity to link the town centre back into the Riverside.

2.152 Darlington plays an important role as a sub-regional employment, retail and cultural centre serving a distinct catchment area covering South Durham and a large part of North Yorkshire, stretching into the Richmondshire and Hambleton districts. It is also a Strategic Public Transport Interchange and provides key links into the national transport network through its location on the A1(M) and East Coast Main Line and the international network through Durham Tees Valley Airport. Its unique location together with its market town environment enable Darlington to attract employment in the financial, business services and logistics sectors, which may not otherwise locate in the Tees Valley or the North East.

2.153 Hartlepool is a major retail service centre serving the town and East Durham; and a significant manufacturing centre. Over the last decade through the regeneration of its docks, Hartlepool has developed into an office and tourism centre. Its economic base will be strengthened through the development of Queen's Meadow and Wynyard. The development of the Hartlepool Quays, and particularly the Victoria Harbour project, will enable Hartlepool to develop a critical mass of tourism attractions and businesses, other office employment and a wider choice of housing.

2.154 Redcar is a key industrial location in the Tees Valley. The Wilton International site is home to the UK's principal integrated petrochemical complex and the Region's Centre of Excellence for Process Innovation. The Redcar Steel Complex, one of the three main producer sites in the UK, has secured long-term international partners and will be dedicated to serving main export markets. Teesport is the second largest port in the UK by volume, dealing with 10% of all UK port traffic. Teesport is expanding rapidly and has the potential to become a Northern Gateway port through the creation of major container berths and facilities. Along with the petrochemical complex on the North Bank at Seal Sands, North Tees and Billingham, the industrial complex provides the potential to both create new jobs and attract significant investment in the chemical, steel and energy sectors.

2.155 Redcar is also a traditional seaside resort and the main service centre for East Cleveland. Its retail function has been enhanced by the recent Regent's Walk development. There is an opportunity to increase its tourism potential with new all season attractions at Coatham, Redcar Racecourse, and Kirkleatham together with realising the potential for activity tourism on the heritage coast and rural areas of East Cleveland, part of which lies within the North York Moors National Park.

2.156 Outside the conurbation and the main settlements, the East Cleveland Regeneration Area and the southern extent of the Durham Coalfield Communities Area have an important role to play in the regeneration of the area. Aycliffe Industrial Park is home to 250 companies employing 8,000 people in mainly manufacturing employment. There is a need to continue the regeneration of the industrial park and help firms to retain their manufacturing competitiveness in the face of globalisation. The towns of Newton Aycliffe, Spennymoor, Shildon, Bishop Auckland, Saltburn, Brotton, Skelton

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and Loftus, within these areas, provide important local facilities, services and employment. It is important that the function and vitality of these towns are supported, so that they can continue to meet the local shopping, recreational and community needs of the communities which they serve. They also have links to the conurbation and main settlements where a broader range of facilities, services and employment opportunities are provided.

2.157 The interactions with more remote rural areas, such as the Durham Dales, are much less. Therefore, the policies for towns such as Barnard Castle and Middleton-in-Teesdale are contained within the Rural Areas section.

Labour Market

2.158 There have been significant increases in the size of overall commuting flows in the city-region over the past decade. Higher proportions of workers now live in a different borough to their place of work. Flows into and out of each borough are much greater, even where the number of jobs has fallen.

2.159 The five Tees Valley Boroughs experience large flows between them with relatively large inflows to Middlesbrough, with a net inflow of 8,000 people per day for employment purposes. There are large flows, in both directions, between North Yorkshire and Tees Valley boroughs except for Hartlepool. There is a large net inflow from County Durham, and to a lesser extent North Yorkshire. For travel to and from Durham County, there are significant flows between Easington district and Hartlepool, but also from Sedgefield and to a lesser extent from Teesdale and Wear Valley districts. The major focus of the latter flows is to Darlington. For North Yorkshire, the biggest flows are between Hambleton and the Middlesbrough, Stockton and Redcar & Cleveland boroughs, principally to and from the Stokesley and Northallerton areas. There is significant two-way commuting flows between Tees Valley and the Stokesley area. There are also significant flows between Darlington and Richmondshire, and between Redcar & Cleveland and Scarborough district.

2.160 Flows to and from County Durham have both increased by similar amounts, leaving the net flow relatively constant. For North Yorkshire, the outward flow has increased rather more than the inflow, meaning that the net inflow has declined by around 50% since 1991. There have also been increases in the net outflow to Tyne & Wear and a large increase in travel to other destinations outside the North East.

2.161 The travel to work data confirms the city-region's sphere of influence and shows that people have been moving out of the older residential areas in the conurbation to newer residential areas. The population migration figures also suggest a significant movement into North Yorkshire. The challenge is to reverse both the migration of people out of the main urban centres in the conurbation and the increase in the distance of commuting.

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The Economy

2.162 Since the economic downturn of the 1980's, the city-region's economy has gone from strength to strength. Unemployment, at 3.6%, is the lowest for decades and job vacancies are at record levels. Worklessness, which shows the proportion of the workforce without a job who are seeking work but not necessarily registered as unemployed, is double that at 7.4%. Nevertheless, the structure of the economy has been transformed from one reliant on heavy industries to a more diverse and balanced economy. Chemicals, steel making and fabrication industries remain important. The growth in the economy has been fuelled by expansion in the business services, knowledge based and information and communications sectors. Call centres have made a major contribution to diversifying the economy and offering new opportunities.

2.163 Despite these improvements over the last twenty years, structural problems remain. In fact, the success of the economy has revealed the inadequacies of the labour force. Compared to other regions, the Tees Valley City-Region displays a weak enterprise culture: the rate of new business start-ups is amongst the lowest in the UK and the failure rates are amongst the highest. The city-region has experienced high rates of out migration of the young and working age population. Consequently, the population is ageing faster than the national average and the skilled and qualified pool of labour is shrinking (less than 16% of the workforce is educated to degree level). Forecasts for the future labour force raise concerns and therefore, business support arrangements are being radically improved to increase business start-ups and reduce the failure rates. A comprehensive enterprise programme is being implemented to accelerate new business formation and rediscover entrepreneurialism.

2.164 Retaining people with graduate level skills is a priority at the University of Teesside, which has formed a partnership with colleges to increase participation in higher education through the development of foundation courses. The University has an expanding portfolio of research and development activities, particularly within digital media technologies. Through the Digital City project, the University aims to become a world-class higher institution for teaching, innovation and enterprise in digital media and digital technology. The project features programmes for the commercialisation of research expertise, support for graduate enterprise and provision of incubator accommodation and studio workspaces. Digital City is a key part of the North East's efforts to strengthen the digital technology and creative industries cluster and will develop a close relationship with the Region's Centre of Excellence in Sunderland.

2.165 Teesside University also contributes to the economy in other ways; it employs 2,000 staff and hosts 20,000 students, with these figures expected to grow following the implementation of committed expansion plans. Nor is it the only higher education institute in the city-region: the University of Durham has an established research presence in health, medicine and the environment at the Queens Campus on Teesdale Business Park, Stockton and proposes to develop this into a health/medical research cluster.

2.166 The health and social care sector already plays a major role in the city-region's economy and, with the Government's commitment to substantial investment in the National Health Service, is likely to be a major growth sector. Teesside University's School of Health and Social Care is a national exemplar of good training and educational practice. With over 5,000 of its students studying health and social care, the University is well placed to supply the skilled labour necessary for the anticipated increase in employment opportunities.

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2.167 NetPark at Sedgefield aims to provide a regionally significant location for science and technology businesses, and to be a unique combination of University Research Centres, spin-out businesses and high tech companies with knowledge based business support. The intention is to create a collection of science and technology buildings of high quality and design, in a high quality landscape setting, which is capable of growing a new indigenous business base and attracting significant international interest and investment. NetPark aims to provide new employment opportunities to encourage graduates to stay in the Region, whilst creating opportunities for the development of technical skills and expertise amongst the local workforce.

2.168 In contrast, the Tees Estuary forms a major world-class heavy industrial complex based on petrochemicals at Wilton, Seal Sands and Billingham, and steel at Redcar and Lackenby. It is important to the Tees Valley economy that this world class integrated industrial complex is maintained and allowed to grow. Major new investments at Wilton will help to secure the long term future of the complex, together with proposals to develop the hydrogen economy and the research and development capacity of the area through the Centre of Process Innovation, the Wilton Centre and the research activities of the universities. Past rationalisation has resulted in a plentiful supply of land for heavy industry both for chemicals and for steel, which is readily available for redevelopment. No new land will need to be allocated to accommodate the anticipated growth. The proposed Pioneer Process Park within Wilton provides the opportunity for specialised chemicals investment.

2.169 This unique combination of established modern facilities, skilled workforce and research and development capability, is proving attractive to the rapidly developing renewable energy industry and environmental technology sector. Major projects being developed include biomass, biofuels, recycling and green hydrogen. Of particular importance is the establishment of a national Fuel Cell Application Centre at the Wilton Centre. Renew Tees Valley is an organisation set up to drive forward the use and development of renewable energy in the city-region. This organisation will work closely with the New and Renewables Energy Centre (NaREC) set up in the Tyne and Wear City-Region.

2.170 This heavy industrial complex at the Tees Estuary is served by Teesport. Further expansion would be needed to support Teesside Cast Products' plans to increase exports from one million tonnes per annum to almost three million tonnes. In addition, the port owners are investigating the feasibility of developing a £225 million deep sea container terminal to substantially increase the number of containers handled and is attracting major distribution operators.

2.171 There are proposals for a £20 million investment at Durham Tees Valley Airport. Passenger numbers are expected to reach one million in 2005 and three million by 2016. Empirical evidence suggests that an airport will employ 500 staff for every million passengers. There are proposals to improve passenger facilities at the airport and to develop a modern business park on the north side of the Airport. In addition, there are plans to develop approximately 80 hectares of land for airport related development on the south-side of the airport.

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Tourism & Culture

2.172 Whilst the majority of passengers travelling through Durham Tees Valley Airport will be holiday makers to foreign countries, the potential exists to attract tourists to the Tees Valley City-Region. A new park between Stockton and Middlesbrough will become a major visitor attraction and the Coastal Arc initiative will exploit the potential of the coast as an economic driver for the area. Redcar is a popular seaside resort receiving over a million visitors a year, whilst Hartlepool, through its development of tourist attractions, now attracts 600,000 visitors per year. Elsewhere, the promotion of a 'birth of the railways' heritage theme, linking Shildon, Darlington and Stockton, has been enhanced by the opening of Locomotion, a museum which holds the National Railway Museum's reserve collection. Other key leisure assets include the Tees Barrage, with its international standard rowing and canoe course, the Riverside Stadium and the Teesside International Nature Reserve.

2.173 The Tees Valley Tourism Strategy aims to increase day visitors and develop the business tourism market. As more destinations, such as Prague, Paris, Rome, Geneva, Belfast and Dublin are added to existing routes by the budget operators, the opportunity for business tourism will grow. The challenge will be to create a destination, which will encourage business travellers to return for a longer stay, as tourists. However, more importantly, it is vital for the global industries located in the city-region that the connections to international airports such as Heathrow, London and Schiphol, Amsterdam are maintained.

Connectivity

2.174 The business services sector has been growing in the city-region and the Tees Valley is now an established location for business support services, particularly in financial services and telecoms. These businesses, generally, require modern offices but are not location specific. Successful centres have been established in various locations including refurbished offices in town centres, redeveloped brownfield land on the edge of centres and on business parks on the edge of the urban area. The development of high quality, accessible accommodation in areas such as Morton Palms and Central Park in Darlington will enable the Tees Valley to compete for employment at the higher value-added end of business and financial service sectors. The growth of business services, in the city-region, can be attributed to a combination of factors. However, one essential advantage has been the almost universal coverage of telecommunications and cable infrastructure in the Tees Valley.

2.175 There are now many e-mail and Internet providers located in the area and many businesses and organisations have their own websites. As a marketing and commerce tool, the Internet is having an impact on business growth, through the ability to generate new customers and trading links. Whilst the take-up of Information Communication Technologies varies across the city-region, general awareness is growing and levels of access to the equipment is increasing. Further growth in the economy is expected on the back of this provision.

2.176 However, not all goods and services can be delivered electronically. Some still require to be moved by water, rail or road, or by a combination of these modes of transport. The city-region is fortunate in having several facilities available for the transportation of freight. The South Tees area, based on Teesport, provides a major multi-modal interchange. However, rail infrastructure and connections will need to be improved to achieve the Northern Way Growth Strategy target of redirecting an additional 3% of UK shipping tonnage from southern to northern ports.

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2.177 Logistics is another sector where demand is expected to increase with implications for capacity at Teesport as a rail freight interchange. Significant capacity for large-scale logistics operations is being created at Faverdale Industrial Estate in Darlington, where close access to the A1(M) and A66 is likely to see major investment, following the example set by Argos Direct.

Sustainable Communities

2.178 At the centre of the conurbation lie the towns of Middlesbrough and Stockton and the areas along both banks of the River Tees between them. For the city-region to grow and prosper it is important that priority is given to the regeneration of this urban core between and including the two towns.

2.179 Whilst there have been a number of successful regeneration projects in Stockton and Middlesbrough town centres, such as Teesdale and Riverside Park, much more needs to be achieved. The work of Tees Valley Regeneration includes two major regeneration schemes at North Shore (Stockton) and Middlehaven (Middlesbrough). The Stockton/Middlesbrough Initiative aims to produce a radical economic regeneration strategy for the urban core of the city-region, building on the work of Tees Valley Regeneration and the economic assets of the area notably the River Tees; the two town centres; the two universities; the successful Teesdale Business Park; the buoyant market for offices that has been created; and the Tees Barrage. The masterplan includes a bold blue/green concept which introduces the use of structural landscaping and water features as the environmental context for the economic regeneration of the area.

2.180 The town of Hartlepool also performs an important role in the sub region. Whilst it remains a major manufacturing centre it is increasingly serving other business, commercial and service sectors and, through the regeneration of the former docks, has developed into an office and tourism centre. Hartlepool also provides a wide range of services and facilities to surrounding areas in the Tees Valley and County Durham. Its economic base will be strengthened through the development of significant employment sites of Queens Meadow and Wynyard.

2.181 The Tees Valley Coastal Arc Initiative, stretching from Hartlepool through Redcar, will exploit the potential of the coast as an economic and tourism driver for the city-region in terms of the potential for increased business and commercial activity within an environmentally attractive coastal landscape/townscape setting. At Hartlepool the focus is on the Hartlepool Quays area as an expanding centre for business, commerce, leisure and tourism. Hartlepool Quays builds upon Hartlepool's maritime heritage and the successful ongoing regeneration of the Marina, the Central Area, and Hartlepool Headland. Within the Quays, Victoria Harbour will continue the regeneration of this part of the former dockland area for housing, retail, leisure and employment uses. Its redevelopment will provide a regionally significant critical mass of facilities that will be a catalyst to creating new demand and stimulating further inward investment.

2.182 A key element of the Coastal Arc Initiative in Redcar is the Coatham Enclosure project where a seafront site is being promoted for a mixed residential and leisure development with a special focus on extreme sports and family attractions, including a visitor centre, which will act as a catalyst for investment along the adjacent seafront and promenade. This scheme will complement other ongoing investment in the Victorian resort of Saltburn, and the Heritage Coast in East Cleveland, North Yorkshire and County Durham.

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2.183 Darlington has a vital role to play in the Tees Valley as a sub-regional centre servicing a large part of North Yorkshire and South Durham, and as a major employment centre and gateway to the Region through its East Coast Main Line station, the A1 and the expanding Durham-Tees Valley Airport. Its unique location with its excellent transport links and good environment enables Darlington to attract logistics and other office employment that may not otherwise be attracted to the Tees Valley. Major employment locations include Central Park, next to Darlington Station, and Faverdale, , and sites near the A66 and the Darlington Eastern Transport Corridor. The Darlington Eastern Transport Corridor will improve accessibility into the town centre and enable further priority to be given to public transport along the main radial routes. Improvements to the A66 around the town may be required if further employment land is to be released and developed.

2.184 Just to the north of Darlington, Newton Aycliffe, with its major industrial park currently employing some 8,000 people and the reserve employment site at Heighington Lane West, is a regionally significant employment area. Given its location on the A1, there is significant interest in Newton Aycliffe from logistics operators. Connectivity with the Darlington to Bishop Auckland railway for employment, retail and leisure activities needs to be developed as well as Newton Aycliffe's role in serving the regeneration of the Durham Coalfield Communities Area.

Regeneration

2.185 In County Durham, the towns in the regeneration areas, Newton Aycliffe, Spennymoor, Shildon and Bishop Auckland have a particular role to play as main focal points for readily accessible local employment opportunities, services and facilities for their own residents and those in the surrounding villages and rural areas.

2.186 In East Cleveland, the structural, economic and social problems have been long recognised. East Cleveland's socio-economic characteristic has been one of dependency on agriculture, extractive industries, and iron and steel manufacturing. The narrow base of the local economy and the reliance on remote employment opportunities leave the area highly vulnerable to the unpredictable future of its two major industries, steel processing and potash extraction.

2.187 With its industrial background and high levels of unemployment, East Cleveland has more in common with inner city areas of Teesside than with the traditional rural areas of neighbouring North Yorkshire. Priorities for the area include attracting further investment; ensuring workspace and premises are available for diversification; ensuring the housing supply meets local needs; improving access to key services; and improving the environment. The Market Town Initiative for Guisborough is looking at ways of enhancing the environment of this historic market town and the range of shops, jobs and facilities available so that it can better serve the settlements of East Cleveland.

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2.188 Regeneration also deals with communities and the houses they live in. The North East has had the lowest average house prices nationally for decades and the Tees Valley prices are the lowest in the Region. In December 2003 the average terraced house was worth less than £30,000 in nine of the ninety-four Tees Valley postcode areas. An improving economy, combined with highly attainable owner-occupation, means that demand for social rented accommodation and for pre-1919 owner-occupied terraced housing, has declined leading to a major over supply of both. New housing is also needed to support the economic growth strategies to be provided in sustainable locations, mainly on previously developed land, in areas where it does not undermine existing housing markets and with good accessibility to where growth in jobs is being planned.

2.189 Tees Valley Living has been formed to develop a sub-regional response to the problem of low demand and abandonment and to promote the case for a national policy. A comprehensive range of interventions is being planned including the possible clearance of approximately 17,500 dwellings, of which about one third will be social rented. The best of the existing stock in the Intervention Areas will be identified, maintained and improved to decent homes standards, and Registered Social Landlords will be encouraged to adapt their business plans in line with the strategy.

2.190 A key element of the housing market renewal policy is the need to create new sustainable communities and to maintain existing ones. In areas where clearance is the only solution, this will create opportunities to introduce a range of types and sizes of new housing which will meet residents' aspirations and allow them to remain in their neighbourhood. It should also create opportunities for better design, a mix of uses and for improvements to the environment and the public realm. The approval by Government of a special fund for housing market renewal in the Tees Valley will add impetus to the programme.

Sustainable Transport

2.191 The Tees Valley City-Region is located on two important north-south transport axes; the A1(M)/East Coast Main Line transport corridor and the A19T transport corridor which link Tees Valley with Tyne & Wear. A further important transportation link is the A66 trunk road, connecting Teesport with the North West of England. This latter route forms an important transport corridor within the city-region, which connects the two north-south axes and gives ready access to both the port and the airport. However, the single carriageway section of the A66(T) around Darlington, together with some of its junctions, could deter or be a restraint on development in the future (in Darlington and areas to the east, including the airport and port) unless action is taken to improve the capacity of the road.

2.192 External connectivity is very important and the city-region supports public transport corridor improvements. Good road networks are particularly important to the Tees Valley for the movement of freight and improvements may be required to maintain their efficient operation.

2.193 Connectivity within the city-region by public transport requires major investment. It is proposed to concentrate this investment on the routes between Redcar and Middlesbrough; Hartlepool and Stockton/Middlesbrough; Stockton and Darlington; and Darlington to Durham. In addition, the current emphasis is on providing an integrated public transport network for the Tees Valley based on an improved bus network linked into a light rail system for the Tees Valley - for which a business case is being prepared. Improvements to the network are needed to provide better public transport access

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to the various regeneration projects in the Tees Valley. Further investigation is necessary into the need for another crossing of the River Tees. Initial analysis suggests that it will remove significant levels of local traffic from the A19 Flyover, thereby improving conditions for longer distance traffic. The new crossing would also make development sites on both sides of the River Tees more accessible. In addition, protection of the line of the East Middlesbrough Transport Corridor, primarily for development as a public transport corridor, would allow sustainable proposals to help alleviate the increasing congestion problems in this corridor of strategic importance to the sub-region linking Middlesbrough town centre with large parts of Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland and North Yorkshire to be developed

2.194 Aside from the economic value of Durham Tees Valley Airport, it is the only airport within the city-region. It is likely that expansion of the Airport will need to be linked to improved surface access. The Airport intends to develop a Travel Plan with targets aimed at reducing airport-related car traffic. Better bus services to and from the Airport and greater use of the airport railway station to provide regular train connections would be beneficial. Durham County Council is investigating the feasibility of developing an airport park and ride facility near Durham City, comprising secure parking close to the A1(M), with modern express coach services to both Durham-Tees Valley and Newcastle International Airports.

2.195 Another international transport facility which also makes a major contribution to the economy is the port. Teesport handled nearly 54 million tonnes in 2003 and there are plans to increase this figure in the future. Corus intends to increase its export of steel slab to 3.5mt and this will require the opening up of South Bank Wharf. In addition, the Port is keen to win some of the container traffic destined for the north but currently being landed at southern ports and then transferred by road. There are proposals for major investment to create a Northern Gateway deep-sea terminal. However, a major constraint on the operation of a new container terminal at Teesport is the rail infrastructure. A programme of action is desired to improve the rail infrastructure serving the port to allow for the maximum use of rail freight in any proposed expansion.

Environment

2.196 In addition to realising opportunities to improve the quality of the environment, there are key environmental assets, which it is important to conserve or enhance. In the city-region, the Saltholme Nature Reserve will provide opportunities to increase biodiversity and the Heritage Coast represents one of the finest stretches of undeveloped coastlines in England. The Tees Estuary and associated coast is a wetland of international importance, as a vital staging post for migrating birds and a breeding site for threatened species.

2.197 The environmental character of the Tees Estuary has historically been influenced by industrial activity. LDFs and development proposals in these areas will need to be subject to the most rigorous examination and where appropriate conduct an environmental assessment of cumulative effects. Because of the nature of some of these sites “coastal squeeze” is also a potential issue.

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2.198 To the south and west of the city-region are areas of high quality landscape in the North York Moors National Park and the Durham and Yorkshire Dales Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. These areas help to enhance the setting of the Tees Valley City-Region and provide opportunities for outdoor recreation for residents. In the Tees Valley conurbation, designated strategic gaps perform a valuable function in preventing urban coalescence and contributing to urban regeneration. Green Belt designations in the Tees Valley are not considered to be required.

Policy 10

TEES VALLEY CITY-REGION

Strategies, plans and programmes, and planning proposals, should support the polycentric development and redevelopment of the Tees Valley City-Region by:

10.1 Regeneration

- a. giving priority to the regeneration of the Stockton-Middlesbrough Initiative area, both banks of the Tees between Stockton, Middlesbrough and Redcar; Hartlepool Quays and brownfield opportunities in Darlington;
- b. supporting the regeneration of the Coastal Arc from Hartlepool Headland to East Cleveland for appropriate development;
- c. supporting the regeneration and development of Newton Aycliffe, Spennymoor, Shildon, Bishop Auckland, Saltburn, Brotton, Skelton, and Loftus for sustainable growth without adversely impacting on the regeneration initiatives within the Tees Valley conurbation.

10.2. Economic Prosperity

- a. giving priority to major new heavy industrial, chemicals and port related development at Billingham, Seal Sands, South Tees, Teesport and Wilton;
- b. supporting the expansion of the renewable energy and recycling sector and their links to sustainable regeneration;
- c. supporting the development of business and financial services and new city scale leisure, cultural and retail development in Stockton and Middlesbrough;
- d. developing manufacturing and logistics based accommodation in line with Policies 18 and 20;
- e. supporting the appropriate development of Wynyard and NetPark as Key Employment Locations as set out in Policy 20

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- f. supporting the development of Darlington and Newton Aycliffe as employment locations, particularly to take advantage of their location close to the A1, A66 and East Coast Main Line;
- g. supporting the expansion of the Universities of Teesside and Durham, and the research and development capabilities of the Wilton Centre and NetPark;
- h. concentrating major new tourist developments related to the coast in Hartlepool and Redcar;
- i. focusing on the creation of local jobs and retraining and up-skilling of local workforces in the Other Regeneration Areas.

10.3. Sustainable Communities

- a. locating the majority of new retail and leisure development in the sub-regional centres of Middlesbrough and Darlington, whilst additional development in other centres should be consistent with their scale and function to enhance their vitality and viability;
- b. developing housing to support the economic growth strategies in sustainable locations, mainly on previously developed land in areas where it does not undermine existing housing markets, particularly housing market restructuring areas;
- c. supporting housing market renewal programmes for the Tees valley City-Region, including Durham Coalfields Communities Area;
- d. insisting on high standards of new development and redevelopment, which improve the quality of the environment and promote sustainability;

10.4 Connectivity

- a. encouraging the growth of passenger and freight services from Durham Tees Valley Airport in linking the Region to international markets, and encouraging the development of 80 hectares of land for airport-related uses (as defined in this RSS), to enable Durham Tees Valley Airport's potential as an economic driver to be realised and cater for its anticipated passenger growth;
- b. supporting and encouraging the sustainable development of Teesport as a northern gateway port;
- c. developing a modern integrated public transport network for the Tees Valley;
- d. exploring the need for sustainable transport infrastructure improvements to support regeneration initiatives;
- e. supporting the upgrading of the East Coast Main Line, the Durham Coast Rail improvements and rail freight improvements to Teesport;

2 Development Principles and Locational Strategy

- f. improving interchange facilities at the Strategic Public Transport Hubs of Darlington and Middlesbrough
- g. investigating improvements to the A66 Darlington Bypass, a new crossing of the River Tees and reducing congestion on the A19;
- h. promoting bus-based public transport improvements between the Other Regeneration Areas and the Tees valley Conurbation and Main Settlements
- i. protecting the line of the East Middlesbrough Transport Corridor, primarily for development as a public transport link.

10.5 Strategic Gaps

Ensuring that strategic gaps continue to maintain the separate identity of settlements in the Tees Valley by preventing them from coalescing and by preventing urban sprawl. Strategic gaps should be identified:

- Between the conurbation (Marske / Redcar / Eston / Middlesbrough / Thornaby / Stockton / Yarm / Billingham) and surrounding towns and villages;
- Between Hartlepool and surrounding villages;
- Between Darlington and surrounding towns and villages and Newton Aycliffe;
- Between Eaglescliffe and Middleton St George; and
- Between Middleton St George and Darlington.

10.6 Environment

- a. supporting the establishment of strategic networks of green infrastructure, including green wedges, that links existing and proposed greenspace with green corridors running through urban, suburban and urban fringe areas to the countryside and coast;
- b. subjecting development proposals in and likely to affect internationally designed sites of nature conservation importance, Salholme Nature Reserve, the Heritage Coast and the Tees Estuary, to rigorous examination, taking account of existing biodiversity and geodiversity interests; and
- c. encouraging the development of renewable energy whilst carefully considering the local impacts of proposals.

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Rural Areas

The Rural Areas of the Region

2.199 This section focuses on areas of the Region which are rural in character; within or outside the two city regions; further information is contained within the 'Technical Paper No. 5: Rural'. The North East has some of the most remote and least populated areas in England, with the lowest proportion of people living in rural areas of any English region; two thirds of the Region, primarily to the north and west are rural in character, sparsely populated with large swathes of attractive upland countryside. The Region's rural areas include: remote upland; commuter villages on the outskirts of conurbations; market towns; and towns in the former coalfield areas. They adjoin and fall within the two city regions of Tyne & Wear and Tees Valley where the interdependencies are strong and complex. Although the city-regions do not have formal boundaries, the local authorities which relate in whole or in part to them are described earlier in this section.

2.200 The rural areas of the Region are not homogenous; there are large differences between rural wards, often heavily influenced by their accessibility to the main urban areas. They range from outlying areas with small, isolated settlements and a continuing reliance on agriculture, forestry, fishing and quarrying; through small settlements which are important as service and employment centres; to the urban fringe areas and communities which mining, extraction and heavy industries once supported.

2.201 In 2001, 16.9% of the Region's population lived in a rural ward (using the former ODPM/Countryside Agency 2004 rural-urban classification system). The Region's rural wards have lower proportions of younger people (under 16) and higher proportions of elderly people (aged 75+) than the North East as a whole. The remote rural districts tend to have an older age structure due to outward migration of young people and inward migration of older people. The Region's rural areas have the highest proportion of adults with no qualifications in England. However, between 2000 and 2003, the proportion of the NVQ qualified workforce in the Region's rural areas has increased at a greater rate than the national average. They have higher levels of self employment, and are more likely to be experiencing net population growth, development pressures and a high demand for housing. Although the average wage rates in rural areas are lower than in urban areas, rural areas do have a stronger representation of workers in more skilled and managerial jobs due to a high proportion of in-migrants.

2.202 Throughout the Region there are a number of towns such as Barnard Castle, Alnwick, Hexham and Morpeth which provide important services to their rural hinterlands; these are identified within Policy 11. In addition some of the towns within the regeneration areas such as Bishop Auckland and Crook, also provide a similar function, these are included within Policies 9 and 10. All of these towns extend the quality of life options of the city regions and are the gateways to the rural economy, providing employment and tourism opportunities and serving as support hubs for key industrial sectors. As a result of the remoteness of the Region's rural areas their population is also reliant on smaller settlements. In the former industrial areas, settlements can be overshadowed by the relative prosperity of the larger conurbations.

2 Development Principles and Locational Strategy

2.203 Rural areas of the Region face a number of challenges including a lack of affordable housing for local people, retention of key workers and low wage rural economy, a decline in rural employment and, in comparison to national figures, a higher than average dependence on agriculture. In some rural areas, there are problems of low property values, with consequent lack of investment. It is vital that rural areas are not seen in isolation from the rest of the Region.

2.204 The Region's rural areas also display many positive aspects, such as a rich biodiversity, with many of the UK's most important habitats and species represented. Protected landscapes cover approximately 30% of the Region, and host businesses generating a turnover of over £700 million annually and account for 11% of all regional tourism activity.

The Economy

2.205 In the Region's rural areas agriculture and other primary industries such as quarrying and forestry are generating less income and employing fewer people. These economic changes have had a major impact on many rural communities. The 2001 census suggests that rural areas contribute roughly £3,476 million in gross annual earned income to the Region, 18% of the Region's total. The vast majority of this comes from those rural areas found within the city regions.

2.206 Farming is an important sector in the Region. Although its importance as a direct employer in the rural economy has declined, it still has a vital role. This role continues as farming businesses strive to broaden and diversify their income base. Agricultural land and natural resource management functions remain vital. The reform of the European Union's Common Agricultural Policy to a single farm payment scheme took effect at the start of 2005. Changes will impact on the levels, type and use of funding that is available to farmers and other land managers in the Region. The proposed changes under the 'Single Payment Scheme' are potentially very significant factors to consider when planning for the future development of our rural areas and the use and management of land.

2.207 Attractive rural environments are an important part of the Region's 'offer' to in-migrating, and returning entrepreneurs. Rural areas offer important competitive advantages: there are labour market advantages from a flexible, cheaper and reliable workforce; the costs of business premises are often much lower; rural areas are free from congestion and the associated costs; and there are positive advantages in terms of branding. Research by the University of Aberdeen, suggests that migration to rural areas is often strongly associated with migrants becoming self-employed, and setting up new businesses, with an average of 2.4 full-time jobs created for every self-employed migrant.

2.208 One of the Region's major assets is the natural beauty of its landscape. The importance of this in relation to its capacity to generate income, for example, through tourism and as an attractive place in which to live and work should not be undervalued. There is an important interdependence between environmental, economic and social aspects of the rural economy. Many of the valuable natural and cultural assets depend on particular land management practices, particularly those related to agriculture. The Region's rural environment presents many opportunities to support economic growth and regeneration.

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2.209 In addition to the tourist potential of the Region's distinctive rural landscape of rolling hills, heather moorland, forests, river valleys and spectacular coastline, the Region's rural areas also contain the significant tourist destinations of Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site, Alnwick Garden, Beamish Museum, the Weardale Railway and numerous castles, country houses and gardens. These attractions provide valuable benefits to sustaining rural communities, especially in the case of Hadrian's Wall where the tourism sustains many communities along the wall. The Region's rural economy has the potential to be further diversified by building on its distinctive landscape and other tourist destinations.

2.210 RSS recognises that the Region's rural areas and their assets are active contributors to the regeneration of the Region. The main urban areas and settlements of the Tyne & Wear and Tees Valley city regions have a close interrelationship with their rural hinterlands. There are a number of positive aspects of the overlap and linkages. The supply chains and labour markets for many of the clusters within the city regions extend well into rural areas. Sustaining the vitality of rural areas is important both to sustain rural businesses and because the rural environment helps make the city regions more attractive places to live and work.

2.211 The RSS aims to encourage the existing and future entrepreneurial nature of rural dwellers and the attraction of entrepreneurs to rural areas. It is recognised that although the cumulative regional impact of business creation and survival in rural areas could be minor, strong local economies are vital to securing indigenous population, particularly young people, and the securing of localised service population.

Labour Market

2.212 The 2001 census illustrates that the Region's rural areas have higher rates of self employment (8.3%) than the regional average (5.3%). There were also lower proportions of people reporting themselves as unemployed in the rural areas (3.6%) compared to the Region as a whole (4.5%). Larger proportions of people in the rural areas work in agriculture, forestry and fishing, but these still only make up around 4% of the workforce in the rural areas. Census data also reveals that higher proportions of employed people are in the higher occupations status categories (managers and senior officials, and professional occupations) in the rural areas (13.2%) than the regional average (11.5%).

2.213 Rural economies are particularly reliant on the quality of the environment, for example, new innovative industries are being pioneered, which harness the potential of the environment, such as in the renewable energy sector. A recent study of protected AONBs and Heritage Coasts in the North East concluded that these protected landscapes are an important economic asset generating output of £700m and support 14,000 jobs.

2.214 The decline in fishing and farming has impacted on the Region's rural coastal towns and villages. The Region's rural coastal areas are an important asset to the Region and there is scope for sensitive development to capitalise upon the key opportunities the coast brings including tourism, culture and leisure and also new opportunities for the economy including renewable and environmental technologies. As extensive stretches of the coast are designated as AONB and Heritage Coast, new development should be appropriate so as not to result in a loss of landscape character and erosion of local distinctiveness.

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2.215 The spread of broadband is opening up important new opportunities for businesses based in rural locations. Rural businesses are largely, small, family based microbusinesses. Technologically-led innovation is sometimes less appropriate, although innovation is a mix of IT development, plus new approaches to business planning, business and product development and marketing. Building the knowledge economy in rural areas is therefore not just about high-technology solutions, but is also about raising the performance of existing small businesses through relatively modest social learning. In the context of the UK, the North East has competitive strengths in the university-business initiatives to develop local rural economies, and the possibility of a Centre for Professional Excellence in Rural Economic Development.

2.216 The large country estates in Northumberland and Durham have an important role in the rural economy. They often have sustainable diversification programmes which provide new opportunities for employment and can help in retaining the workforce and young families in rural areas.

2.217 Rural areas have an important role to play in attracting population and businesses back to the Region. An extensive survey by the Centre for Rural Economy in 2000, 'Rural Microbusinesses in the North East of England' found that half of rural microbusinesses in the North East were set up by in-migrants (most had moved in with no intention of starting a firm). Entrepreneurial in-migration is an important driver of rural development and so contributes to regional growth.

Sustainable Rural Communities

2.218 In the more remote areas of the Region, the primary industries of forestry, agriculture, and fishing remain significant employers although there is pressure on these industries to compete economically internationally and nationally. The distribution of the rural population, particularly those beyond the main service centres creates difficulty in accessing key services. This is in part as a result of reducing provision in services like rural post offices, schools, and public transport services, predominantly as a result of the distribution of the population, particularly in more remote areas. A consequence is the increasing dependency upon car based transport.

2.219 Many communities, particularly in Northumberland and the Durham Dales, have been affected by increasing house prices and demand from in-migrants and second home owners. A key issue in many rural areas across the Region is the need for affordable housing for local people and to retain key workers. Factors such as a low-wage rural economy, loss of stock through right to buy, pressure from commuter markets, and more widespread issues of affordability have contributed to this need. The continued development of mixed tenure affordable accommodation is needed both in market towns and other towns and villages within the remoter rural areas where increased provision can enhance community viability and sustainability.

2.220 There is a specific problem concerning holiday homes, concentrated in the districts of Alnwick and Berwick which, the 2001 census shows, have 4.7% and 8.46% respectively of their dwellings used as second/ holiday homes; in the National Park this is 10%. The number of such homes has been increasing and is expected to continue as tourism thrives. Holiday homes can assist the rural economy but the impact on the local housing stock is a problem.

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2.221 The main Rural Service Centres have a crucial role within the rural communities and the rural economy, providing a focus for wider hinterlands and economic activity, public transport; services and facilities; and as places to live. Whilst serving extensive rural hinterlands some also lie within the sphere of influence of the Region's two city regions. Alnwick, Morpeth, Prudhoe and Hexham are within the Tyne & Wear City Region; and Barnard Castle is within the Tees Valley City Region. Wider RSS objectives suggest that development within rural service centres should be of an appropriate scale and nature to fulfil the needs of the local communities. The development of ICT is important in these more remote areas to facilitate economic growth and diversity. Increasing rural businesses will result in a greater number of economically active people being located in rural areas during the day, supporting a variety of local services, including shops and schools.

2.222 Outside the main rural service centres there is a network of Secondary Settlements that provide a range of community facilities, retailing and employment opportunities for more local catchments. It is important to ensure that their specific local economic and regeneration needs are provided for, to ensure that the whole of the rural economy contributes to regional economic growth and regeneration. However, these will be on a much smaller scale, in accordance with the RSS Locational Strategy. Local Development Frameworks will need to identify an appropriate settlement hierarchy, incorporating the Secondary Settlements and villages below the main rural service centres, to determine where further small scale development is required to support sustainable communities. (See Automatic Text)

2.223 A strategy to address significant rural deprivation and the diversification of the economy is being developed through the East Northumberland Regeneration Initiative (ENRGI) as part of the Rural Coalfield Regeneration Area, which lies north of SENNTRI. The economic needs are particularly important due to the closure of the Ellington Colliery, which has resulted in significant unemployment in the area. Due to its predominantly rural area and relative peripherality within the Tyne & Wear city Region, development and regeneration needs to be focused on catering for local indigenous needs, particularly the creation of local jobs and the retraining and up-skilling of the local workforce. An integrated approach should be adopted towards the provision of new housing and the renewal of social housing to rebalance the housing stock and meet local housing needs. Improved public transport links into the SENNTRI area and the conurbation will be particularly important to enable access to wider job opportunities.

Connectivity

2.224 In the Region's remote rural areas, the private car has and will continue to have an important role to play. However, significant numbers of rural residents do not have access to a car and given the remoteness of some of the Region's rural areas this can lead to social exclusion, severely limiting access to employment opportunities, education, health care and shopping. Research by the Countryside Agency (2000) found that transport is the single most important concern of people living in rural areas and a number of studies have identified transport as a major barrier to social inclusion in rural areas.

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2.225 Figures from the 2001 census suggest that households without access to a car are almost twice as likely to say they face difficulties in accessing at least one local service. Only 21% of people in households with access to a car said they experience difficulties accessing their chemist, GP, post office, main food shop, or local hospital – compared to 38% in households without a car. Consequently there is the need for the development of innovative integrated rural public transport to ensure access to services, healthcare and employment for rural residents and to support the development of the Region's tourism industry. The development and implementation of rural car clubs is one example of a solution that aims to address the joint issues of social exclusion through tackling transport poverty and increasing car use in rural areas through providing viable alternative transport options to private car use. Recent pilot schemes have suggested that there is merit in developing these schemes as part of a package approach of solutions to address the transport needs of people in rural areas. Other innovative examples of trying to improve access to services to those without a car in rural areas include the 'wheels to work' initiative in Wear Valley; pioneering public transport arrangements including demand responsive transport; and development of taxi-buses. The importance of awareness raising campaigns via leaflets, posters, timetables and websites are crucial to the success of any potential scheme.

2.226 The need to travel, particularly by the private car, can be reduced. The Rural Service Centres act as hubs of the rural public transport network, linking them both to the main conurbations and the rural hinterlands. Commuting by private modes of transport from rural areas to the conurbations in the city regions has continued to increase. For example, in Tynedale, 36 % of residents of working age in employment commute out of the District to work and 42% of these, (15% of the total) commute into Newcastle upon Tyne (Census, 2001). Of these Tynedale to Newcastle commuters, only 2% use the Tyne Valley line for the journey to work. The Regional Rail Study, 2004 recommended that smaller rural interchanges along the Tyne Valley line and on the East Coast Main Line in Northumberland could be developed and would also support the growth of sustainable tourism traffic to locations such as Seahouses and Holy Island, in a manner similar to the Hadrian's Wall bus service that is already in operation. The introduction and development of Community Rail Partnerships, discussed later in section 3D, policy 56, could assist in the role of rail in providing an alternative to private car users. The RSS also recognises the importance of the former goods yard at Tweedmouth, which has potential for use as part of ECML improvements.

Policy 11

RURAL AREAS

Strategies, plans and programmes, and planning proposals, should support the development of a vibrant rural economy that makes a positive contribution to regional prosperity, whilst protecting the Region's environmental assets from inappropriate development by:

11.1. Regeneration

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- a. strengthening the role of the Rural Service Centres of Alnwick, Barnard Castle, Berwick-upon-Tweed, Guisborough, Haltwhistle, Hexham, Middleton-in-Teesdale, Morpeth, Prudhoe, and Stanhope; and
- b. identifying an appropriate scale of development that is sufficient to sustain settlements and a vibrant rural economy. Local Development Frameworks should identify a settlement hierarchy, including Secondary Settlements to determine the appropriate scale and nature of development.

11.2. Economic Prosperity

- a. providing a positive framework to capitalise on the key opportunities the environment provides for the development of a range of employment uses, including the diversification of agriculture, tourism, culture and leisure and new sectors of the economy including renewables and environmental technologies.

11.3. Sustainable Communities

- a. protecting and improving the provision of rural service infrastructure and other physical development where this is critical for supporting and maintaining sustainable rural communities;
- b. addressing affordable housing problems arising throughout the Region's rural areas, particularly in Alnwick, Berwick, Tynedale and Castle Morpeth; and;
- c. combining landscape improvements, wildlife and heritage conservation and enhancement measures with the provision of leisure and educational opportunities, where appropriate.

11.4. Connectivity

- a. providing attractive and innovative public transport services to improve accessibility for their surrounding hinterland to Rural Service Centres, between Rural Service Centres and to the Conurbations and the Main Settlements in the city regions;
- b. developing core networks of public transport links focused on key hubs, in particular on the main rural service centres, with frequent services from these centres to the Conurbations and Main Settlements within the two city regions;
- c. developing feeder public transport services from surrounding rural areas to the main Rural Service Centres, ensuring integration with core network services;
- d. supporting the introduction, concept and development of Community Rail Partnerships; and
- e. protecting the land at the former goods yard at Tweedmouth that may be required as part of the ECML improvements.

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Theme 3A: Delivering Economic Prosperity and Growth

Introduction

3.1 The regional economy is growing stronger and this will need to continue if the Region is to close the gap in its performance comparative to other regions, and compete within an expanding Europe. The RES provides a framework for economic development, skills and training, and regeneration. An urban and rural renaissance will allow the North East to be vibrant, self reliant and ambitious. To facilitate this process the RES focuses on making progress on broad themes of:

- leadership,
- business,
- people and
- place

3.2 It emphasises the need to increase GVA per capita, create new businesses, and increase employment levels. To do this will require encouraging enterprise, supporting business start-ups and survival, boosting productivity, promoting science and innovation, enhancing the skills of the workforce, and investment in regeneration.

3.3 It is essential that the RSS and RES are complementary and mutually supportive. This will assist the efforts of the Region's Urban Regeneration Companies, the Sub-Regional Partnerships, and other regeneration initiatives such as SENNTRI. To do this the RSS sets out the spatial priorities required to achieve an accelerated growth in the economy and improve competitiveness. The Strategy supports the aim to move from a growth rate of 1.8% to an annual average rate of 2.8% over the plan period. Detailed analysis to support this approach is included in 'Technical Paper No. 2: Delivering Economic Prosperity & Growth'.

3.4 The RSS seeks to strengthen the regional economy by continuing to encourage the focus of economic activity within and around the conurbations and main settlements of the two city-regions, with particular emphasis on city and town centres. This reflects the point that higher levels of job creation are likely in these areas, and that the majority of the population live in or close to them. At the same time it will be important to meet the economic regeneration needs of areas elsewhere within the Region, both in urban and rural areas, as part of wider regeneration initiatives and strategies, to diversify local economies. Economic development is needed of an appropriate scale and nature to maintain vibrant, sustainable communities.

3.5 The Region exhibits some strong competitive advantages and is pioneering new innovative industries such as in the renewable energy sector. Manufacturing remains an important and competitive sector within the Region, particularly through its changing dynamics and innovative ways in which companies are adapting to the global marketplace. Whilst the workforce might decline compared to recent history, outputs and the contribution it makes to the regional economy will remain significant. In addition, major growth industries will increasingly be in service and information technology. The

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strategy aims to support the continued restructuring of the economy to capture the growth potential of these sectors. This includes ensuring that there is an appropriate land portfolio to meet existing and future needs in the areas where maximum economic and regeneration benefits can be achieved, with an increasing emphasis on prioritising policy and resources to these locations and the major growth sectors.

Key Objectives

3.6 In pursuit of an improved competitive position for the regional economy and within a framework of sustainable development, the main objectives are to:

- achieve accelerated economic growth and reduce disparities between the North East and other regions;
- improve the range and quality of employment opportunities available;
- broaden the Region's economic base and attract mobile investment;
- focus development, investment and policy in support of the growth of key regional economic drivers;
- encourage the creation, growth and survival of new and existing enterprises;
- facilitate the continuing adaptation and restructuring of the Region's economy;
- improve the health of the Region to produce a healthier workforce; and
- provide appropriate economic development within the urban and rural centres which is complementary to their viability and the overall aim of achieving sustainable communities.

Sustainable Economic Development

3.7 There is an increasing need to focus economic growth in the most sustainable locations, which maximise regional economic growth and wider regeneration priorities, whilst safeguarding the environment. Important considerations in developing the economy in a more sustainable way include being close to an available workforce; accessibility by public transport, cycling and walking; promoting self sufficiency with indigenous businesses locally producing goods and services; and making optimum use of existing infrastructure.

3.8 To achieve this, the emphasis given in the RES, and the implications of the locational strategy, are that the core areas of the Conurbations and the Main Settlements should be the primary focus of economic development and investment, as these are where the greatest economic and social benefits can be achieved at the lowest environmental cost. The implications are that these areas should be the focus for major office, leisure, cultural and tourism, digital industries and other uses allied to their central retailing functions. Developing the central functions of town centres and other service centres within regeneration areas will also be important to maximise economic growth and regeneration potential. One of the implications of the sequential approach is to encourage reuse and adaptation of existing sites and older premises will be particularly encouraged, as will ensuring access to opportunities from the more deprived communities.

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3.9 Although this would focus the majority of economic developments within the Conurbations and Main Settlements, particularly for office uses, there are also locations in the Region that can attract companies and provide a significant contribution to implementing the accelerated growth in the regional economy. Brownfield mixed-use development locations are areas for flagship projects that can provide a catalyst for the successful implementation of the Region's wider regeneration objectives. Key Employment Locations have been identified to provide a flexible response to attract regionally significant investment in emerging growth sectors and will facilitate innovative cluster development.

3.10 The importance of supporting rural regeneration and economic diversity is also a priority and is complementary to the priorities for urban regeneration. Supporting the investment priorities and approaches of the North East Rural Action Plan, and emerging Rural Delivery Framework, Rural Service Centres can be the focus for economic activity at an appropriate level to support viable communities. Outside the main rural service centres there is a network of secondary centres that provide a range of community facilities; retailing; nature and culture based tourism; and employment opportunities for more local catchments. It will be important to ensure that their specific local economic and regeneration needs are provided for, to ensure that the whole of the rural economy contributes to regional economic growth and regeneration. Other important initiatives, which will complement this approach, include the Market Towns Initiative and the designation of Rural Priority Areas in Northumberland, East and West County Durham, and East Cleveland.

3.11 The Region possesses relatively strong links with the rest of the UK and beyond, illustrated by the two airports; north-south and east-west road and rail links; several ports; and the National Cycle Routes. Improvements to the existing transport infrastructure would promote sustainability and allow the Region to maximise economic opportunities and strengthen its position within the global marketplace.

Policy 12

SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

12.1 Strategies, plans and programmes should focus the majority of new economic development and investment:

- a. in the Conurbations and Main Settlements within the Tyne & Wear and Tees Valley City-Regions;
- b. at brownfield mixed-use locations; and
- c. at Key Employment Locations, particularly for employment uses of regional and sub-regional significance.

12.2. New economic activity of an appropriate scale and nature should also be encouraged:

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- a. in the Regeneration Towns, acting as the stimulus for their regeneration and surrounding areas, with a particular emphasis on improving access to skills and training, education and employment opportunities; and
- b. in the Rural Service Centres, and to a lesser degree in Secondary Settlements, to provide a framework for integrated rural development of an appropriate scale to support sustainable, rural communities and diversified economies.

12.3. Economic development proposals should prioritise the renewal and reuse of previously developed land and buildings, particularly within town and city centres and established industrial and commercial estates.

12.4 Proposals for new economic investment should seek to be innovative and imaginative to promote 'green business' in terms of self sufficiency, locally producing goods and services. High quality development in high quality settings, aided by the provision of 'green infrastructure' should be sought.

12.5. To enhance economic performance, and promote sustainability within existing business premises, strategies, plans and programmes should investigate improvements to the existing road and rail networks; footpaths and cycle routes; and at the Region's airports and ports. These improvements should seek to enable opportunities for the Region's businesses to:

- a. operate within the regional, national and international marketplace;
- b. allow their workforce to travel to and from work more efficiently, particularly by public transport; and
- c. reduce the fear of crime and improve the health and safety of employees travelling to and from the workplace.

Brownfield Mixed Use Locations

3.12 There are many locations in the region where major brownfield mixed-use regeneration schemes are progressing. These schemes all have the aim of delivering sustainable economic activity and provide development and investment opportunities that will ensure the long-term development and regeneration of the North East. Many of the locations of such schemes accord well with the locational strategy of RSS, and also help to deliver the objectives of sustainable communities and city-region policies. The creation of stylish apartment and family living accommodation, large scale office development, new educational facilities, business incubator units and sectors for quality tourism, culture, retail and leisure offer a unique opportunity to extend, and in many cases exceed, the current North East offering. As well as enriching the experience of people who will work and live in their surroundings, these flagship schemes will provide the catalyst for wider regeneration. There are also other locations within the Region where smaller-scale mixed-use development will contribute to the economic prosperity at the local and sub-regional level.

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3.13 The broad locations identified in Policy 13 may contain more than one individual area to be considered. For example, the Tyne River Corridor includes areas spanning from Newburn running east (excluding the MetroCentre in terms of Policy 26) through to the Tyne Gateway of North and South Shields. Likewise, the central areas of Newcastle, Sunderland and Darlington may present sustainable locations for a number of mixed-use proposals.

Policy 13

BROWNFIELD MIXED-USE LOCATIONS

13.1. Strategies, plans and programmes should support brownfield mixed use developments in sustainable locations throughout the Region.

13.2. The following Brownfield Mixed-Use Locations are identified for major mixed-use regeneration projects in the Conurbations and Main Settlements:

- Blyth Estuary;
- Central Newcastle;
- Tyne River Corridor (East of Newburn, excluding MetroCentre in terms of Policy 26);
- Central Sunderland;
- Greater Middlehaven, Middlesbrough;
- Central Darlington;
- Victoria Harbour, Hartlepool; and
- North Shore, Stockton.

13.3. Local Development Frameworks should make provision for regeneration schemes within the above brownfield mixed-use locations. Provision for the employment element of proposals at these locations will be met from the General Employment Land Allocation in Policy 18. LDFs and planning proposals should ensure that the development of each site:

- a. is subject to the preparation of a detailed masterplan prior to the commencement of development;
- b. adopts an appropriate phasing and monitoring framework to ensure alignment with changing local and wider city-region objectives so that housing development does not exceed the respective local authority's housing provision;
- c. mitigates any potential exacerbation of housing market failure in the respective local authority and surrounding districts;
- d. ensures that the respective adjacent town centres are not adversely affected by the proposed development of town centre uses associated with the mixed use scheme;
- e. is served by high levels of public transport, walking and cycling, particularly through the development of workplace travel plans;
- f. secures any necessary improvements to the strategic and local road network required to accommodate traffic generated by the development, taking account of the likely use of public transport to the site;

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- g. seeks to maximise the employment opportunities for residents of surrounding wards, particularly from the more deprived wards;
- h. ensures that the necessary utilities infrastructure is coordinated with new development; and
- i. protects and enhances environmental, historic and resource assets

Supporting Further and Higher Education

3.14 Due to their significant knowledge and research resource and international networks, the universities, colleges and Centres of Excellence in the North East are to play a pivotal role in the transition to higher productivity; a more knowledge based economy; raising the skills base of the workforce; and improving social and cultural facilities. The potential that these institutions provide needs to be realised to forge stronger links with existing and new commerce. This is supported through the 'Skills Strategy – 21st Century Skills: Realising our Potential' (DfES, July 2003), which aims to ensure that individuals have the necessary skills they need to be employable and support the success of businesses.

3.15 In response to 'Success for All' (November 2002) the Learning and Skills Council published the 'Strategic Area Review' (March 2003), which aims to meet learner, employer and community needs, and improve the choice and quality of post-16 education and skills provision. Embracing these national skills strategies will enable the Region's further and higher education facilities to contribute to the aim of reducing regional disparities.

3.16 'Innovative Cluster Areas' comprise a network of locations with a central research and development base, with incubator units connected through both digital and land based communication links to growth points for specialised production, analysis, testing and services. NetPark (Sedgefield), Knowledge Campus (Baltic Business Quarter, Gateshead), Centre of Excellence for New and Renewable Energy (NaREC) at Blyth Quayside, Greater Middlehaven in Middlesbrough, Central Park in Darlington and North Shore in Stockton are being developed with strong linkages to universities and colleges to enhance the Region's knowledge economy and the emerging Science City concept. This concept advocates physical development, new forms of commercialisation, strengthened core science teaching across all ages, and major public involvement programmes.

Policy 14

SUPPORTING FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION

Strategies, plans, programmes, and planning proposals should support the growth and increasing role of universities and colleges in the regional economy by:

- a. recognising their pivotal role in the transition to higher productivity and a more knowledge-based economy;
- b. encouraging greater links with local businesses, particularly in terms of workforce development and research and development opportunities;
- c. enabling the necessary infrastructure and campus development to facilitate their expansion;

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- d. supporting the emerging Science City concept;
- e. maintaining, improving and adopting innovative public transport solutions and information and communication technologies to improve access to learning and training opportunities in both urban and rural areas; and
- f. strengthening their links to assist existing and new companies to take advantage of partnering opportunities and/or cluster activity, particularly at NetPark, Knowledge Campus, NaREC, Greater Middlehaven, Central Park and North Shore.

Information and Communications Technology Networks

3.17 The availability of high standard ICT facilities is crucial for retaining existing businesses, creating new employment, influencing business location, and extending opportunities in the Region. The RES recognises that ready access to high quality broadband services is essential if the Region is to compete effectively in the global economy.

3.18 Whilst the availability and use of ICT facilities, networks and applications are having a positive impact on the economy, there are also social and spatial implications. Greater integration between providers will encourage changes in working patterns and the reduction of travel by facilitating home working, shopping from home (commonly referred to as 'e-tailing') and enabling remote access to training and education. The improvements to ICT availability are allowing people to achieve a better work-life balance through flexible working patterns, including home-working.

3.19 Access to broadband is now available throughout the Region's conurbations, main settlements and main rural service centres. However, the more remote rural areas of the North East currently still depend more heavily on radio or satellite technology. Local Development Frameworks should enable the necessary infrastructure to be installed to ensure full regional coverage. Pressure for the development of facilities is increasing and it is important to establish policies and liaison procedures that minimise their environmental impact through sharing of facilities where practicable.

Policy 15

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY NETWORKS

Strategies, plans and programmes, and planning proposals should seek to provide flexible responses to rapidly changing physical and social demands for ICT business and in particular should:

- a. seek to ensure that broadband infrastructure is available to all communities, particularly within the more rural and peripheral areas;
- b. encourage flexi-working patterns in order for people to achieve a better work-life balance and quality of life overall;
- c. promote e-tailing, working from home and e-business to contribute to a better environment by reducing the need to travel, particularly by private car;
- d. seek investment into ICT training and skills in schools and the workplace;

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- e. establish strategic priorities for providing access from rural areas in order to guide investment decisions;
- f. ensure the roll out of ICT networks to existing urban areas, rural communities, business parks and industrial estates;
- g. ensure ICT infrastructure needs are incorporated into the development of sites and premises and enabled at an early stage;
- h. establish a targeted programme to promote broadband-enabled small and medium-sized business accommodation in every district in the Region, including possible refurbishment and improvements to existing premises; and
- i. promote the use of telecommunications technology in traffic management and in improving information available to public transport users.

Culture and Tourism

3.20 Culture, tourism, sport and recreation businesses and creative industries employ nearly 10% of the Region's workforce, and contribute over £1bn per year to the regional economy. There has been considerable investment and growth in the sector. The tourism industry, for example, is witnessing an increase in visitor numbers. It is anticipated that this growth and development will continue. The Regional Cultural Strategy, the North East Tourism Strategy and the Region's Sports and Physical Activity Strategy, 'Turning Ambition into Reality', all highlight the importance of culture in its broadest sense to the Region's social, economic and environmental regeneration and seek to position the sector to continue to deliver results for the Region.

3.21 The attractiveness of all parts of the Region: the towns; cities; the coast; and rural areas is critical not only to the Region's aim of increasing both domestic and overseas visitors, but also to the indigenous population. The development of facilities in the cultural sector should therefore also be of benefit to local communities themselves. Cultural development, including that which is aimed at tourists, contributes positively to urban and rural regeneration and diversification. Day visitors, from within the region and elsewhere, are an important part of the demand for access to countryside, coast, heritage and recreational features and facilities.

3.22 Tourism itself is based on many aspects, but the intrinsic quality of the countryside, the coast, wildlife, geology, the built environment and heritage resources, and urban and rural facilities are particularly important and contribute to the diversity and distinctive character of the North East. Investment needs to be directed towards upgrading, renewing and expanding existing cultural facilities, tourist attractions, accommodation, and upgrading the quality of service. Appropriate to their location, new culture and tourist facilities and tourism-related services need to be supported and developed in both urban and rural areas, particularly those that will increase the international and national profile and attractiveness of the Region.

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3.23 The Region has an extensive variety of tourist and cultural facilities including Alnwick Garden; Hadrian's Wall; the NewcastleGateshead Quayside; National Glass Centre in Sunderland; Beamish Museum; Chester-le-Street Riverside; Durham Castle and Cathedral; Hartlepool Historic Quays; Tees Barrage; Darlington Railway Centre and many more. It is essential that visitors, both from within and beyond the Region, can easily access the many tourist and cultural facilities on offer in the North East by all modes of transport, but particularly by public transport, walking and cycling.

3.24 Many of the areas of the region that are attractive for recreation, leisure and tourism are also important for their landscape, heritage and nature conservation qualities, which may form part of the reason for their attractiveness. There is a need to minimise any potential conflicts between these interests. For example, recreation and tourism can cause increased disturbance to habitats and species that are important for biodiversity. This is particularly important in the case of internationally designated sites of nature conservation importance. Planning for developments and access, and other strategies such as the Regional Tourism Strategy, need to take account of this, including the review and mapping of areas vulnerable to disturbance and situations where rigorous control of disturbance would be required to maintain the integrity of vulnerable sites and species. It may be necessary in the preparation of LDFs, and in preparing planning proposals, to consider a strategic approach to management, avoidance and mitigation measures, such as the preparation of zoning plans for the timing and location of activities; inclusion of buffer zones; and careful consideration to the detailed design and layout of any development adjacent to the buffer zones in terms of pressures for recreational use which it may generate, to minimise both direct and indirect impacts and consider cumulative effects.

Policy 16

CULTURE AND TOURISM

Strategies, plans and programmes and planning proposals should promote culture and tourism, including provision for sport and leisure and the resources which support these, by:

- a. improving the first impressions gained by visitors arriving and passing through the Region, including supporting environmental improvements to gateways and transport corridors;
- b. ensuring that the development of culture, sports, leisure, recreation and tourist facilities and attractions protects, invests in and enhances and maintains the Region's natural, built and heritage environments, and that adverse effects on internationally designated nature conservation sites are avoided or mitigated;
- c. ensuring that the planning and development of cultural, sports, leisure, recreation and tourism facilities of regional or sub-regional significance is taken forward in a coordinated way, including working across local authority boundaries;
- d. encouraging cultural, sports, leisure, recreation and tourism developments that benefit the local economy, people and environment without diminishing the attractiveness of the place visited;

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- e. ensuring that the identification and development of cultural, sports, leisure, recreation and tourist facilities is guided by the principles of sustainability and information on market demand, including maximising opportunities to travel by means other than the private car;
- f. ensuring all major cultural, sports, leisure, recreation and tourism attractions and services are accessible by a range of transport modes to improve links to develop the Region as an integrated visitor destination; and
- g. encouraging the creation of concentrations of , cultural, sports, leisure, recreation and tourism related development within sustainable locations to contribute to wider regeneration objectives.

Casino Development

3.25 The laws which govern gambling in the UK have been modified. The Gambling Act modernises all legislation governing gambling in the UK. The extent to which the North East is in a position to maximise the contribution of new casinos towards economic development will be determined by planning and licensing decisions in view of national Gambling and Casino regulations. The new system limits the number of large and small casinos to 16. This is to ensure that the risk of an increase in problem gambling is minimised whilst allowing for a proper assessment of their impact to be made.

3.26 In the North East, the announcement identified Middlesbrough as the location for the category of a large new casino, and further work will take place locally identifying the precise location.

3.27 Casinos have the potential to make a considerable contribution to economic regeneration and development. Developed in sustainable locations, casinos, incorporating leisure and entertainment facilities, can assist wider regeneration objectives including job creation, both directly and indirectly; tourism; and business development. The development of integrated leisure and casino facilities should consider the social implications.

Policy 17

CASINO DEVELOPMENT

For regional, large and small casino development, Local Development Frameworks and planning proposals should:

- a. establish the need for the development if proposed outside of town centres;
- b. ensure that any development is accessible by a range of transport modes, particularly public transport, cycling and walking;
- c. establish the impact of development on existing centres;

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- d. develop on previously developed sites to make optimum use of existing infrastructure;
- e. maximise the contribution to regional economic growth; the creation and enhancement of sustainable communities; tourism; and wider regeneration priorities; and
- f. optimise the net additional employment opportunities that would arise locally as a result, particularly for residents of deprived wards.

Employment Land Portfolio

3.28 It is important that the scale and quality of the employment land provision meets requirements to assist the accelerated growth in the regional economy. The provision should ensure that the RES and other strategies can be delivered effectively and will not be constrained by a lack of suitable and available land. Local authorities will be required to monitor and review their employment land allocations. This will include examining the potential for mixed-use schemes, and the continued need to consider, as part of the preparation of LDFs, the de-allocation or re-allocation of sites.

3.29 It is important that local planning authorities ensure that there is a continuous supply of land to provide a variety of choice of sites in terms of size, quality and location throughout their respective plan period; and should continue to work closely with sub-regional partnerships to ensure that the majority of economic development is located in the conurbations and main settlements. The distribution of sites across the Region must reflect the RSS locational strategy; create employment opportunities in places that are economically competitive; and are close to where available workforces live.

3.30 At submission of RSS, there was approximately 5,000 hectares of employment land allocated in the Region. Discussions with local authorities and indicative figures have suggested that approximately 365 hectares of employment land could potentially be de-allocated. In addition 1,560 hectares of employment land is restricted for particular purposes, such as airport and port expansion, chemical and steel industry, protecting land for potential rail freight interchanges, and sites reserved for major users and inward investment. These specific industries and others, including timber processing, will significantly contribute to a prosperous economy. Therefore, taking into account the proposed de-allocations and restricted employment sites, there are approximately 3,430 hectares of employment land for general employment use (including brownfield mixed-use locations) and Key Employment Locations in the North East. Table 1 illustrates the distribution of sites by category and by sub-Region.

3.31 A wide range of quality land and premises will be required throughout the Region to meet the varying growth needs across a number of sectors. The city centres should be the priority locations to accommodate office premises and the continued growth of knowledge based SMEs, whilst the edge of the conurbations, main settlements and regeneration centres, which have good public transport links and access to the strategic road and rail networks, may be suitable locations to accommodate manufacturing and logistics.

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3.32 Research undertaken suggests that the majority of economic growth will be in Tyne & Wear and the main urban centres. Notwithstanding the projected increase in take-up, there remains an oversupply of general employment land in the North East, particularly in parts of Northumberland, County Durham and Tees Valley. Whilst a critical review should be undertaken, there are indications that a potential shortfall of employment land exists in Tyne & Wear to 2021. Discussions at the Examination in Public in 2006 indicated that future economic development was likely to be based on the knowledge economy; feature small and medium sized businesses and would tend to focus on the cores of the city-regions. It was suggested that oversupply in the Region as a whole was such that the de-allocation of some of the less sustainable and/or viable sites should not present any problems to the overall offer. Sustainability principles are vital to attracting investment in the Region supporting the engines of economic recovery, namely the core cities and urban areas. In these terms, the RSS land provision strategy will accommodate the broad thrust of the RES.

3.33 Local Authorities and Sub-Regional Partnerships should continue to work together to seek to reduce the provision of employment land within the Region in order to focus resources and ensure the RSS Strategy is achieved. Local employment land studies should be undertaken to consider the effects of overprovision and the potential for the de-allocation of sites that have no prospect of being developed for any employment related use; or the re-allocation of suitable sites for alternative uses such as housing, open space, or opportunities for increasing biodiversity where appropriate. Regional research on the provision of sites and premises in the North East supports this approach, with details included in 'Technical Paper No. 2: Delivering Economic Prosperity & Growth'. The RPB and One NorthEast will lead on developing a comprehensive Regional Employment Land Assessment with liaison with local authorities and SRPs.

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Table 1

A sub-regional breakdown of the supply of employment land					
EmploymentLandType	TeesValley	Northumberland	Tyne & Wear	Durham	North East
'Unrestricted' Employment Land					
Key Employment Locations	330	55	190	95	670
General	1180	565	665	610	3,020
General & Key Employment Sub Total	1,510	620	855	705	3,690
'Restricted' Employment Land					
Chemical & Steel	805	0	0	0	805
Port	150	10	20	0	180
Airport	80	10	45	0	135
Rail	0	0	0	135	135
Reserve	215	0	0	90	305
Restricted Land Sub Total	1,250	20	65	225	1,560
All Employment Land Total	2,760	640	920	930	5,250
Indicative Reduction in Supply					
Indicative de-allocation of restricted land	110	0	0	0	110
Indicative de-allocation of general employment land	135	85	0	35	255
Total Proposed de-allocations	245	85	0	35	365
Restricted Employment Land (minus indicative restricted de-allocations)	1,140	20	65	225	1,450
General & Key Employment (minus indicative general de-allocations)	1,375	535	855	670	3,435
All Employment Land Total (minus all indicative de-allocations)	2,515	555	920	895	4,885

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Table 1 Notes

3.34 All figures expressed above are in hectares.

All figures are subject to rounding – therefore figures may not add up correctly.

Figures exclude land developed at June 2005.

Figures for Airport are allocated land not yet developed.

Policy 18

EMPLOYMENT LAND PORTFOLIO

18.1. Local Development Frameworks should make the appropriate provision of general employment land and Key Employment Locations up to:

Local Authority	General Employment Land Allocation (hectares)	Key Employment Locations (hectares)	Total (hectares)
Hartlepool	210	135	345
Stockton-on-Tees	255	70	325
Redcar & Cleveland	160	0	160
Middlesbrough	185	0	185
Darlington	235	125	360
Tees Valley	1,045	330	1,375
Durham City	150	0	150
Derwentside	105	0	105
Wear Valley	105	0	105
Sedgefield	55	95	150
Easington	110	0	110
Chester-le-Street	30	0	30
Teesdale	20	0	20
Durham	575	95	670
Wansbeck	165	0	165
Blyth Valley	120	55	175
Castle Morpeth	90	0	90
Tynedale	55	0	55

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Local Authority	General Employment Land Allocation (hectares)	Key Employment Locations (hectares)	Total (hectares)
Berwick upon Tweed	25	0	25
Alnwick	25	0	25
Northumberland	480	55	535
Sunderland	225	0	225
North Tyneside	230	0	230
Newcastle	30	170	200
Gateshead	110	20	130
South Tyneside	70	0	70
Tyne & Wear	665	190	855
NORTH EAST	2,765	670	3,435

18.2. In determining the land portfolio in accordance with the provision set out above, planning authorities should undertake sub-regional and local employment land assessments based on a 25 year level of supply and take up, taking into account of:

- the need to protect employment land and premises from redevelopment to alternative uses, where they are an essential part of the long-term employment land and premises portfolio;
- the potential of existing employment allocations no longer required for employment purposes for reallocation to alternative uses or de-allocation;
- a presumption in favour of regenerating and upgrading existing employment land and premises in advance of allocating new sites on greenfield land;
- the need to ensure that employment land provision is of an appropriate scale and nature, particularly at employment sites outside the conurbations; and
- the need for the Tyne and Wear authorities to seek to maximise opportunities to meet any shortfall of employment land supply through the intensification of sites around transport hubs and on previously developed land.

18.3. The Regional Development Agency, the Regional Planning Body and sub-regional partnerships will conduct a joint regional study to provide up-to-date evidence, review the demand for and supply of employment land, and consider de-allocating employment land where this is not required within the 25 year period.

Notes

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- Figures are subject to rounding.
- 20ha of Stockton's 255ha general employment land and 5ha of Darlington's 235ha general employment land is to be provided on land to the south of Durham Tees Valley Airport.
- General Employment Allocation figures exclude land developed as of June 2005.

Office Development Outside of City and Town Centres

3.35 Office development of the type listed in the Use Classes Order B1a category should ideally, and wherever possible, be located within city and town centres to support their vitality and viability. The B1a category includes offices, other than those within use class A2 (financial services) which are also town centre uses. Such an approach is complementary to policy supporting sustainable communities, maximisation of brownfield potential and wider strategy objectives including city-regions and delivering a North East renaissance. City and town centres are generally the most sustainable locations capable of access by public transport and the development of offices in such locations can help to support the local economy such as retailing. To recognise this priority, the objective of the following policy is to steer such development into these central locations, and where opportunities are limited within centres, to favour locations on the edge of such centres and the brownfield mixed-use development locations identified in Policy 13. Key Employment Locations are covered in Policy 20 and a definition of major development is contained within the Glossary.

Policy 19

OFFICE DEVELOPMENT OUTSIDE OF CITY AND TOWN CENTRES

City and town centres will be the preferred locations for major office development (B1a) which is not ancillary to other uses.

Proposals for this form of office development, other than those already allocated in existing adopted development plans, will only be approved at Key Employment Locations, if it can be shown that –

- a. in order of priority, they cannot be accommodated in a city or town centre, in an edge of centre location, or at other brownfield mixed-use locations in Policy 13.
- b. and any such proposal will not put at risk the strategy set out in any approved Local Development Document for a city or town centre, or Master Plan for a major brownfield mixed-use development.

This policy is not intended to restrict small scale developments as provided for in Policy 11.1 and 11.2.

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Key Employment Locations

3.36 The Region's city and town centres and regional brownfield mixed-use development locations are compatible with the principles of sustainability and marketability and should be the focus for the majority of general economic development opportunities. To assist in the Region's accelerated economic growth, unique opportunities within specialist growth sectors of the economy should be maximised. It is expected that city and town centres and regional brownfield mixed-use development locations will be the most suitable locations to accommodate these opportunities, and appropriate economic investment should also be directed towards Key Employment Locations. Being developed with a particular strategic function, these are locations within the city-regions and within or adjacent to the conurbations. The locations are:

3.37 West Hartford, Cramlington – 55 hectare location with good road and potential rail access, this location provides a limited number of large scale development opportunities for high quality modern industry.

3.38 Newcastle Great Park– 80 hectare location for digital based businesses, with a particular focus on innovation and entrepreneurship, providing incubator units for start-up firms and facilities for technology transfer, financial and management support.

3.39 Newburn Riverside, Newcastle – situated on the north bank of the River Tyne, this 90 hectare location has planning permission for offices, general industrial, and warehousing. Due to the nature of the site, this will meet many of the City's general employment land requirements.

3.40 Baltic Business Quarter, Gateshead – this 20 hectare location is a prestigious international centre located at the core of the Tyne and Wear City-Region, providing physical workspaces, technology based products, practices and methodologies, and on-line services to the global product development community.

3.41 North East Technology Park, Sedgefield – a 25 hectare location capitalising upon the research potential of the Region's universities and colleges, NetPark has been conceived as a regional centre for technology transfer, creating a bridge between research work and product development, encouraging a knowledge-based economy within County Durham and the Region. The potential of this location will be utilised through the development of its role as a hub for research, innovation and technology transfer. Initial development may be extended in the medium term for related research and commercial activities.

3.42 Wynyard, Stockton/Hartlepool – 200 hectare location being developed for the prestige electronics and high technology sectors.

3.43 Heighington Lane West, Newton Aycliffe - a 70 hectare location close to the A1 with potential for the distribution and logistics sector. (This location is primarily within Sedgefield District, with a small minor element within Darlington).

3.44 Faverdale, Darlington - a 120 hectare location close to the A1 with potential for the distribution and logistics sector.

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Policy 20

KEY EMPLOYMENT LOCATIONS

In order to enable the accelerated growth in the regional economy to be maximized, strategies, plans and programmes should focus appropriate investment towards the Key Employment Locations shown below:

NewcastleGreat Park	Approximately 80 hectare location focusing on innovation, entrepreneurship and technology transfer.
Newburn Riverside, Newcastle	Approximately 90 ha location with planning permission for general industry.
Baltic Business Quarter	Approximately 20 ha location for innovation and high technology uses.
West Hartford, Cramlington	Approximately 55 ha location to provide a limited number of large scale development opportunities for high quality modern industry.
NorthEast Technology Park, Sedgefield	Approximately 25ha location for research, innovation and technology transfer.
Wynyard, Stockton/Hartlepool	Approximately 200ha location to provide a limited number of large scale development opportunities for high quality modern industry, minimising B1 (a) potential.
Heighington Lane West, NewtonAycliffe	Approximately 70ha location with potential for distribution and logistics.
Faverdale, Darlington	Approximately 120ha location with potential for distribution and logistics.

In planning for Key Employment Locations, Local Development Frameworks and planning proposals should ensure a high level of sustainability. They should:

- prepare a detailed masterplan prior to the commencement of development setting out such considerations and meeting the requirements of clauses b-e;
- seek to achieve zero or low carbon emissions, including energy conservation measures and secure energy supply from decentralised and renewable or low-carbon sources in accordance with the approach set out in Policy 38;
- encourage high levels of public transport, walking and cycling accessibility and use;
- discouragement of the need to travel by car through limited parking, the use of other demand management measures, and requiring a Travel Plan for each future occupier;

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- e. include a waste audit in view of Policy 46;
- f. secure any necessary improvements to the strategic and local road and rail networks required to accommodate traffic generated by the development, taking account of the likely use of public transport to the site;
- g. maximise the employment opportunities for residents of surrounding areas, particularly those in deprived communities;
- h. ensure that the necessary infrastructure is coordinated with new development;
- i. employ sustainable construction and design methods, which deliver biodiversity benefits and foster local distinctiveness;
- j. protect and enhance major environmental, historic assets; and
- k. ensure that the integration of the development with the landscape meets high environmental standards;
- l. give priority to accommodating major investors and prestige business development of national or regional significance.

Airports

3.45 The 'Air Services White Paper: the Future of Air Transport' sets out the anticipated growth rates of both Newcastle international and Durham-Tees Valley airports. The key to their continued growth will be to ensure that national and international air service links are maintained with London Heathrow Airport and improved to other airports, and that there is sufficient land to enable their expansion of airport related activity. Improving public transport surface access to both airports will also be important to contribute to wider RSS objectives including encouraging modal change. Specific surface access issues to the airports are set out in Policy 48.

3.46 The 'Guidance on Preparation of Airport Master Plans' produced by the Department for Transport states that proposals for mitigation measures, for example, emission controls and measures to address landscape and biodiversity impacts should be a major component of airport masterplans. Although such masterplans are produced by the airports themselves and do not have planning status as such, they will perform a useful complementary function to this RSS and emerging Local Development Frameworks. Significant land is allocated for airport-related uses at both airports.

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3.47 The sustainable growth and expansion of Newcastle International Airport and Durham-Tees Valley Airport for airport-related development is supported by the RES and RSS. The airports are important drivers of the Region's economy, acting as key Gateways into the Region for business, tourism and leisure purposes. The airports play an essential role in maintaining and attracting new development and investment in the Region and are significant sources of employment in their own right. It is important to safeguard land for expansion at the Region's airports, and the sustainable expansion of the airport facilities should be encouraged to assist economic prosperity. The Northern Way Growth Strategy advocates reviewing the definition of airport-related uses at airports. In view of this the definition of appropriate airport-related development to be applied in this RSS includes:

Airport-related Development	
Development Category	Specific uses
Operational Infrastructure	Runways Taxiways Aircraft Apron Control Tower Fire Station Internal Highways Service Vehicle Maintenance etc Aviation Fuel Farm Vehicle fuel storage
Terminal facilities	Airline Sales, Reservations and Booking Passenger Facilities, including Catering Passenger Retail Facilities Public Transport Facilities
Car Facilities	Car Hire Public Car Parking Staff Parking Petrol Filling Station
Maintenance Facilities	Aircraft Maintenance

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Airport-related Development	
Development Category	Specific uses
	Avionics Maintenance and Supply
Offices	Ancillary Uses Supporting Functions
Warehousing/Distribution	Freight Forwarding Freight Agents In-flight Catering Facilities Flight Packaging and Provision Facilities
Training Centres	Airline Training Centres Related Training Centres
Hotel	Accommodation Conference Ancillary Activities

3.48 In terms of the above, for development including hotels, conference and leisure facilities, offices and retail, the relationship to the airport-related business should be explicitly justified, be of an appropriate scale relative to core airport related business and be assessed against relevant policy elsewhere in planning policy guidance .

3.49 However, it may be acceptable to consider other appropriate uses if a valid planning case for location at the airport rather than other locations in the Region is presented and it can be demonstrated that this is fully consistent with other RSS policies and that there will be no adverse impacts on the delivery of wider RSS objectives.

Policy 21

AIRPORTS

Strategies, plans and programmes and planning proposals should support the development of both North East airports by:

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- a. supporting the sustainable expansion of facilities at the Region's airports to accommodate and cater for the anticipated growth in passenger numbers to 10 million passengers per annum at Newcastle International Airport and 3 million passengers per annum at Durham-Tees Valley Airport by 2016;
- b. maintaining and improving efficient surface access links by all modes, particularly by public transport and sustainable modes;
- c. allowing for the expansion of operational facilities and airport-related development – as set out in the preceeding table - within currently allocated land;
- d. maintaining frequent services to London Heathrow Airport;
- e. increasing the range of direct European and other international destinations;
- f. ensuring that the needs and preferences of tourists, including both leisure and business visitors are taken into account.

Relevant Local Development Frameworks should safeguard land currently allocated for airport-related uses but not yet developed (80 hectares of land at Durham Tees Valley Airport and 55 hectares of land at Newcastle International Airport) for airport-related uses.

Ports

3.50 The Region's ports are key drivers of the regional economy and their infrastructure provides potential for unlocking regeneration opportunities. Their continued growth is in the interests of the regional economy. Teesport generates substantial investment in the Region, both directly and indirectly, and is a major employer in its own right. It is the second largest port in the UK (based on tonnage handled) and has aspirations for a deep-sea container terminal. The Port of Tyne is a modern trust port, which provides a passenger terminal handling regular ferry services to Northern Europe and Scandinavia with nearly 1 million passengers per year, and a comprehensive handling service for forest products, steel and metals, cars, and bulk products. The Port of Sunderland is a short-sea specialist but has aspirations to convert into a diverse community that will provide new opportunities for employment and respond to the challenge for environmentally focused business development. There are also a number of smaller ports, which deal with specific products.

3.51 The Region's ports provide an increasing opportunity for growth, through more short sea shipping movements, both between North East ports and beyond that bypass the increasingly congested South East of England; thereby offering a more sustainable option to long distance road freight and helping to take unnecessary traffic off the Region's roads. They have the opportunity to develop their businesses and increase the markets they serve, looking north to Scotland and south and west to the northern regions and the Midlands. Maximising sustainable movement opportunities is encouraged, for example, through the development of multi-purpose freight interchanges including road-rail as well as sea-rail. The transport access issues relating to ports are set out in policies 48 and 57.

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3.52 Sites within and adjacent to ports are unique assets and should be protected where they have a realistic potential for port-related purposes. However, not all land adjacent to ports may be needed for port-related and interchange expansion, and therefore, alternative uses should be encouraged where appropriate.

3.53 A number of the Region's ports are close to, or adjoin areas of international or national importance for nature conservation, and these areas will need to continue to be protected and considered in relation to proposals for port development and expansion. Furthermore, the development at ports should ensure that national and international environmental designations are protected and enhanced, and where appropriate mitigation measures are introduced.

Policy 22

PORTS

Strategies, plans and programmes and planning proposals should support the growth of the Region's ports by:

- a. supporting and encouraging the sustainable development of Teesport;
- b. supporting rail loading gauge enhancements to Teesport and the Port of Tyne;
- c. continuing to focus the Region's international passenger ferry traffic at the Port of Tyne;
- d. recognising the significant economic investment generated at both the Port of Tyne and Teesport, both directly and indirectly;
- e. supporting the development of short-sea shipping connections to improve linkages between the Region's ports and the wider European network;
- f. promoting north east ports' facilities;
- g. ensuring that the needs and preferences of tourists, including both leisure and business visitors are taken into account;
- h. safeguarding adjacent sites for port operational uses, where appropriate;
- i. ensuring the protection of sites of nature conservation importance and features of heritage conservation importance; including taking into account the potential risk of coastal squeeze, and considering measures to address this;
- j. considering, where appropriate, alternative land uses, particularly where this would contribute to the regeneration of the wider area.

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Chemical and Steel Industries

3.54 The chemical and steel industries make a vital contribution to the economy of the Region, particularly in the Tees Valley where all chemical and steel employment land is located. They provide direct employment to 12,000 people in the sub-Region and indirect employment to over 65,000 people, across the UK. Global output in chemicals and steel has grown over the past decade, which is a trend that looks set to continue. Therefore, significant re-investment is required to keep the area competitive on a global scale. However, this growth should not be to the detriment of the environment through associated pollution.

3.55 The 'Tees Valley Vision Strategic Framework' suggests that a figure of £4 billion is required through public-private investment to 2020, in order to secure a long-term future for the industry. There is sufficient land available to accommodate this growth and therefore, no additional land for the chemical and steel industries is anticipated. The 'Tees Valley Employment Land Review' (2002) has indicated that approximately 65 hectares of land allocated for chemical and steel use in Redcar & Cleveland could be de-allocated.

Policy 23

CHEMICAL & STEEL INDUSTRIES

In addition to the allocations in Policy 18, Hartlepool, Stockton-on-Tees and Redcar & Cleveland Local Development Frameworks should safeguard land for chemical and steel manufacturing industries up to

Local Authority	Land for Chemical & Steel Industries (hectares)
Hartlepool	65
Stockton-on-Tees	445
Redcar & Cleveland	230
TeesValley	740

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Theme 3B: Delivering Sustainable Communities

Introduction

3.56 Sustainable communities are cohesive, mixed and socially inclusive with a sense of place and identity with opportunities for people to maximise their health and quality of life. The design and layout of settlements influence and are influenced by the complex interrelationships of different land uses within sustainable communities. These include reducing crime and the fear of crime; offering safe, healthy, high quality living environments and providing the opportunity to easily access locally provided jobs, facilities and services by non-car transport modes. High quality design can also provide for a mix of housing size, type and tenure to meet changing needs without reinforcing social distinctions, and reduce fuel poverty and reliance on natural resources and energy.

3.57 Sustainable communities are also places with effective and inclusive participation, representation and leadership. Although these are elements of governance, the planning system has a duty to deliver the spatial elements of sustainable communities in a way that involves and actively includes the people it affects. Delivering sustainable communities will require a multi agency approach tackling spatial issues that impact on and are influenced by planning decisions but which are not always directly within the remit of the planning system.

3.58 Annex A of “Securing the Future”, the UK Government Sustainable Development Strategy describes the Definition and Components of Sustainable Communities.

Key Objectives

3.59 In pursuit of delivering sustainable communities, which thrive on the opportunities offered by a diverse economy, a high quality environment and a multi-cultural, inclusive and cohesive society, the main objectives are to:

- stabilise and then increase the Region’s population;
- focus housing development on previously developed land and buildings in sustainable locations within the conurbations and main settlements; housing market restructuring areas; towns in regeneration areas; and rural service centres;
- focus all types of retail, commercial, leisure, recreation and service development, particularly high trip generating uses, within city, town and rural service centres;
- provide a more appropriate mix of type, size, tenure and affordability of decent, high quality homes by housing market restructuring and through additions to the Region’s housing stock;
- reduce the amount of vacant housing in the Region to 3% by 2011;
- promote new development where jobs, housing, and, key services and facilities are accessible by public transport and modes other than the car; and,
- build to design standards that minimise the consumption of natural resources, both in construction and operation, and contribute to stimulating local economies.

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Delivering Sustainable Communities

3.60 Delivering sustainable communities requires consideration of spatial issues that are both directly and indirectly affected by the planning system. Local planning authorities will need to consider the contribution of both the locational elements of land use and the design and layout of development in delivering sustainable communities. Therefore, all development within the Region should be designed and located to deliver sustainable communities.

Policy 24

DELIVERING SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

Strategies, plans and programmes and planning proposals, should assess the suitability of land for development and the contribution that can be made by design in relation to the following criteria:

- a. the nature of the development and its locational requirements;
- b. concentrating the majority of the Region's development within the defined urban areas;
- c. the need to utilise previously developed land wherever possible;
- d. locating development to reduce the need to travel, journey length and fuel consumption;
- e. the ability for movement needs and accessibility of development sites to homes, jobs, services and facilities to be well served by all modes of transport, particularly walking, cycling and public transport;
- f. linking development to appropriate provision of infrastructure including green infrastructure, water supply and wastewater treatment, energy supplies;
- g. linking development to provision of educational, health and other social facilities and services;
- h. the impact that the development of sites and its design will have on the Region's natural resources, biodiversity, landscapes, environmental and cultural assets, and people's health; and its potential to contribute to enhancement of these;
- i. physical constraints on the development of land including the level of contamination, flood risk and land stability, incorporating flood protection and alleviation mechanisms such as Sustainable Drainage Systems;
- j. the potential contribution of development to reducing health and social inequalities including fuel poverty, and to meeting the needs of an ageing population and the disabled, through design and the provision of accessible health, sports, community, recreational, and other facilities including suitable provision of play space and greenspaces with accessible woodland, with new development;
- k. the promotion of mixed use developments, well served by public transport, to reduce journey lengths and ensure that the best use is made of land, transport infrastructure and services;
- l. the potential contribution of development to the strengthening of local communities and their social cohesion;
- m. the potential contribution of development to secure crime prevention and community safety by design;

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- n. ensuring that development has low consumption of natural resources both in construction and in operation, and incorporates embedded renewable energy generation where appropriate;
- o. the potential contribution of development to the enhancement and creation of habitats and species populations and to the promotion of biodiversity and geodiversity; and,
- p. the use of local labour markets and materials.

Urban and Rural Centres

3.61 The size of each centre reflects its role and function in providing housing, employment, services and facilities for its hinterland. There are complex interrelationships within city-regions between the conurbations at their heart and the settlements and rural areas within their hinterlands, which do not adhere to local authority boundaries. There are also settlements outside of the city-regions that serve or form other important hinterlands, some of which stretch beyond this Region's boundaries.

3.62 The development of employment, retail, leisure and other services and facilities will be focused in the centres identified in policies 9, 10 and 11 in the city-regions and rural areas. This approach supports the provision of locally available services and facilities, strengthening the role of existing centres as the focus for jobs; retail; commerce; entertainment; leisure; culture and places of worship; recreation; education; health; business; public services and other high trip generating uses commensurate with their scale and function, particularly around key strategic and local public transport hubs.

3.63 The 'Regional Retail and Leisure Need Assessment' (2002) concluded that within the conurbations the centres of Newcastle, Sunderland and Middlesbrough contain a broader range jobs and retail and leisure provision and include higher-order services and functions not available in smaller town centres. Darlington, although smaller, provides a wide range of services to a large hinterland that crosses the regional boundary into North Yorkshire. The MetroCentre also provides higher-order retail facilities, but a more limited range of other functions and attracts a lower proportion of visitors by public transport. These centres exert influence beyond the Region offering investment opportunities that distinguish them from other centres.

3.64 The Study also defined Durham City, Hartlepool and Stockton as important centres for retail, leisure and other services and facilities. Whilst these centres do not exert the same influence as those mentioned above they do have an important role in serving wide hinterlands. Town centres within the regeneration areas should also be given particular priority. Like Stockton, Peterlee is an example of where retail-led town centre regeneration could particularly be encouraged. Further analysis of the Study is provided in 'Technical Paper No. 3: Retail & Leisure'.

3.65 The scale of new development within town or other centres should be based on the sequential approach and locational strategy to reflect their role in the Region. This will provide a network of centres and enable informed strategic choices of where growth should be located, whilst recognising the requirement to support growth across a range of centres. It also recognises the need to protect existing facilities in small settlements. Such an approach will allow future retail and leisure investment to assist in achieving both a rural and an urban renaissance.

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Policy 25

URBAN AND RURAL CENTRES

Local Development Frameworks and planning proposals should ensure that:

- a. in the Conurbations and Main Settlements development of retail, commerce; entertainment, leisure, community, cultural and religious facilities, recreation, education, health services, business, public services and other high trip generating uses are focused within defined urban centres commensurate with their scale, function, environmental capacity and ability to be served by transport modes other than the car;
- b. within the Tyne & Wear City-Region, the majority of new retail and leisure floorspace should be located in Newcastle (Regional Centre) and Sunderland (Sub-Regional Centre). Durham City will continue to have an important role in servicing its hinterland;
- c. within the Tees Valley City-Region the majority of new retail and leisure floor space should be located in Middlesbrough (Sub-Regional Centre) and Darlington (Sub-Regional Centre). Hartlepool, Stockton and Redcar will continue to have an important role in servicing their hinterlands;
- d. in other centres, additional retail, commerce; entertainment, leisure, community, cultural and religious facilities, recreation, education, health services, business, public services development should be consistent with their scale and function to maintain and enhance their health and vitality;
- e. where a need for retail-led regeneration has been identified for Regeneration Towns and for Rural Service Centres, retail and leisure development may be allowed above the scale that would be required for the centre to maintain its role.; provided that it would support the sustainable regeneration of these centres without compromising the vitality and viability of other town centres; and
- f. The design of development in centres should contribute to the creation of sustainable communities and be in harmony with and enhance the built environment.

Metrocentre

3.66 The MetroCentre is a large, purpose built regional shopping centre, providing a modern, secure shopping environment with adjacent parking, and rail and bus stations. A recent extension to the Red Quadrant has increased the retail range and facilities offered. Improvements to public transport provision, including an enlarged public transport interchange, the 'Centrelink' bus scheme and an internal shuttle bus service, have enhanced accessibility to and from other parts of the Tyne & Wear City-Region. The MetroCentre is a major out-of-centre retail destination and National Planning Policy Statement 6 on planning for town centres sets out the policy approach that development at regional out-of-centre destinations, such as the MetroCentre, should be strictly controlled.

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Policy 26

METROCENTRE

No provision should be made for additional retail or leisure development at the MetroCentre or the surrounding retail complex.

Out-Of-Centre Retail and Leisure Developments

3.67 PPS6 outlines the policy approach for planning for town centre uses. Paragraph 2.14 states that development should be focused in town centres and makes it clear it is unlikely that new out of centre regional or sub-regional shopping centres would be permitted. However, it is not necessary for RSS to repeat national policy.

3.68 The size, function and nature of major leisure facilities such as water sports lakes, parks and theme parks may require land to be made available outside city, town and rural centres. These functions will need to be considered and fully justified through the sequential approach and locational strategy as part of the production of local development frameworks. Where these leisure and recreation functions are judged to require an out-of-town location they should preferably be on previously developed land and will need to be well connected to the nearest centres and public transport hubs by new or improved high quality public transport services, and cycling and walking facilities. When planned sustainably, rural leisure developments can contribute significantly to the vitality and viability of the rural economy and local communities.

Policy 27

OUT-OF-CENTRE LEISURE DEVELOPMENTS

Proposed regional and sub-regional scale leisure developments will need to be considered and justified through the sequential approach (Policy 4) and locational strategy (Policy 6) of the Regional Spatial Strategy. Local Development Frameworks should ensure that leisure developments are of an appropriate scale in relation to nearby settlements, and should not make provision for new out-of-centre leisure developments unless there are demonstrable benefits that would contribute to the sustainable growth of the local economy.

Improving and Increasing the Housing Stock

3.69 In 2007, the Government published a Housing Green Paper - Homes for the future: more affordable, more sustainable. Combined with Planning Policy Statement 3 it provides a context for planning for housing. The Green Paper outlines plans for delivering the Government's targets for three million new homes nationally by 2020, with two million of these by 2016. It includes:

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- plans for more ambitious building targets, increased investment, and new ways of identifying and using land for development
- more social housing
- building homes more quickly
- more affordable homes
- well-designed and good quality homes
- greener homes.

3.70 The population of the North East declined throughout the 1990s as the Region experienced reducing birth rates and out-migration. This was particularly significant through the recession of the early and mid-1990s as people left the Region in search of work. However, since the late 1990s natural change and net migration have been becoming less negative. The revised Mid Year Estimates emphasise this and show that the Region has experienced positive net migration since 2001. The latest population projections from the Office of National Statistics suggest that this trend will continue, and that the Region can expect to grow from 2.54m people in 2004 to about 2.56 million people by 2021 (2004-based population projections, amended October 2007).

3.71 An updated set of household projections published in February 2008 translated these population figures into household projections for the region.

3.72 The RSS therefore does not plan for past trends of population decline to continue. Average annual Family Health Service Authority data (1998-2003) shows that the dominant intra-regional migration flows are from urban to more rural neighbouring areas or regions, especially those within commuting distance. It is also important to appreciate that urban to urban movements have occurred, particularly into the authority areas of North Tyneside and Stockton within their respective city-regions. It is therefore evident that both of the Region's conurbations have been losing population, particularly to their neighbouring areas, and that hinterlands are broadening.

3.73 House prices, housebuilding and migration show a trend away from the creation of sustainable communities to a more dispersed pattern of development. This is influenced by people's greater willingness to travel; their increased financial mobility; and the availability of housing and living environments that people aspire to outside of the Region's conurbations. The resultant inequality of housing demand is demonstrated by geographical pockets of high and low demand. In areas of high demand the less affluent become priced out of the market resulting in problems of affordability.

3.74 The RPG1 Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) (2003/4) identifies 76,000 properties as suffering from low demand in March 2004. These are primarily concentrated within the Region's conurbations and former coalfield and heavy industrial areas. More crucially the draft RHS (2007) notes that these geographical areas of low demand also closely reflect the distribution of disadvantage. These two factors can be mutually reinforcing, where large parts of the existing dwelling stock are not meeting current or future aspirations, and demand for all types and tenures of property has collapsed or is close to doing so. This is not conducive to delivering sustainable communities and reinforces a more dispersed development pattern, which is contrary to the RSS locational strategy.

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3.75 The provision of housing that meets people's needs and aspirations in sustainable locations would help to diversify the dwelling stock; support economic growth; contribute to providing more balanced demand; reduce social exclusion; reduce the need to travel; reduce pressure in areas of current high demand; and protect the environment. Therefore, the RSS locational strategy focuses the majority of new development in existing settlements whilst simultaneously making better use of the existing dwelling stock. This provides the opportunity to reduce the consumption of natural resources; provide for inclusive communities; and reinvest in existing communities to complement regeneration.

3.76 Focusing development within the North East's two city-regions, and in particular its Conurbations, Main Settlements and Regeneration Towns will help to maximise the re-use of previously developed land and restructure failing housing markets. This approach would also support accelerated economic growth and increase the potential for people to access services and facilities without the need to travel by car.

3.77 As the Region's population increases further with economic prosperity, the housing stock will need to adapt to cater for changing needs and circumstances. The availability of high quality housing and living environments will therefore be essential in facilitating and in supporting economic growth by helping to attract and retain the Region's workforce. Attractive housing and living environments can contribute positively to urban areas, particularly through integrated packages of policies and proposals that include housing, retail, employment, transport, regeneration, crime prevention and community safety, and environmental protection and enhancement. Such an approach is essential to deliver and maintaining sustainable communities and in securing thriving regional and local economies.

3.78 Not all of the Region's housing problems are directly related to the dwelling stock and not all of them will be solved through housing based solutions. Delivering sustainable communities within the North East will therefore require physical, social and economic regeneration through an urban and rural renaissance. However, the Region's existing dwelling stock is important because it represents the vast majority of housing choice over the RSS period. The RSS approach therefore considers the total level of dwelling construction, instead of solely dwellings that are additional to the existing stock, as in the past. This recognises the need to improve, replace and/or clear some existing properties suffering from, or at risk of low demand, concurrently with an increase in additional dwellings focused within the conurbations and main settlements. This two pronged approach aims to reduce vacancy over the RSS period and complement regeneration activities to retain and attract population. Further analysis of the population and housing issues discussed in RSS is provided in 'Technical Paper No. 4: Housing'.

3.79 Delivering sustainable communities requires high quality housing and living environments in sustainable locations to facilitate and support accelerated economic growth. Both the RHS and RSS recognise that this requires an approach that simultaneously tackles housing market failure and increases the Region's dwelling stock resulting in increased build rates and demolition rates. Not every demolished dwelling will need to be replaced thereby resulting in stock reduction in some places, at least in the short term.

3.80 Delivering sustainable communities by retaining and stabilising population in sustainable locations requires a better mix of housing size, type and tenure within high quality living environments.

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3.81 The Regional Housing Aspirations Study (2005) showed that the Region has a lower proportion of detached dwellings and a higher proportion of terraced dwellings than other English regions outside London.

3.82 The local authorities with the largest proportions of detached dwellings are in Northumberland and County Durham. Conversely the largest proportions of terraced housing are in the conurbations and former coalfield and heavy industrial areas. The RHS demonstrates that low demand and disadvantage are most prevalent in areas with higher proportions of high density, terraced housing. The inner urban areas, in particular, represent some of the Region's most sustainable and accessible locations. The Regional Housing Aspirations Study showed that the property type and living environments in these areas do not meet people's aspirations. House prices, build rates, commuter data and migration show that people aspire to other types of property. It is essential therefore to improve or replace dwellings in these areas to provide a better mix of dwelling type, size and tenure within improved living environments to better meet people's aspirations. Failure to do so will increase the number of empty properties; lead to pressures for unnecessary land release; and undermine regeneration and housing market restructuring activities. Tackling low demand is also crucial in alleviating pressure on areas of high demand.

3.83 Priority should therefore be given to housing market restructuring initiatives making the best use of the existing housing stock, where there is a viable end use, so as to reduce the number of vacant and void properties. This also requires a significant increase in demolition rates, particularly the clearance of obsolete housing where improvement would not be viable. This will enable replacement with better, more energy efficient housing that better meets needs and aspirations. Not all dwellings that are demolished will be replaced and there will therefore be no need to increase the figures in Policy 28 to compensate for this.

3.84 Demolition and replacement represents one part of the RSS approach to increasing the Region's total housebuilding. Although the planning system has a limited role in tackling issues within the existing dwelling stock, close working with the Regional Housing Board (RHB) and other partners is needed to tackle low demand in a spatially coherent way.

3.85 The RPG1 Annual Monitoring Report (2003/4) identifies 76,000 properties in low demand in March 2004 throughout the Region that do not meet current or future housing needs. The RHS indicates where housing market restructuring initiatives aim to tackle low demand and re-establish a working market, which include housing within: South East Northumberland / North Tyneside Regeneration Initiative (SENTRI); East Northumberland Regeneration Initiative (ENRGI) in Castle Morpeth and Alnwick former coalfield area; parts of Sunderland; the Durham Coalfield Communities Area; and Tees Valley Living. Bridging NewcastleGateshead has been given Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder status by the Government; Tees Valley Living has also received funding. All of these initiatives take an integrated approach linking housing, planning, economy and other policy areas to improve properties and living environments tailored to local circumstances and needs. The Region's two Urban Regeneration Companies: Tees Valley Regeneration and Sunderland ARC both focus on the regeneration of central urban, previously developed sites for mixed use through new build, improving living environments and encouraging people to live in urban areas.

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3.86 As well as improving or replacing some existing dwellings, the RSS aims to accommodate concurrently additions to the dwelling stock. The level of additional dwellings has been influenced by housing market restructuring; the locational strategy; availability of previously developed land; and the economic and demographic and housing model projections developed by the Assembly and One North East. Policy 28 includes sub-regional targets for housing development on previously developed land. Firm targets are proposed for 2008 and further work is needed to establish the targets for 2016.

3.87 The RSS is based on a working assumption of levels of economic growth of over 2.5% per annum. Together with the population and household projections, the proposed scale of new housing to meet the needs both for demolition and replacement, and for additional housing ("net new housing") are as set out in Policy 28. This additional housing provision recognises the current level of commitments, the need to diversify the existing dwelling stock and the need to ensure that the successful delivery of housing market restructuring initiatives are not compromised.

3.88 The positive change in the economy will be focused within the conurbations as the largest entities of commercial activity and population. It will involve significant expansion of the knowledge economy and the retention and arrival of more knowledge workers in the Region. The distribution of housing to local authority level therefore reflects the need to meet the locational strategy by focusing the majority of new housebuilding in the conurbations at the heart of the city-region and the main settlements. It also reflects the need to ensure the success of the Region's housing market restructuring initiatives, the re-use of previously developed land and a reduction in the need to travel to access work, services and facilities. The Region's additional dwelling provision recognises the need for 'front-loading' to accommodate the large number of extant planning permissions that will be taken up in the first period. Post 2011 a greater proportion of additional housing will be focused in the conurbations.

3.89 PPS3 advocates an approach where housing allocations are now increasingly part of a long term system for adjusting to supply and demand, in which better information gathering and analysis by local authorities could lead to adjustments of the district figures in the next RSS revision. In planning to delivery housing trajectories, it seeks a flexible, responsive supply of land managed in a way that makes efficient and effective use of land, including re-use of previously-developed land, where appropriate. It is emphasised that the gross and net dwelling provisions set out in Policy 28 are guideline figures and do not represent a ceiling; LDFs may make the case for higher figures as appropriate.

3.90 Strategies, plans and programmes at both regional and local level will need to consider the rate of replacement of demolitions as well as additional new housing allocations when releasing land for housing development. They will also need to consider making suitable land available for replacement housing which is unable to be accommodated on its original site as a result of rebuilding at lower density. The annual rates of housing provision will include units secured through conversions that are still net additions to the stock. The net additional dwelling provision considers the reduction in requirements through using the existing stock more efficiently to reduce vacancy rates to at or below 3% by 2011. It will be important to ensure that all sources of housing potential are considered in determining housing supply and land release, including reconsideration of unimplemented

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allocations; lapsed planning consents; and other identified urban capacity; with priority being given to the reuse of previously developed land and buildings in sustainable locations through the sequential approach. This may mean that some local authorities will not need to allocate any new land until later in the RSS period, but may need to consider how better to bring forward sites identified in Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments .

Policy 28

GROSS AND NET DWELLING PROVISION

28.1. Total dwelling construction (Gross completions)

Local Development Frameworks should make provision for the following average annual level of total dwelling construction in the period 2004-2021.

Gross Dwelling Provision				
Figures Rounded (Oct 2005)	2004-11	2011-16	2016-21	2004-21
Tees Valley	2,860	2,695	2,280	2,640
Durham	1,890	1,620	1,225	1,615
Northumberland	945	930	900	925
Tyne & Wear	3,580	4,200	4,670	4,080
NORTH EAST	9,270	9,450	9,070	9,265

(Regional totals rounded to the nearest 5)

28.2. Improving the housing stock

Strategies, plans and programmes and planning proposals should develop an integrated package of measures to address low demand and abandonment that:

- maximises the improvement of existing properties where sufficient demand exists for their continued residential use and reduces or maintains vacancy rates at or below 3%;
- increases the average annual level of demolitions, particularly in the housing market restructuring areas, to the indicative estimated level identified below:

Demolitions					
Figures Rounded		2004-11	2011-16	2016-21	2004-21
Tees Valley	Replacement	580	575	460	545

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Demolitions					
	Demolition	920	635	440	695
Co Durham	Replacement	220	285	190	230
	Demolition	355	360	145	295
Northumberland	Replacement	45	35	50	45
	Demolition	70	35	55	55
Tyne & Wear	Replacement	1,005	820	715	865
	Demolition	1,595	780	750	1,110
NORTH EAST	Replacement	1,845	1,720	1,410	1,680
	Demolition	2,940	1,815	1,395	2,155

(Regional totals rounded to the nearest 5)

c. considers, in areas of older high-density housing, replacement at lower densities where this would improve the living environment and quality of life, and achieve a better mix of dwelling type, size and tenure.

28.3. Net dwelling provision

Local Development Frameworks and planning proposals shall:

- a. provide for average annual net additions to the dwelling stock, by district, for the financial years 2004-2021, as identified below:

Net Dwelling Provision				
(Figures Rounded)	2004-11	2011-16	2016-21	2004-21
Hartlepool	390	400	400	395
Redcar & Cleveland	325	365	330	340
Middlesbrough	440	485	300	410
Stockton-on-Tees	600	530	525	555
Darlington	525	340	265	395
Tees Valley	2,280	2,120	1,820	2,100

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Net Dwelling Provision				
Chester-le-street	100	130	130	120
Derwentside	320	270	200	270
Durham	250	220	190	225
Easington	370	215	70	235
Sedgefield	280	260	225	260
Teesdale	70	80	75	75
Wear Valley	280	160	145	205
County Durham	1,670	1,330	1,035	1,385
Alnwick	105	95	85	95
Berwick-upon-Tweed	85	85	75	80
Blyth Valley	250	290	290	275
Castle Morpeth	140	130	120	130
Tynedale	140	115	100	120
Wansbeck	180	180	180	180
Northumberland	900	895	850	885
Gateshead	435	585	775	580
Newcastle upon Tyne	700	940	1,070	880
North Tyneside	400	500	500	460
South Tyneside	340	415	540	420
Sunderland	700	940	1,070	880
Tyne and Wear	2,575	3,380	3,955	3,220
NORTH EAST	7,425	7,725	7,660	7,580

(Sub-Regional and Regional totals rounded to the nearest 5)

The District Allocations set out above should not provide the justification for the refusal of windfall housing proposals that fall within the guidance set out for Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments.

28.4. Provision post 2021

- a. To plan for the continuous delivery of housing for at least 15 years from the date of adoption, the first round of Local Development Documents should make the assumption that the annual average rate of provision during the early years after 2021 will be the same as the average for 2004 to 2021.

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28.5. Housing markets and assessments

- a. Local Development Frameworks should identify and develop specific strategies and programmes in liaison with stakeholders and local communities, for each Housing Market Restructuring area.
- b. In preparing strategies, plans and programmes, and in determining planning proposals, local planning authorities should ensure that they have regard to the wider housing market area, including that beyond their local authority boundary and the potential impact that their proposals may have on that wider area.
- c. In preparation for future reviews of housing within RSS, the RPB and Local Planning Authorities should develop Strategic Housing Market Assessments. These should take into account of market information and have regard to housing market areas.

Delivering and Managing Housing Supply

3.91 PPS3 states that Local Planning Authorities should continue to make effective use of land by re-using land that has previously been developed. The Regional performance in 2004-05 was 67.8% and it is proposed a regional target of 70% is set for 2008, increasing to 75% by 2016. This is significantly above the national average of 60%.

3.92 The 'plan, monitor and manage' approach to housing land release, in accordance with policy 5, is essential to ensure that housing land in sustainable locations is developed ahead of less sustainable sites. This is critical in responding to changing circumstances and ensuring that targets for the reuse of previously developed land are met. The continued review and update of local authority strategic land availability assessments and reconsidering lapsed planning consents and unimplemented allocations support this by identifying and phasing the release of housing sites. In the short term interim local policy guidance is a useful tool to limit the potentially adverse impacts of un-coordinated land release. In the longer term strategic housing market assessments will offer a more detailed evidence base particularly in tackling cross-boundary issues. Local authorities with adequate land supplies will need to consider the phased release of the most sustainable sites. Where land that better fulfils the locational strategy and sequential approach becomes available it should be phased ahead of other previously identified but less suitable land.

3.93 PPS3 requires local authorities to consider the redevelopment of 'unneeded' employment land for housing. Employment land is essential for economic prosperity, the renaissance of the Region and in the delivery of sustainable communities. Therefore, whilst housing on previously developed land is important, the re-use of such land for employment is also important. The managed release of housing land can protect employment sites from re-development for other uses like housing, even where these uses would be regarded as sustainable. This is particularly important when considering the compatibility of alternative land uses such as housing and the future operability of employment land adjacent to 'unneeded' employment sites. Local authorities will consider the exact nature and level of protection for employment sites not identified in the RSS from changes of use to housing and other uses through their LDFs.

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3.94 PPS3 suggests a national minimum density of 30 dwellings per hectare, with some local flexibility to set a range of densities under justified circumstances. It is also appropriate to make most efficient use of land and concentrate development in urban areas. The RSS supports this principle but also accepts that density influences the type and particularly the size of dwellings. Planning for future households and the provision of a better mix of dwelling types and sizes, particularly in urban areas, has important social and economic implications for the future and is essential if the Region is to have a sustainable pattern of development. These factors all contribute directly to the health and quality of life of current and future residents. There is, therefore, a wider sustainability argument about meeting people's aspirations and the needs of different households and dwellings in sustainable locations. The provision and location of so called 'executive housing', defined as the upper end of the market, and dwelling types under-represented in the current stock, like detached housing, will have an important role to play in attracting and retaining population. There will be no need for locational exceptions for 'executive housing' or types under represented in the housing stock as these should be subject to the RSS locational strategy and sequential approach. The type and size of dwellings should be controlled through clear local policies on density.

3.95 Local authorities will therefore need to take into account PPS3 and identify clear circumstances, within the sequential approach, where different densities will be applied to achieve a better mix of dwelling type, size and tenure. Higher densities should particularly be located within close proximity to strategic and local public transport hubs. In housing market restructuring areas, replacing demolished dwellings at lower densities can improve demand for properties and improve living conditions. Other crucial factors to consider are the protection of local character and of larger dwellings from sub-division where this would be detrimental to the mix of dwelling type, size and tenure. The onus will be on LDFs to generally conform to the 30 dwellings per hectare approach within PPS3 but to outline specific criteria within the sequential approach and locational strategy where densities could be lower to diversify the dwelling stock and better plan for mixed communities.

Policy 29

DELIVERING AND MANAGING HOUSING SUPPLY

Local Development Frameworks and/or planning proposals shall:

29.1. Previously Developed Land Targets

- a. meet the sub-regional targets for housing development on previously developed land and through the re-use of existing buildings as set out below;

Previously Developed Land Targets		
Area	2008	2016
TeesValley	70%	
DurhamCounty	65%	
NorthumberlandCounty	50%	

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Previously Developed Land Targets		
Tyne and Wear	80%	
North East	70%	75%

29.2. Infrastructure Provision

- a. ensure that the necessary new or improved infrastructure and services are provided and co-ordinated with the development of new housing;

29.3. Densities

- a. consider making suitable land available for replacement housing which is unable to be accommodated on its original site due to re-building at lower density;
- b. where appropriate restrict higher density housing resulting from sub-division or other intensification to protect an area's characteristics and ability to contribute towards types, sizes and tenure under-represented in the Region's dwelling stock; and
- c. provide for an average density of 30-50 dwellings per hectare at the local authority level, and set out criteria to define circumstances where provision of lower densities is needed for additional dwellings to better provide for future households and a better mix of dwelling type, size and tenure within the context of the RSS Locational Strategy and Sequential Approach.

29.4. Release of land

Local Development Frameworks should put in place phasing policies that:

- a. ensure the managed release of housing land occurs in accordance with the locational strategy and sequential approach and consider reaching at or below 3% vacancy in local authority areas by 2011;
- b. bring forward previously developed land opportunities first, taking account of new previously developed land potential as identified in up-to-date Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments;

29.5. Consideration of planning proposals

In considering planning proposals local planning authorities should:

- a. take into account lapsed planning permissions and unimplemented development plan allocations in light of up-to-date Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments, and the locational strategy;

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- b. consider phasing the release of housing land to ensure that it does not compromise the successful delivery of housing market restructuring initiatives;
- c. consider the re-use of employment sites for housing only where they are not required for long-term employment use;
- d. consider the compatibility of housing with the operation of adjacent employment land; and
- e. take into account the impact on the local planning authority's housing and previously-developed land trajectories.

Improving Inclusivity and Affordability

3.96 Nationally-based household and population projections indicate trends towards a lower average household size due to changing social characteristics and people living longer.

3.97 Nationally and regionally the population is growing and there are major demographic trends that will affect the nature of housing supply in the future. With declining death rates and increasing longevity the elderly will make up a far greater proportion of the North East population than at present. This will be particularly pronounced as the 'baby boom' generation, presently turning 60, live on into their 80s. This will mean there are more one and two person households. More recently, increased birth rates, partly due to more younger people staying or moving to the region for better economic opportunities, will contribute to there being more families. It is important that the nature of housing provision reflects this situation and can respond to the needs and aspirations of different households over time.

3.98 The provision of an appropriate mix of dwelling type, size and tenure in sustainable locations will therefore be important to provide sufficient choice of housing; create inclusive, mixed-income communities; improve quality of life and reduce social polarisation. Specific consideration needs to be given to the provision of facilities and services within existing and future communities; housing quality and affordability; special needs; and the needs of the Gypsy and travelling communities.

3.99 The provision of phased new or improved schools, health services and other services and facilities, through planning obligations or specifically designed schemes, with new housing are key to improving the health and quality of life of the Region's inhabitants.

3.100 The significant inequalities in demand and affordability in the Region's housing stock show that it is not meeting the housing needs of people on modest or low incomes. Housing affordability problems occur where house price increases exceed average income increases. A lack of affordable housing creates imbalances in the population mix; reduces workforce availability to local businesses; undermines local service provision; and increases in-commuting, the need to travel and length of journeys. The provision of an adequate supply of good quality affordable housing, as part of a better mix of housing type, size and tenure, is conducive to the economic and social well being of the whole Region.

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3.101 The RSS tackles both the cause and effect of affordability by better meeting people's aspirations and needs to help alleviate pressure on popular areas and create a more balanced demand, whilst providing for affordable housing where it is needed. The Region's more popular rural areas exhibit high demand for housing because of the property type and living environment they offer. Former coalfield and former heavy industrial areas, particularly parts of South East Northumberland; and North West and Southern County Durham have mixed patterns of high and low demand. Urban areas do not have widespread affordable housing supply problems, but do experience issues of quality and desirability. Some of the Region's rural areas have an affordable housing supply issue fuelled by demand from urban areas and demand for second homes. The resultant house price inflation and the differential costs of equivalent dwellings exclude lower-income groups of society from being able to access the housing market.

3.102 The RHS (2007) noted that the local authorities with the most significant affordability problems in the Region were Alnwick, Berwick-upon-Tweed, Castle Morpeth and Tynedale. Alnwick and Berwick-upon-Tweed and Tynedale in particular have affordability issues that relate to second/holiday homes, with the former two most notably in the coastal area. Other parts of the Region also experience demand for second homes. Darlington, Newcastle and Stockton-on-Tees are the urban authorities with the most significant affordability problems. Derwentside, Teesdale and Wear Valley are the authorities in County Durham with the most apparent affordability problems.

3.103 Removing the factors that influence people to move away from the urban and former coalfield and heavy industrial areas, through improvement of housing and living environments, would help to alleviate some of the pressure on rural areas. This would also help to reduce population loss from urban areas and reflect the locational strategy. This approach is complemented by providing for different tenures, levels of affordability and social needs, including better providing for people's increasing longevity and for special needs. Given the conclusions of the 'Barker Review of Housing Supply' (2004), the Assembly, RHB and stakeholders are undertaking appropriate research identifying and assessing housing markets.

3.104 It will be for LDFs to determine the actual target for affordable housing provision and the range of housing requirements through up-to-date local housing assessments, although Strategic Housing Market Assessments will assist this. However, low level thresholds should be set to determine the size of developments above which affordable housing should be provided. In some circumstances these may be below the levels indicated in PPS3. It will also be useful to incorporate the sequential approach by having different thresholds dependent on the needs, size and function of the settlement. The RPB and the RHB will work closely with local authorities to identify local level affordability targets.

3.105 All housing authority districts are required by law, to have a homelessness strategy in place which should outline their strategic approach to tackling and preventing homelessness in their areas. The RSS can assist in this process by guiding affordability and inclusivity issues. Homelessness is specifically covered under Priority 4 in the Regional Housing Strategy 2007 which highlights the importance of addressing specific community and social needs. Strategic Housing Market Assessments are designed to provide up to date research about local requirements including levels of homelessness and should involve a range of stakeholders including local homelessness services.

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3.106 Local Planning Authorities are expected to provide sufficient affordable housing in rural areas consistent with the broader aims of this strategy. This is particularly the case where pressure from the “second homes” market is having a significant impact on the availability and price of property. It has already been shown to be a problem in Alnwick and in Berwick-upon-Tweed, the latter which has the third highest second home ownership figures in England, and it is likely that other areas of attractive coast and upland are susceptible to similar pressures.

3.107 Local Planning Authorities should allocate and release sites for affordable housing in small rural communities* ⁽ⁱ⁾ using the rural exceptions sites policy. Local Planning Authorities will need to demonstrate that housing need exists and that mechanisms to retain the affordability of the housing in perpetuity are clearly established. Policies should set out the criteria to be used when applying such an approach, including identifying the local need, how creating sustainable, mixed rural communities will be addressed, and the manner in which planning agreements will be enforced and maintained.

3.108 The 2004 Housing Act imposes a duty on local housing authorities to carry out an assessment of the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers residing in or resorting to their district and prepare a strategy to meet these needs. Circular 01/06 provides guidance on the planning aspects of locating sites for Gypsies and Travellers. The Circular highlights that the RSS should identify the number of pitches required by each local planning authority. In March 2007 consultants undertook an assessment for the North East Assembly of Gypsy and Traveller needs in the region, and the following assessment should be regarded as a broad indication of where accommodation needs arise. Local studies will provide further evidence base for where pitch provision should be considered within LDFs. The regional study estimated that there is a current unmet requirement for 49 pitches in the region. In addition to this the Study estimates that a further 117 pitches would be required by 2020. This gives an estimated regional need of 166 pitches above current provision by 2020. The Study gives a breakdown of these requirements by eight groups of local authorities.

Gypsy and Traveller Pitch Requirements (Source: White Young Green)					
Area	Current	by 2010	by 2015	By 2020	Total by 2020
Berwick, Alnwick	0	1	2	2	5
Tynedale, Castle Morpeth, Wansbeck, Blyth Valley	3	3	5	5	16
North and South Tyneside	2	0	0	0	2
Newcastle upon Tyne, Gateshead	12	1	1	1	15

i [*Small Rural Settlements that have been designated for enfranchisement and right to acquire purposes by Statutory Instruments 1997/620-25 and 1999/1307]

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Gypsy and Traveller Pitch Requirements (Source: White Young Green)					
Sunderland, Chester-le-Street, Derwentside, Durham City	0	4	7	8	19
Hartlepool, Easington, Sedgefield	4	2	3	3	12
Teesdale, Wear Valley	5	5	6	7	23
Darlington, Stockton on Tees, Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland	23	13	18	20	74
Total	49	29	42	46	166

3.109 A key aim of the Circular 01/06 is to enhance the health and education standards of these families and good quality accommodation is key to this aim. Development Plan Documents should include policies to ensure identified need is dealt with fairly and effectively. LDFs will also need to make provision for changing needs including setting criteria for the release of private sites for use by the gypsy and travelling community as well as those owned by local authorities. In addition Circular 04/07, issued after the NEA consultants' assessment of Gypsy and Traveller needs, states that the needs of Travelling Showpeople should be captured in Accommodation Needs Assessments. Their site and plot needs are different from Gypsies and Travellers in that sites are normally for a mixed business and residential use with facilities to repair and store significant amounts of equipment.

Policy 30

IMPROVING INCLUSIVITY AND AFFORDABILITY

30.1. In preparation for future reviews of housing within RSS, Strategic Housing Market Assessments will inform a review of the regional approach to addressing affordable housing needs, including an affordable housing target for the Region and each housing market area.

30.2. Strategies, plans and programmes and planning proposals should:

- a. make provision for a range of dwelling type, size and tenure to meet the assessed needs of all sectors of the community, including the needs of families with children, single person households, the disabled and older people. In doing so they should consider those elements of the housing stock which are currently under-represented and the contribution that could be made by replacement dwellings in the housing market restructuring areas;
- b. set local authority affordable housing provision targets informed by up to-date local housing assessments;

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- c. address the problems of local affordability in both urban and rural areas, including ensuring a high provision of affordable housing is sought within the districts of Alnwick, Berwick-upon-Tweed, Castle Morpeth and Tynedale;
- d. have regard to the level of need for affordable housing, including the use of planning obligations in the development of all housing sites, including when considering the renewal of lapsed planning consents;
- e. ensure housing is served by public transport and is accessible to jobs, services and facilities by modes other than the car; and
- f. ensure the integrated and phased provision of new or improved schools, health, community and other services and facilities with new housing development.

30.3. Provision of sites for gypsies and travellers

- a. Local authorities should carry out an assessment of the housing needs of Gypsies and Travellers and Showpeople. Collaboration between authorities on these studies is encouraged to more fully understand the patterns of need and the adequacy of current provision; and
- b. Local development frameworks / documents should provide the criteria following the plan, monitor and manage and sequential approaches for the provision and release of pitches for the Gypsy and Travelling and Showpeople communities and, where appropriate, identify locations for these pitches.

Theme 3C: Conserving, Enhancing and Capitalising Upon the Regions Diverse Natural and Built Environment, Heritage and Culture

Introduction

3.110 Together, the Region's built and natural environment are an important resource and major asset, both in their own right and as a necessary component in contributing to economic growth, regeneration, health and quality of life in the Region. Creating and retaining high quality and attractive environments is important in encouraging tourism; providing leisure, recreational and cultural opportunities; improving health and providing a sense of well-being; as well as being an essential element both to successful regeneration and to improving the image of the Region. High quality design ensures attractive, usable, durable and adaptable places and is a key element in achieving sustainable development. The natural environment is the support system within which all life exists. Its resources, such as air, water, land and soil, have a limit to the amount of activity they can support. Breaching these limits will lead to a reduction in quality of life, particularly for future generations. Economic and social development must take place within the framework of respecting regional and global environmental limits.

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3.111 A high quality, attractive natural and built environment is important to people's quality of life and sense of well-being. The North East has some of the country's highest quality natural environment that includes major areas of landscape importance such as National Parks and AONBs, supporting a vast array of species and habitats and geological features. Statutory management plans provide the framework for the conservation and enhancement of National Parks and AONBs. The Region also enjoys an outstanding cultural and historic heritage, including two World Heritage Sites at Durham Cathedral and Castle and Hadrian's Wall. It is not only important to protect and improve these assets, but also to manage their use to optimise their resource potential for the wider benefit of the Region. Some parts of the Region suffer from poor environmental quality, often as a result of former industrial activity and associated dereliction. The right of everyone to live in a clean, healthy, attractive environment is a central principle of the RSS. The North East Environment Forum commissioned a report on the state of the environment in the Region in 2004 'North East State of the Environment' (NESE). The report provides evidence of the significance of the Region's environmental assets and their importance to the economic, social and environmental well-being of the Region, assessing the wider benefits of environmental enhancement projects.

3.112 The Region's National Park, AONBs and Heritage Coasts are highly prized for their unspoilt open landscapes. These areas are subject to strong protection from inappropriate development through the planning system. However, these areas also contain living, working communities that have, to a large extent, been disadvantaged due to their relative remoteness and by changes in the agricultural economy.

3.113 The North East displays evidence of a long history of human occupation, much of which is not always easily visible. The Region's upland areas are among the country's most significant archaeological resources, with whole landscapes being of historic interest, whilst sites in urban areas can provide unique insights into more recent developments. Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site and its setting form an important historic landscape. Other important historic landscapes include the Cheviot and Eston Hills; commons such as the Newcastle Town Moor and village greens like Stamfordham or West Auckland. The Region also contains a significant industrial archaeological resource, notably related to the early history of the various mining industries and of the railways. Attention is now also being paid to maritime archaeology associated with inter-tidal areas on the coast and in the river valleys.

3.114 The Region's abundance of listed buildings, sites designated on the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens, conservation areas, the two World Heritage Sites, sites designated on English Heritage's Register of Historic Battlefields, and Scheduled Monuments are all of historic importance. The two World Heritage Sites are: Hadrian's Wall Military Zone, which is recognised as one of the best preserved and most complete examples of Roman frontier defences in the world; and Durham Cathedral, which is the largest and best example of Norman architecture in the UK and Northern Europe with the Castle, being the former residence of the Prince-Bishops of Durham. It is important that the character and setting of the sites are safeguarded from inappropriate development. These two World Heritage sites are hoped to be joined by a third which centres on St Paul's (Jarrow) and St Peters (Monkwearmouth) associated with the vastly influential life and works of the Venerable Bede and which will add depth to this heritage offering and strategic support through the RSS and the Regional Cultural Strategy.

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3.115 Water quality is important to the quality of life of the Region's population both as the source of drinking water and for industrial use. The Region's rivers and coasts also support a wide variety of wildlife and are used for recreation activity. These factors make water a key economic resource; the North East being a net exporter of water from its substantial storage capacity at Kielder and other reservoirs.

3.116 Increased areas of tree cover can provide a diverse range of benefits, such as providing timber, enhancing the beauty of the countryside, revitalising derelict landscapes and enhancing wildlife habitats and acting as sinks for CO₂. It can also be used to improve the quality of life in and around towns and cities by screening development and improving the surroundings of housing and industry; providing opportunities for sporting and recreational activities; and generating employment. The North East Regional Forestry Strategy identifies key regional opportunities and priorities and provides the overarching strategic context for the North East Community Forest Programme and for local initiatives including the South East Northumberland 'Greening for Growth' Strategy.

3.117 Delivery of the Region's economic, regeneration and population aspirations is therefore only sustainable where conservation and enhancement are equal elements of the proposed use of the environment. This Theme therefore provides the framework for more effective, sustainable use and management of the Region's environment as a resource. This will enable utilisation of the opportunities that the environment presents to improve social conditions; support economic regeneration and growth; and enhance environmental habitats. It should be noted that due to the integral part that the environment plays within the overall RSS, many of the policy elements are also incorporated within other RSS Themes. Further information can be found within '*Technical Paper No. 6: Environment*', '*Technical Paper No. 7: Energy*', '*Technical Paper No. 8: Minerals*' and '*Technical Paper No. 9: Waste*'.

Landscape Character

3.118 The Region hosts a wealth of valuable landscapes including the Northumberland National Park and a small area of the North York Moors National Park, which for the purposes of RSS is covered as a whole by the Yorkshire & the Humber Region. It also contains two AONBs, the North Pennines AONB, some of which is within the North West Region, and the Northumberland Coast AONB. These areas, shown on the Environment Information Map, are nationally designated for their special landscape and environmental qualities and should be managed and enhanced appropriately to deliver the statutory conservation objectives for which they were designated; public bodies have a duty to have regard to National Park purposes when exercising their own functions. National Parks are also designated for the opportunities they provide for public enjoyment of their special qualities. Public enjoyment and recreation are also important for AONBs, although these are not specific reasons for designation. Strategies, plans and programmes should support suitably located and designed development necessary to facilitate the economic and social well-being of these designated areas and their communities.

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3.119 As well as the landscapes designated for their value nationally, the Region also possesses three Heritage Coasts. Heritage Coasts are a non-statutory landscape definition. The main purpose of the definition is to conserve the natural beauty of the coastline and, where appropriate, improve accessibility for visitors. The Region also has a number of landscapes that have been identified in existing development plans as Special Landscape Areas and Areas of Great Landscape Value to provide an extra degree of protection to locally important landscapes, which are highly valued by local communities.

3.120 At the regional level, landscape character has been broadly defined in the Countryside Agency's publication 'Countryside Character: Volume 1 – North East' (1998), which identifies fifteen Countryside Character Areas. These provide the framework for more detailed county and district level landscape character assessments, which can be used to determine the ability of a landscape to accommodate change whilst protecting key characteristics that contribute to local distinctiveness and sense of place. In addition, English Heritage's Historic Landscape Characterisation Programme establishes an overarching view of the whole historic landscape; and focuses on aspects of the landscape that have not always been regarded as archaeological. Where appropriate, these assessments can also be used to help target landscape restoration and environmental improvement schemes as part of wider area-based regeneration objectives.

3.121 Tranquillity, freedom from noise and visual disturbance, is one of the less easily defined attributes of the countryside but is also important to quality of life. The Region has some of the most tranquil landscapes in the country and these are a major asset to the tourism economy. A pilot study has investigated ways of mapping tranquillity in more detail in the Northumberland National Park and the Durham Coalfield. As there is no comprehensive study of the Region, the RSS does not define tranquil areas as this is more appropriately considered at the local level.

3.122 In addition to protection from inappropriate development, integrated management initiatives developed and implemented by effective partnerships are required to sustain, and in some cases enhance, the diversity of the Region's designated and non-designated valued landscapes. Management plans and strategies should be developed and kept updated for the National Parks, AONBs and for the Durham, North Northumberland and North Yorkshire and Cleveland Heritage Coasts. Urban fringe landscapes would also benefit from this approach.

3.123 The preparation of Town Design Statements, Village Design Statements, Countryside Design Summaries and Concept Statements can help ensure that regional and local characteristics are understood and influence the design of new development.

Policy 31

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

Strategies, plans and planning proposals should:

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- a. promote development appropriate to the special qualities and statutory purposes of these areas in the Northumberland National Park, the Northumberland Coast and the North Pennines AONBs, and the three areas of Heritage Coast: North Northumberland, Durham and North Yorkshire and Cleveland;
- b. contribute to the implementation of the National Park and AONBs Management Plans whilst helping to achieve favourable condition status at European sites;
- c. have regard to landscape character assessments and the content of AONB/National Park Management Plans to justify the retention or creation of any local landscape designations, guide policy formulation and development control decisions, and assist in targeting landscape restoration and environmental improvement schemes;
- d. promote integrated management initiatives to sustain nationally, regionally and locally valued landscapes, including the Durham, North Northumberland and North Yorkshire and Cleveland Heritage Coasts and urban fringe landscapes;
- e. recognise the role that character-based planning tools such as Town Design Statements, Village Design Statements, Countryside Design Summaries and Concept Statements can play in promoting high quality development that respects local character and distinctiveness; and
- f. Incorporate the findings of Shoreline Management Plans and Catchment Flood Management Plans.

Historic Environment

3.124 The historic environment is a term used to embrace all the historic aspects of our environment, be they archaeological sites, historic landscapes, standing buildings, parks and gardens, semi-natural environments such as wood, heath and moor, or historic land uses such as industry, farming, defence, communications and even tourism. The historic environment is not just about the past, it is also about the present and the future. It can contribute to our quality of life by giving people a sense of place and identity. This Region's historic environment gives it a unique competitive advantage, attracts people to live and stay; businesses to invest; and tourists to visit. The North East contains some of the world's finest heritage assets: two of Britain's sixteen World Heritage Sites – Durham Castle and Cathedral and Hadrian's Wall. Furthermore, the case for a third, centred on Monkwearmouth and Jarrow, based on the world-wide significance of the life and works of the Venerable Bede, is currently being put forward. These sites are of significant value nationally and internationally, and have significant benefits to the Region's economy through tourism and the heritage they portray. Their maintenance, enhancement and management are critically important. They should be approached holistically and delivered jointly by a range of agencies responsible for plans and programmes in the surrounding areas; for example, English Heritage has published 'Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site Management Plan 2002-2007'.

3 Delivering an Urban and Rural Renaissance

3.125 The North East contains over 12,000 listed buildings, which represent around 3% of the total number in England. 3.3% are listed Grade I (compared to 2.46% nationally), and 5.8% are listed Grade II* (compared to 5.6% nationally). The North East has 8.29% of the country's Grade I and II* buildings which are considered to be 'at risk'; which is over twice the national average. These assets are in a vulnerable condition and to deliver PPG15 objectives, all local authorities should seek to ensure the repair of these buildings to remove them from the "At Risk" Register.

3.126 The majority of listed buildings in the Region are listed Grade II. Information on their condition is only available from other organisations in the sector, but there is sufficient evidence to suggest that they may be equally at risk. However, only a third of local authorities have registers of such buildings. Furthermore there are hundreds of other buildings that are not included on the Department of Culture, Media and Sport list, yet they are of interest to the local communities in which they are found, and for many, form important parts of the familiar and cherished local scene. Local authorities are encouraged by English Heritage to create and maintain lists of these buildings to accord them to the recognition they deserve. In the North East, only around a quarter of local authorities maintain such lists.

3.127 The North East possesses other heritage assets, including scheduled monuments, conservation areas, and entries on English Heritage's Registers of Battlefields, and Historic Parks and Gardens, in addition to a wealth of unscheduled archaeological sites. An integral part of Conservation Area designations is the preparation of appraisals of the special character of an area, which informs a management plan to help deliver positive enhancement. Only an estimated 2.5% of the 277 Conservation Areas in the North East are informed by such appraisals and even fewer have management plans. This compares unfavourably with the national average of 28%.

3.128 An important principle is that strategies, plans and programmes should adopt an approach to the historic environment which is based upon:

- adequate identification and assessment of the assets;
- consideration of the contribution these make to local character and diversity; and
- assessment of the capacity of these assets to absorb change.

3.129 In areas identified for growth and regeneration it is important that the impacts on the historic environment are properly understood at an early stage in the process. For instance, it is important to fully assess the implications of sustainable construction policy and energy efficiency improvements during the renovation, upkeep and repair of historic buildings. Section 7 of PPG15 provides some relevant guidance. In many areas, opportunities exist for conservation-led regeneration which will benefit both the historic environment and the economy. Grainger Town in Newcastle and the work ongoing in Sunniside, Sunderland are examples of what can be achieved.

Policy 32

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

32.1. Strategies, plans and programmes and planning proposals should seek to conserve and enhance the historic environment of the Region by:

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- a. clearly identifying and assessing the significance of any heritage assets and their vulnerability to change;
- b. using the process of characterisation to understand their contribution to the local environment and to identify options for their sensitive management;
- c. encouraging the refurbishment and re-use of appropriate disused or under-used buildings and incorporating them into regeneration schemes;
- d. seeking to preserve, in situ, archaeological sites of national importance and, where appropriate, other archaeological remains of regional and local importance;
- e. recognising the opportunities for heritage led regeneration to be used in a constructive way to help bring about social and economic regeneration, and to encourage its potential for business, education and tourism; and
- f. encouraging and supporting the preparation and review of the management plans for Hadrian's Wall Military Zone World Heritage Site, Durham Cathedral and Castle World Heritage Site, and the candidate World Heritage Site at Jarrow and Monkwearmouth and incorporating their principles and objectives;

32.2. Local authorities should:

- a. prepare, and regularly maintain registers of Grade II listed buildings 'at risk'; for their areas, and pursue policies and measures which seek to repair and remove all grades of building from 'at risk' registers through repair;
- b. consider preparing, and regularly maintaining, lists of locally important buildings for their areas, and set out policies in LDFs, which seek, as far as possible, their protection against inappropriate change;
- c. consider preparing Conservation Area Appraisals for existing and proposed conservation areas, and proceed to the preparation of Management Plans for the delivery of improvements to those areas;
- d. consider preparing lists of locally important registered landscapes, Historic Landscape Assessments and Conservation Management Plans for historic designated landscapes; and
- e. consider preparing urban surveys of historic towns and other substantial settlements, to improve knowledge of their entire historic fabric as a guide to ensure future development maximises the potential for preservation, protection and enhancement.

Biodiversity and Geodiversity

3.130 The richness of the Region's biodiversity and geological conservation features is highlighted by its abundance of designated sites. The main concentrations of designated wildlife habitats and geological features are found in the North Pennines, Northumberland National Park and the Northumberland, Teesmouth, Cleveland and Durham Coasts. The international importance of the North Pennines for its geological features is recognised by its recognition as Britain's first European

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Geopark and a founding member of the UNESCO Global Geoparks Network. European / Global Geoparks have been identified as having outstanding geological heritage, where there is considerable local effort to conserve this heritage and encourage its enjoyment and understanding by the public. It is important that these areas and designated sites are not seen in isolation but are considered as an integral part of the nature conservation resource across the Region. The Magnesian Limestone, which underlies part of eastern County Durham into south Tyne and Wear, has a significant bearing on the economy of the area, through quarrying, and in influencing the landscape and soils which create a unique community of plants found nowhere else in the world. The Region is also significant in terms of species protection as it supports over 90% of England's black grouse and is the last English stronghold for the red squirrel.

3.131 The Whin Sill is of biodiversity importance to the region (supporting an important grassland flora), is of economic importance for the aggregates extraction industry, and is of heritage and landscape value (the Roman Wall is built of the Whin Sill escarpment, as are other heritage sites such as Bamburgh Castle).

3.132 The North East Biodiversity Forum has published 'Biodiversity Indicators and Targets for the North East of England'. The targets set out the Region's goals for contributing to the delivery of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan. The RSS recognises the need to integrate the delivery of biodiversity with social and economic objectives and has identified the key areas where action should be targeted to make the greatest impact on achievement of the Region's biodiversity targets. These broad areas are areas of greatest need or opportunity, but this does not imply that positive measures for biodiversity are restricted to these areas.

3.133 Planning authorities should work in partnership with the Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) partnerships, relevant agencies, organisations and fora to identify and map the areas of nature conservation importance and set out the action required to meet the Regional Biodiversity Targets. The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 puts a duty on all public authorities, in the exercising of their functions, to have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity.

3.134 The Environment Information Map shows:

- Biodiversity Target Zones: priority areas for the management and enhancement of existing biodiversity resources and for targeting the reversal of habitat fragmentation; and
- Habitat creation and enhancement areas: areas with the greatest need or potential for the creation / retention and enhancement of biodiversity, including brownfield biodiversity areas.

3.135 A number of habitats require activity to reverse fragmentation: for example ancient semi-natural woodland habitat, most of which is found in the lowlands and upland fringes. The Woodland Trust have produced 'Space for Nature', which highlights the national priorities for dealing with de-fragmentation of ancient and semi-natural woodland habitats, and identifies geographical areas with particular concentrations of ancient woodland as the priority areas for action. One of the thirty five areas with major concentrations of ancient woodland is in the North East, which includes the Derwent Valley, parts of Wear Valley and Durham City.

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3.136 Invasive alien species are an issue affecting many nature conservation sites. There is a need for the Region to develop both strategic and local measures to tackle this.

3.137 The preparation and implementation of LBAPs and Local Geodiversity Action Plans (LGAPs) for appropriate areas covering the whole of the North East is supported as an important mechanism for delivering the Region's biodiversity commitments and targets. At present there is patchy coverage of LGAPs, including Cleveland, North Pennines, County Durham and the Northumberland National Park. To build on this it is important that action for biodiversity and geodiversity should also form part of local Community Strategies.

3.138 'Natural Commitment' (English Nature, 2003) reports on the Region's progress towards one of those key regional biodiversity targets and a national PSA target. Nationally and regionally, 95% of all nationally important wildlife sites (SSSIs) are to be in a favourable condition by 2010. It reports that presently, only 46% of SSSI land in the Region is in a favourable condition and sets out a programme for action to address this major challenge. It is recognised that around 103,000 hectares of SSSI land must be improved in order for the Region to meet the target, through effective management works to sustain and enhance habitats and species populations. The IRF recognises the importance of biodiversity and areas of land designated as SSSIs in favourable condition, as an indicator of the environmental health of the Region.

3.139 The introduction of agri-environmental schemes and new development can provide opportunities for biodiversity, in such cases LBAPs should provide relevant targets together with nationally available guidance such as the Town and Country Planning Association's 'Biodiversity by Design' publication. There is also an increasing recognition of the potential biodiversity value of brownfield sites. It is therefore important to take account of existing biodiversity and geodiversity interests and look for ways of retaining these features when designing regeneration schemes.

Policy 33

BIODIVERSITY & GEODIVERSITY

Strategies, plans and programmes, and planning proposals should ensure that the Region's ecological and geological resources are protected and enhanced to return key biodiversity resources to viable levels by:

- a. continuing to promote the protection and enhancement of internationally and nationally important sites and species;
- b. reversing habitat fragmentation and species isolation particularly in Biodiversity Target Zones;
- c. developing habitat creation / restoration projects particularly in the priority Habitat Creation and Enhancement Areas;
- d. providing for the expansion and linking of existing habitats and species populations including the creation of semi-natural green spaces in and around urban areas and for habitat restoration;
- e. contributing to improving the Region's SSSIs to a favourable condition, by 2010;
- f. preparing biodiversity and geological audits;

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- g. preparing and implementing Local Biodiversity Action Plans and Local Geodiversity Action Plans;
- h. supporting proposals for biodiversity and geodiversity within Sustainable Community Strategies; and
- i. including proposals for action to stop the spread of, and eliminate, invasive species.

The Aquatic and Marine Environment

3.140 The Region's abundant fresh water supply is a major industrial, environmental and recreational asset to the Region and the whole country. This abundance of fresh water is largely due to past investment in Europe's largest man-made reservoir at Kielder Water in Northumberland, together with a supporting water infrastructure, which allows a supply of water, via the river systems to Tyneside, Wearside and Tees Valley. However, new or enhanced infrastructure may be necessary, depending on the location of new development. Any new and existing water transfer activities from Kielder Water and between catchments within and beyond the Region must seek to preserve and enhance the environmental qualities and recreational assets of areas upstream and not just nearby riverside development.

3.141 The biological, chemical and visual qualities of the Region's coast and rivers vary enormously. The north Northumberland Coast is designated as an AONB, with significant stretches of the Region's coastline defined as Heritage Coasts and recognised as internationally important for wildlife. There is much untapped potential along urban waterways for recreation and nature conservation. The aquatic and marine environments are significant for the Region's biodiversity, of archaeological importance and, in certain locations, support activities such as diving and inshore fisheries that can be important to the local economy. The Berwickshire and North Northumberland Coast European Marine Site covers a significant proportion of the Region's inshore marine environment. There are still areas, particularly the lower reaches of estuaries where urbanisation and industrialisation have led to degradation and pollution of watercourses. There is much scope for improvement.

3.142 In addition to the importance of the Region's coast and rivers, the Region's groundwater resources are also significant. Groundwater can be vulnerable to pollution. Unlike a river, once an underground water resource is polluted, whether by, for example, waste tipping or chemicals applied to farmland, or through chemical spills and leaks, or historic minewater pollution, it remains contaminated for many decades. EU Directives require all significant sources of groundwater pollution to be controlled and following the 2000 Pollution Prevention and Control Regulations, former industrial sites must be returned to their pre-industrialised condition. These will prevent future land and groundwater contamination.

3.143 Development incorporating conventional drainage techniques can result in increased flood risk and poor river quality due to contaminated surface run-off. A decrease in water quality and changes in flow patterns can also have an impact on the ecological value of the receiving watercourse. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) provide a range of techniques to minimise the adverse effects of development and to enhance biodiversity through good drainage design and practice. However, there will be certain circumstances in which the use of SUDS techniques may not be appropriate, for example, where proposed development will lie over an important aquifer.

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3.144 The European Water Framework Directive, which came into force in December 2000, sets demanding ecological objectives to protect aquatic ecosystems and groundwater, and promote sustainable water use. This will require an integrated approach to the management of the water environment based on river basins. The Environment Agency is responsible for implementing the Directive and for drawing up the statutory river basin management plans, and is currently preparing the Northumbria River Basin Management Plan. It will consider how a variety of factors, including the development and management of land, place a range of pressures and impacts on the water environment and establish programmes of measures to address these in consultation with local stakeholders. To ensure the planning system can positively facilitate the delivery of the Directive's objectives and the River Basin Management Plan can take account of local priorities, frequent dialogue between the Environment Agency and local planning authorities at all stages in the planning cycle is essential.

3.145 In addition to the statutory River Basin Management Plan, there are a number of voluntary plans, for example a Shoreline Management Plan for the area from the Tyne to the Humber (SMP2) is in the process of being drawn up by coastal authorities in the Region. This will provide extensive guidance on coastal process in the Region, and should help planning authorities steer development towards more appropriate locations and ensure a more joined up approach to coastal planning. There are also Catchment Flood Management Plans, through which the Environment Agency works with other key decision makers to identify and agree policies for sustainable flood risk management. The first round of these plans is due for completion by 2008.

3.146 The relationship between the land use planning system and the marine environment traditionally stops at the mean low-water mark. The range of agencies and programmes, that operate in the 'sea-use' planning system differ to those with which the planning system usually interacts. The Government is committed to implementing the EU Recommendation on Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) in Europe. The North East Region recognises the importance of the marine environment. The ICZM approach integrates biodiversity objectives with socio-economic needs, promoting sustainable use of the coastal zone through tourism, recreation, fisheries and energy generation, while recognising the explicit value of the maritime economy to the Region. Successful ICZM requires a proactive approach by planning authorities, other relevant agencies and local community groups. Stakeholders should work together through appropriate mechanisms to deliver integration of onshore and offshore matters.

3.147 The introduction to the general policy on Protecting and Enhancing the Environment referred to increasing concerns over the issue of "coastal squeeze". Planning responses to this may need to include

- careful consideration of any proposed land uses on the landward side of such areas, and the possibility of facilitating "habitat migration" by allowing land lost on the seaward margins of such sites to be replaced by land from the landward side.
- "safeguarding land adjacent to the internationally designated nature conservation sites to allow for the natural inland migration of the site's interest features in response to the predicted pressures from climate change and associated coastal squeeze:

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- supporting the removal of derelict coastal development and related coastal defences and allow managed realignment”.

Policy 34

THE AQUATIC & MARINE ENVIRONMENT

Strategies, plans and programmes, and planning proposals should:

- ensure that any schemes involving the transfer of water between catchments have consideration to the impacts on environmental and recreational assets of areas both nearby and upstream of the transfer base, particularly in relation to Kielder Water;
- integrate the objectives of emerging and existing plans and strategies which consider the wider management of water bodies, groundwater and coastal / marine areas;
- ensure that the construction and use of new development along river corridors takes account of its potential polluting effects; any opportunities for improvements and conservation of water quality; the possibility of flooding onsite and elsewhere along the watercourse; the availability of water resources; biodiversity; the impacts of climate change and the incorporation of necessary adaptation and mitigation measures, and the risk from minewater pollution;
- ensure, where appropriate, that Sustainable Drainage System techniques are adopted;
- set a positive policy framework for delivering plans for Integrated Coastal Zone Management, River Basin Management, Shoreline Management and Catchment Flood Management for the Region's coastal, estuarine and near-shore zones by adopting an ecosystem based approach to promote the recovery and conservation of marine eco-systems, including designated sites, favouring the evolution of the coast, estuaries and near-shore zones through natural processes wherever possible and seeking to safeguard the conservation of marine heritage features;
- take into account, and where possible plan to ameliorate, the risk of “coastal squeeze” having an impact on internationally designated nature conservation sites; and
- promote appropriate water-based recreational and leisure opportunities, particularly at Kielder Water and along the Region's coastline.

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Flood Risk

3.148 The effects of climate change and factors such as land management and development are having an impact on fluvial and coastal flooding in the Region, as demonstrated by flooding in places including Ponteland and Skinningrove in 2000 and those in Hexham early in 2005. Parts of the Region's coastal and tidal areas are currently at risk of flooding from the sea, for example the south east Northumberland coast and inland and coastal areas around the tidal river Tees. Elsewhere, the low-lying areas adjacent to rivers such as the Pont, Gaunless, the confluence of the North and South Tyne, middle and upper reaches of the Wear, and the lower reaches of the Tees are at risk from fluvial floods, as are communities close to steep, fast flowing watercourses in narrow valleys. The predictions for climate change and sea level rise in the North East will increase these risks and strategies, plans and programmes will need to take this into account.

3.149 Flooding from rivers and coastal waters is a natural process that plays an important role in shaping the natural environment. The damage that results to people and property is a consequence of previous human decisions about the location and nature of development and land use. Such damage cannot be prevented entirely, although its effects can be reduced by: reducing development upstream that may increase flooding; encouraging environmental management through the soft engineering of river banks; promoting rivers to find their natural courses; the use of SUDS techniques; the creation of associated riverine wetland areas; planting of trees; and the blocking of grips and dykes in upland moorland and peat bog to retain water and increase the water holding capacity of upland areas.

3.150 RSS should take a long-term view of coastal evolution and fluvial flooding too, in order to encourage schemes that maintain and restore the dynamic physical environment, and recognise the importance of working with natural processes in adapting to predicted sea level rise. An ecosystem-based approach to marine and coastal management should be promoted that focuses not only on the conservation of existing resources, but also seeks recovery of degraded ecosystems, for example, through managed realignment of sea defences in appropriate locations to allow the re-establishment of inter-tidal salt marsh and mudflats.

3.151 If flood risk is not to increase over time it is important that Local Development Frameworks identify lowest risk sites for future development. In order to do so local planning authorities will need to identify the spatial variation of flood risk within their areas. These studies are known as Strategic Flood Risk Assessments and are a vital part of a Sustainability Appraisal of an LDF. The preparation of Strategic Flood Risk Assessments will enable planning authorities to apply the sequential test to the preparation of strategies, plans and programmes and inform the preparation of flood risk assessments by applicants for planning permission. The RPB, working with the Environment Agency, will produce guidance to assist planning authorities to plan for flood risk within the Region.

3.152 In parts of the country there has been an increased incidence of local flooding occurring as a result of surface runoff and capacity constraints in drainage systems, possibly linked to changes in rainfall patterns and intensity. This is primarily a matter for local planning, but may need to be taken into account strategically where it is likely to contribute to flooding in combination with fluvial and coastal flood risk.

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3.153 The Environment Agency maintains up-to-date flood risk area information. This information is vital for the preparation of plans and strategies along with Catchment Flood Management Plans; the forthcoming Northumbria River Basin Management Plan; Estuary Management Plans; Shoreline Management Plans; Management Plans for the Region's Heritage Coasts; the restoration of upland peatlands in the upper reaches of the catchments; and any other emerging and existing plans and strategies which consider the wider management of water bodies and coastal / marine areas.

3.154 In some circumstances other material considerations may outweigh the flooding issues within identified flood risk areas, for example the significant need for economic and social regeneration and the need to reuse previously developed land. In such circumstances, development will only be permitted where following consultation with the Environment Agency and other relevant organisations, the necessary protection or management measures can and will be provided and are consistent with relevant management plans.

3.155 Taking account of circumstances within entire catchments, strategies, plans and programmes should identify opportunities to control and manage floodwater. Particular attention should be given to identifying the extent of functional floodplains (the unobstructed or active areas where water regularly flows in times of flood); the potential for the extension of managed washlands (areas of flood plain where water is stored in times of flood); managed realignment and the restoration of floodplains; and the possibilities for multi-functional uses of such land so as to inform development plans and gain effective integrated management of areas at risk from tidal or fluvial flooding.

Policy 35

FLOOD RISK

A. Strategies, plans and programmes should adopt a strategic, integrated, sustainable and proactive approach to catchment management to reduce flood risk within the Region, managing the risk from:

- a. tidal effects around estuaries and along the coast including the implications of the latest Government predictions for sea level rise;
- b. fluvial flooding along river corridors and other significant watercourses resulting from catchments within and beyond the Region and other sources of flooding; and
- c. flooding resulting from surface water runoff and capacity constraints in surface water drainage systems.

B. In developing Local Development Frameworks and considering planning proposals, a sequential risk-based approach to development and flooding should be adopted as set out in PPS25. This approach must be informed by Strategic Flood Risk Assessments prepared by planning authorities in liaison with the Environment Agency to inform the application of the Sequential Test and, if necessary, the Exception Test, in development allocations in their LDDs and consideration of planning proposals.

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Trees, Woodlands and Forests

3.156 Trees, woodland and forests provide a diverse range of benefits: providing timber; employment; sport and recreation activities; enhancing the beauty of the countryside; revitalising derelict landscapes; catering for wildlife habitats; improving health; contributing towards targets on renewable energy through the production of biomass; and acting as sinks of carbon dioxide (CO₂) which helps improve air quality and contributes to tackling climate change. The North East Regional Forestry Strategy provides the regional framework for the England Forestry Strategy, identifying key regional opportunities and priorities. It is the overarching strategic context both for the North East Community Forests programme and other local initiatives.

3.157 The value of trees within development schemes and urban areas is increasingly being recognised through initiatives such as Greening for Growth in South East Northumberland. Trees in urban environments are effective at improving local air quality by removing fine airborne particulates. However, on a global scale, trees are one of the most significant carbon sinks on the planet. The Region's forests make a very significant contribution to reducing climate change through provision of sustainable timber, the ultimate low carbon renewable building material.

3.158 One of the most distinctive features of woodlands and forests in the Region is the high proportion (49%) owned and managed by the Forestry Commission. This 50,000ha of publicly owned woodland is available as a regional resource to help meet key economic, social and environmental targets. Forestry is economically productive in areas such as Kielder Forest which is the largest block of land in single ownership anywhere in England. This provides opportunities for delivery at a large and strategic scale. The importance of this area is well recognised in the case of timber, water and tourism. However, it has only recently been appreciated in relation to red squirrel conservation and renewable energy. The potential of the forestry industry within the Region should be realised in the most sustainable way, including through the appropriate provision of infrastructure and facilities enabling integrated plants for processing timber close to source.

3.159 The Regional Renewable Energy Strategy (RRES) recognises Biomass as the Region's second most significant renewable energy resource, with key projects including the use of wood derived fuel in a co-firing trial at the ALCAN power station and Teesside Sembcorp project which envisages the development of a wood burning power station at Wilton. Other important projects using biomass to heat schools and homes, particularly in areas not linked to the gas network and in properties using electricity for space and water heating. The expansion of the biomass sector therefore has a key role in supporting rural recovery and developing sustainable communities.

3.160 Ancient woodlands and veteran trees are valuable habitats and cultural features, as once lost, these woodlands and established ecosystems cannot be fully recreated. The North East has less native woodland than any other English Region, and the lowest percentage land area of native woodland. The main threats to native woodlands are development pressures.

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Policy 36

TREES, WOODLANDS AND FORESTS

Strategies, plans and programmes, and planning proposals should:

- a. in line with the North East Regional Forest Strategy, seek to maximise the social, economic and environmental opportunities that trees, woodlands and forests present, particularly in regeneration areas and on derelict, damaged and underused sites;
- b. support the expansion of community forestry;
- c. facilitate the expansion of tree cover, particularly in urban centres and the rural urban fringe, to provide accessible leisure, recreation and environmental education opportunities;
- d. support the establishment of integrated timber processing facilities, including related industries such as renewable energy, close to existing facilities and timber resources;
- e. seek to maximise the tourism development opportunities presented by woodlands and forests, particularly in rural areas; and identify and ensure strong protection of areas of ancient woodland; and
- f. ensure that proposals for expansion of tree cover do not have adverse effects on internationally designated sites of nature conservation importance.

Air Quality

3.161 Air quality has improved in the Region, however there remain issues of quality both in urban centres, and in terms of the impact of pollution on nature conservation sites. Air quality is important both for human health and for the state of the environment. The Appropriate Assessment has identified impacts on sites of European importance from traffic and land uses, and concerns over the impacts of future developments.

3.162 The responsibilities of local authorities with regard to air quality are set out in the Environment Act of 1995, and include the requirement to declare Air Quality Management Areas and draw up action plans where it is considered that air quality objectives are unlikely to be met.

3.163 Various Planning Policy Statements give advice on air quality issues and the relationship between the planning system and other regulatory regimes. In particular PPS1 requires development plan policies to take account of environmental issues such as air quality and pollution, and PPS 23 advises that the planning system plays a key role in determining the location of development which may give rise to pollution, either directly or indirectly and in ensuring that other uses and developments are not, as far as possible, affected by major existing or potential sources of pollution. It also says that the existing, and likely future, air quality in an area and cumulative effects should be considered in the preparation of development plan documents and may also be material in the consideration of individual planning applications where pollution considerations arise.

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3.164 The Appropriate Assessment has identified a number of instances where it is believed that emissions from developments and traffic movements are already having an impact on internationally designated sites of nature conservation importance, and points to the risk that these impacts may increase.

3.165 The sites affected are:

- Border Mires Kielder – Butterburn SAC
- Borders Woods SAC
- Castle Eden Dene SAC
- Harbottle Moors SAC
- Ford Moss SAC
- Moor House- Upper Teesdale SAC
- North Northumberland Dunes SAC
- North Pennine Dales Meadows SAC
- North Pennine Moors SAC
- North York Moors SAC.
- Simonside Hills SAC
- Tyne and Allen River Gravels SAC
- Tyne and Nent SAC
- Langholm - Newcastleton Hills SPA
- North Pennine Moors SPA
- North York Moors SPA
- Teesmouth & Cleveland Coast SPA

3.166 In preparing Annual Monitoring Reports, the RPB and Local Planning Authorities should take account of air quality indicators and relate these to relevant planning policies.

Policy 37

AIR QUALITY

Strategies, plans and programmes and planning proposals should:

- a. contribute to sustaining the current downward trend in air pollution in the region;
- b. consider the potential effects of new developments and increased traffic levels on air quality; and
- c. consider the potential impacts of new developments and increased traffic levels on internationally designated nature conservation sites, and adopt mitigation measures to address these impacts.

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Sustainable Energy Use

3.167 Energy generation and use is central to the Region's way of life. It has numerous implications both for the way people move around and on economic growth through the exploitation of energy resources, such as oil, gas, coal and renewable energy sources. These include the health of the Region's population and environment as a result of the level of polluting emissions, as well as economic implications of the cost of energy and energy related business.

3.168 Nationally, the Government seeks to minimise energy use and pollution, and move towards a higher proportion of energy generated from renewable resources. The Energy White Paper 2007 sets out a strategy and targets to achieve these objectives. The four goals are to, cut the UK's CO2 emissions by 60% by 2050, with real progress by 2020; maintain the reliability of energy supplies; promote competitive markets in the UK and beyond, helping to raise the rate of sustainable economic growth and improve our productivity; and ensure that every home is adequately and affordably heated. These aim to contribute and go beyond to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Kyoto Protocol to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, which contribute to global climate change.

3.169 The Regional Renewable Energy Strategy, March 2005 (RRES) sets out how the Region can contribute to achieving these objectives and targets. Achieving these targets will require progress on a number of issues. Transport is a major source of energy use and pollution, and the RSS seeks to minimise its effects through the emphasis on reducing the need to travel, particularly by private modes of transport. It is recognised that there is a correlation between economic growth and energy use, and therefore as the Region's economy grows, there will be an upward pressure on energy demand. It will be important to decouple this link by seeking to improve energy efficiency and reduce energy consumption, particularly through the use of more sustainable building practices in new development and during refurbishment. The Region will also need to move towards a more sustainable generation of energy, particularly electricity. RSS seeks to encourage sustainable forms of development that: minimise demand; use energy more efficiently; increase the amount of energy derived from renewable resources; and increase the efficiency and minimise the environmental effects of the continuing use of fossil fuels.

3.170 Policy 2 sets out the criteria against which strategies plans and programmes should support sustainable development, in accordance with the shared regional vision for sustainable development contained within the IRF. 'Building in Sustainability: a Guide to Sustainable Construction and Development in the North East', offers many practical suggestions for promoting sustainability through design, construction and location. To minimise energy use in new and existing developments, strategies, plans and programmes should utilise the guidance contained within the IRF and 'Building in Sustainability' to inform the preparation of guidelines, development briefs and supplementary planning documents.

3.171 In 2007, the Government published the draft Climate Change Bill which sets out a framework for moving the UK to a low-carbon economy and "Planning for Climate Change", a supplement to PPS1. Further to this, a policy statement "Building a Greener Future" (July 2007) covers promoting renewable, low carbon and decentralised energy systems, consistent with ensuring a competitive market and affordable energy alongside the key objective of addressing housing supply. The policy

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statement confirms the national objective of zero carbon homes by 2016. It also confirms that reducing carbon emissions is being set nationally through building regulations rather than through the planning system. Therefore Policy 38 seeks to encourage and promote opportunities for new developments or the redevelopment of existing buildings to achieve high energy efficiency. However, there may be opportunities where local authorities could drive things further and faster where it is demonstrable there are clear local opportunities to use renewable or low carbon energy, perhaps through decentralised systems.

3.172 The Building Research Establishment's Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) is a measure of best practice in environmental design and management of offices, industrial units and retail units. Together with this, the Code for Sustainable Homes, a national standard for sustainable design and construction of new homes, provides an opportunity to drive innovation and technological development. Developers are able to obtain a 'star rating' for any new home which will demonstrate its environmental performance. It will provide valuable information to home buyers, and offer builders a tool with which to differentiate themselves in sustainability terms.

3.173 The Government has also recently published the "Energy Measures Report: Addressing Climate Change and Fuel Poverty – energy measures information for Local Government" (2007) which provides useful advice on the steps that local authorities can take to:

- improve energy efficiency;
- increase the levels of microgeneration and low carbon technologies;
- reduce greenhouse gas emissions; and
- reduce the number of households living in fuel poverty.

3.174 An important element in decoupling the link between economic growth and energy use is the need for renewable energy generation to be embedded in the design and implementation of new developments. A wide range of renewable technologies and design approaches are available and can be readily embedded into many forms of development, such as the Middlehaven macro combined heat and power project.

3.175 For energy supply, the RSS requires local level size thresholds for major new developments to secure within them an ambitious but viable percentage of energy supply from renewable sources. In advance of local targets being set within Development Plan Documents, Local Planning Authorities are expected to secure sustainable energy supply from new developments within the terms of policy set out below.

3.176 A practical tool the "micro-renewables toolkit" has been developed by the Regional Planning Body to help local authority planners and developers to achieve the requirement for embedded renewable energy generation. The toolkit demonstrates the most appropriate form of micro-generation technologies that can be applied to different development. All those involved in the construction industry in the region are encouraged to use this tool.

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Policy 38

SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION

Strategies, plans and programmes, and planning proposals should:

- a. ensure that the layout and design of new buildings and developments minimise energy consumption;
- b. encourage and promote opportunities for new developments or the redevelopment or refurbishment of existing buildings to achieve high energy efficiency and minimise consumption in terms of energy efficiency best practice, BREEAM rating and the Code for Sustainable Homes;
- c. encourage and facilitate homeowners and businesses in improving their energy efficiency and reducing consumption; and
- d. promote and secure greater use of local renewable energy in new development, including through Development Plan Documents, setting local level size thresholds for major new development and require all relevant developments, particularly major retail, commercial and residential developments, to secure an ambitious but viable percentage of their energy supply from decentralised and renewable or low carbon sources. In advance of local targets being set in DPDs, major new developments of more than 10 dwellings or 1000m² of non-residential floorspace should secure at least 10% of their energy supply from decentralised and renewable or low-carbon sources, unless, having regard to the type of development involved and its design, this is not feasible or viable.

Renewable Energy Generation

3.177 Achieving the commitments set nationally by the Energy White Paper will require at least 40% of electricity to be generated from renewable sources by 2060. In the shorter term the Government is committed to the achievement of 10% renewable electricity by 2010 and is aiming for 20% by 2020. The RRES suggests that for the purpose of preparing targets that it should be assumed that efforts to contain the growth in energy consumption will be successful and consumption will be held at the 2003 level. The key conclusions of the RRES are that there is significant potential to match the minimum national targets at the regional level, if the Region embraces the diverse range of potential renewable energy resources, particularly wind generation. By 2020, 20% would be possible if strategic scale wind energy development took place within Kielder Forest. It also proposes sub regional resource estimates and targets for 2010.

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3.178 The RRES brings together estimates of the Region's resources by technology. It is clear from the RRES that onshore wind, even without major development at Kielder, is the Region's most significant resource, followed by biomass. Although electricity accounts for less than 30% of national energy use, the significance of non-electricity renewables sectors is growing, such as heating from biomass, and transport fuels, with new targets being established. Strategies, plans and programmes should encourage non-electricity renewable energy projects such as biomass district heating plants; photo-voltaics and solar hot water technologies; and the use of hydrogen as a fuel option. It is possible that there will be demands for increases in the amount of land dedicated to production of biofuels.

3.179 The potential consequences of this will need to be fully assessed and acted upon, including potential impacts from hydrological change or nutrient runoff on nature conservation sites and sites of archaeological value.

3.180 Further work is proposed to further assess strategic scale wind energy development potential within Kielder Forest, which will include further discussions with the MoD and the National Park Authority. The results of this work and the review of the RRES, which will include an enhanced assessment of other sources of renewable energy generation, will allow for a reassessment of the 2010 targets. Given advances in renewable energy technology, it is considered there are currently a number of uncertainties when setting sub regional targets to 2020. However, as an aspiration for 2020, the target would be to double the 2010 installed capacity target.

3.181 The role of the planning system in renewable energy generation is restricted to onshore development of schemes and development associated with off-shore schemes on the landward side of the mean low water mark. However, as indicated on the Environment Information Map, there are proposals for offshore wind energy developments along the North East coast which should be supported in principle, subject to local assessment. Given the limited potential of the North East coastline, it seems unlikely that further commercial off shore wind sites, or sites for wave energy generation will come forward in the Region before 2010. It is too early to consider the extent and capacity of any future deep water off shore wind and wave energy developments, although this will be reviewed as technology advances.

3.182 In seeking to achieve the following targets, this should not be done at the expense of breaching the requirements of the Habitat Regulations, and appropriate consideration should be given to the factors listed in Policy 40.

Policy 39

RENEWABLE ENERGY GENERATION

Strategies, plans and programmes, and planning proposals should:

- a. facilitate the generation of at least 10% of the Region's consumption of electricity from renewable sources within the Region by 2010 (454 MW minimum installed capacity);
- b. aspire to further increase renewable electricity generation to achieve 20% of regional consumption by 2020;
- c. facilitate the achievement of the following minimum sub regional targets to 2010:

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Northumberland	212MW
Durham	82MW
Tyne & Wear	22MW
TeesValley	138MW
	454MW

Planning for Renewables

3.183 Renewable energy developments have a range of environmental, social and economic benefits; the PPS22 Companion Guide provides further details on the benefits. It is therefore important to provide a positive framework for the development of renewable energy to enable the Region to deliver its maximum potential for generation; embedding renewable technologies into new and existing developments; and maximising the Region's potential to pioneer new renewables technologies. The sustainable energy sector represents a significant opportunity to support economic regeneration and job creation, and renewable energy policies should be included within a wide variety of documents including: Local Development Frameworks; Community Strategies; Local Agenda 21 Strategies; Local Transport Plans; Housing Strategies; Green Space strategies; Protected Area Management Plans and Waste Management Strategies.

3.184 The Key Diagram and insets identify the broad areas, with least constraint, which offer the greatest potential to accommodate new renewable energy developments. This does not, however, remove the need to consider the potential for new renewables developments in other parts of the Region and LDFs should present a positive rather than a restrictive planning framework. There is currently significant interest in developing the Region's renewables sector, for example, through the New and Renewable Energy Centre in Blyth. In addition, there are proposals for a renewable energy exemplar village at the former Eastgate Cement Works site in Wear Valley, where feasibility works have identified that the site has the potential to generate and utilise on-site wind power, biomass, hydro-electricity and heat-exchange pumps, solar power and geothermal energy. An initial study suggested that the renewable energy village could form part of a wider scheme.

3.185 Wind and water energy and to a lesser extent biomass, can only be harnessed where it is found in sufficient quantity. In some cases, for example, brownfield sites' wind characteristics may be favourable but other constraints may render them impractical. Therefore, Policy 4 is an inappropriate test for renewable energy development and therefore will not apply.

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3.186 Renewable energy proposals within or significantly affecting the purposes of internationally and nationally designated areas should be appraised critically. Small scale developments should be considered favourably; including within nationally recognised landscapes (National Parks, AONBs and Heritage Coasts) if they have minimal impact, individually or cumulatively on the special qualities and purposes of the designation of these areas. In the case of wind energy, the development of one or more turbines or a turbine with a ground to hub height of 25 metres or more is unlikely to be acceptable. Other proposals for renewable energy generation will normally be acceptable providing their form, materials and infrastructure do not detract from landscape character, biodiversity, and archaeological and built heritage, or adversely affect local communities.

3.187 The integration of wind and biomass production proposals into the Region's varied landscapes will require careful consideration. The location and design of proposals must be informed by landscape character and sensitivity assessments, using the 'Landscape Appraisal for Onshore Wind Development' (July 2003), produced as part of the RRES. PPS22 is clear that local landscape designations should not be used in themselves to refuse planning permission for renewable energy developments, and in areas where a number of proposals come forward during the same timescale, or would add to existing developments, cumulative landscape and visual effects must be assessed following the steps set out in PPS22 Companion Guide.

3.188 The Regional Planning Body and partners are conducting local landscape studies to further assess the potential for wind farms within broad areas of least constraint, and Local Development Frameworks and planning proposals are the appropriate level to deal with these issues. The RPB's RSS Annual Monitoring Report records the progress made on these studies.

3.189 The availability and cost of connection to the electricity grid is a key consideration for developers, and new power lines can be an important planning and landscape consideration. As far as possible, a proliferation of new lines each serving a separate development should be avoided. Planning authorities should take a pro-active approach when dealing with wind and other renewable energy developments and seek to ensure that the environmental impact of new grid connection lines is limited, for example, placing overhead lines sympathetically within the landscape. Where appropriate, new routes should be shared by a number of wind and other renewable electricity projects, for example those using hydro and biomass.

Policy 40

PLANNING FOR RENEWABLES

Strategies, plans and programmes should support and encourage renewable energy proposals and identify renewable resource areas. In assessing proposals for renewable energy development significant weight should be given to the wider environmental, economic and social benefits arising from higher levels of renewable energy, and the following criteria should be considered:

- a. anticipated effects resulting from development construction and operation such as air quality, atmospheric emissions, noise, odour, water pollution and the disposal of waste;

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- b. acceptability of the location and the scale of the proposal and its visual impact in relation to the character and sensitivity of the surrounding landscape;
- c. effect on the region's World Heritage Sites and other national and internationally designated heritage sites or landscape areas, including the impact of proposals close to their boundaries;
- d. effect of development on nature conservation sites and features, biodiversity and geodiversity, including internationally designated and other sites of nature conservation importance, and potential effects on settings, habitats, species and the water supply and hydrology of such sites;
- e. maintenance of the openness of the Region's Green Belt;
- f. accessibility by road and public transport;
- g. effect on agriculture and other land based industries;
- h. visual impact of new grid connection lines;
- i. cumulative impact of the development in relation to other similar developments; and
- j. proximity to the renewable fuel source such as wood-fuel biomass processing plants within or close to the Region's major woodlands and forests.

Onshore Wind Energy Development

3.190 The use of relatively small-scale technologies such as photo-voltaics, solar hot water and biomass can help to increase general awareness and acceptance of renewables. However, to deliver the regional targets set out in Policy 39, will rely on a substantial contribution from wind energy generation, particularly from onshore wind energy developments.

3.191 The Key Diagram and Policy 41 indicate the broad areas with the least constraints identified by the Regional Renewable Energy Strategy, which offer the greatest potential to accommodate onshore wind energy developments resulting from an appraisal of potential constraints. This does not, however, remove the need to consider the potential for onshore wind energy developments in other parts of the Region. Proposals for onshore wind energy development within and outside these broad areas should be assessed against the criteria contained within Policy 40.

3.192 PPS22 national planning guidance is clear that development plans, including Regional Spatial Strategies, should not set arbitrary limits on the numbers of turbines that will be acceptable in particular locations. This is because planning applications present the opportunity to assess the cumulative impact of proposals. Within RSS, Medium scale wind energy development is broadly defined as up to 20-25 turbines, with small scale up to five turbines, although this may change dependent on advances in technology.

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3.193 It is possible that broad areas of least constraint could sustainably accommodate more than one wind energy development subject to the requirements of Policy 40.

3.194 In particular, Kielder Forest is highlighted as having significant potential for wind energy development on a regionally strategic scale. Realising the potential in this area will be essential to meeting the regional aspiration of 20% renewables by 2020, although this will be dependent on overcoming MoD constraints and any environmental constraints. Upgrading of the grid system in that area could also release further potential for significant biomass and possible hydro resources and as such, this area is referred to as a Strategic Renewables Resource Area (SRRA). Policy 41 and the Kielder Forest SRRA will be kept under review as work with the MoD progresses.

3.195 PPS22 and ODPM/DfT Circular 1/2003 “Safeguarding, Aerodromes, Technical Sites and Military Explosives Storage Areas” contain guidance on procedure for consulting relevant authorities and interested parties when considering the potential impact of wind turbine proposals upon aviation operations. If a Local Planning Authority is minded to approve a wind farm application against which there is an outstanding objection by an airport, the Civil Aviation Authority or the Ministry of Defence must be notified.

Policy 41

ONSHORE WIND ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

Strategies, plans and programmes should provide a positive policy framework to facilitate onshore wind energy development within the following broad areas of least constraint for wind energy developments:

- a. Kielder Forest has the potential to become a Strategic Renewables Resource Area, including large scale wind energy development;
- b. The following areas have potential for medium scale development:
 - South and West Berwick upon Tweed
 - North/ South Charlton
 - Knowesgate Area
 - Harwood Forest
 - Northern Coalfield south of Druridge Bay
 - Kiln Pit Hill Area
 - North Durham Upland Coalfield
 - South Durham Upland Coalfield
 - East Durham Limestone Area
 - Tees Plain
 - Teesside
- c. Small wind farms in urban areas and on the urban rural fringe should also be supported, particularly within the following areas:

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- Sunderland;
- South Tyneside; and
- Tees Valley.

The broad locations of these areas should be identified within Local Development Frameworks using Policy 40. Their identification does not preclude proposals being considered in other areas in terms of Policy 40.

Overall Minerals Strategy

3.196 The Region is rich in mineral deposits and is a major producer of a variety of important minerals. Minerals currently or potentially exploitable in the Region include coal, brick making material (shales, fireclay and glacial clay), limestone, igneous rock, sandstone, sand and gravel, peat and oil and gas. The maintenance of a healthy regional economy will require an adequate supply of minerals and minerals related products to support a major housing programme; deliver key infrastructure projects; and provide everyday products. However, planning policy also has to balance these requirements and economic benefits with the impacts on the environment and communities arising from the extraction, processing and transportation of minerals.

3.197 The overall objective for minerals policy in the Region is to ensure the prudent use of the Region's indigenous natural resources in line with sustainable development objectives. This means that while delivering the minerals that the Region and the nation reasonably needs, extraction, processing and transport should:

- safeguard the Region's naturally occurring minerals and encourage the use of alternative materials where appropriate;
- protect the environment and local amenity; and
- minimise the adverse impacts of the transport of minerals and minerals products.

Policy 42

OVERALL MINERALS STRATEGY

Minerals and Waste Development Frameworks, Minerals Development Frameworks, Local Development Frameworks, and planning proposals should:

- ensure that land is made available to provide an appropriate contribution to local, regional and national needs for minerals;
- ensure the prudent use of minerals resources in line with sustainable development objectives;
- ensure the effective environmental management of mineral extraction and processing sites, high quality restoration and aftercare, and appropriate beneficial after uses;
- promote the transport of minerals and minerals products by rail or water wherever practicable and minimise the effects of transport by road;

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- e. identify and safeguard significant mineral resources from other types of development; and
- f. include criteria based policies against which individual minerals proposals will be assessed.

Aggregate Minerals Provision

3.198 The most important minerals in tonnage terms and the most widespread throughout the Region are primary aggregates. The national and regional guidelines for the provision of aggregates up to 2021 were published by the then Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in October 2005 (now Communities and Local Government). For the North East this means that provision must be made for 26.25 million tonnes of land-won sand and gravel and 156 million tonnes of crushed rock over the 21-year period 2001-2021. The figures set out in criteria (a) and (c) of policy 43 relate to guidelines covering the period to 2016 and they assume that a further 9 million tonnes of sand and gravel will be provided from marine dredged sources and that 76 million tonnes of aggregate supply will be met from alternative materials.

3.199 As recommended by North East Regional Aggregates Working Party (NERAWP), the North East guideline figures have been split into sub regional areas. In the metropolitan areas of Tyne & Wear and Tees Valley, which have limited primary aggregate resources, apportionment to mineral planning authority level was not appropriate or indeed possible. Northumberland National Park has been combined with Northumberland County due to the low level of aggregate output from the Park and the special policy considerations that apply.

3.200 NERAWP recommended a split, which was achievable through the implementation of existing planning permissions and additional permissions granted in accordance with the development plan. Following consultation with all Mineral Planning Authorities it was concluded that the recommended apportionment could be achieved at acceptable environmental cost. However, in the longer term a change in the pattern of supply may be needed and, in order to inform such decisions, a full environmental appraisal should be carried out of possible supply scenarios.

3.201 A sustainable approach to the supply of aggregates requires that alternative (secondary and recycled) materials should be used whenever possible. In the Region considerable progress has been made towards this aim in recent years. Primary aggregate production in the Region has declined from 10.7m tonnes in 1997 to 7.9m tonnes in 2003. The Region produces various types of secondary materials available for aggregate use including demolition and construction waste, 75% of which is already recycled colliery spoil, power station ash and blast furnace slag. Unlike primary aggregates, accurate information on the supply and use of alternative materials is difficult to obtain. Most surveys carried out by NERAWP have found that secondary aggregate sales in the Region are approximately 1 million tonnes per annum. However, a more extensive survey carried out on a national basis in 2001 found that sales in the North East totalled 5.2 million tonnes. The regional guidelines require 5.2 million tonnes to be achieved throughout the 16-year period and this represents a significant increase in the supply and use of alternative materials compared to the previous guidelines (with further details included within 'Technical Paper No. 8: Minerals'). This will require a positive policy approach in Local Development Documents towards the supply and use of alternative materials.

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3.202 Currently marine dredged sand and gravel is imported into the Region through four wharves on the Rivers Tyne and Tees. Imports have averaged 1 million tonnes per annum in recent years. The continued operation of these wharves will be important in enabling marine dredged materials to maintain their contribution to supplies in the Region.

Policy 43

AGGREGATE MINERALS PROVISION

Minerals and Waste Development Frameworks, Minerals Development Frameworks, Local Development Frameworks, and planning proposals should make provision to maintain a landbank of planning permissions for primary aggregates which is sufficient to deliver 26.25 million tonnes of sand and gravel and 156 million tonnes of crushed rock over the 21 year period 2001-2021 based on the following apportionment to sub regional areas.

	Sand and gravel (m tonnes)	Crushed rock (m tonnes)
Durham	8.0	99.5
Northumberland (including National Park)	14.6	47.8
Tyne & Wear	3.5	6.0
TeesValley	0.21	2.9

To reduce the need for primary aggregates over the period 2001-2016 Minerals and Waste Development Frameworks, Minerals Development Frameworks, and Local Development Frameworks should:

- facilitate the increased use of alternative (secondary and recycled) materials, including suitably located minerals recycling facilities, to enable the regional target of supplying 76 million tonnes of alternative materials to be met;
- ensure that development projects use construction materials that reduce the demand for primary aggregates where practicable; and
- safeguard existing wharves and where appropriate propose new wharves for the handling and distribution of imported materials to enable a minimum of 9 million tonnes of marine dredged sand and gravel to be imported.

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Other Minerals

3.203 The majority of issues relating to other mineral workings in the Region concern the impacts on the immediate locality and can be dealt with satisfactorily at the local level by mineral planning authorities in the preparation of their Minerals and Waste Development Frameworks and Local Development Frameworks. Therefore, whilst the existing RSS includes specific policies on specialised minerals, building stone and peat, it is considered that such policies are not necessary in this RSS. However, the supply of brick clay can have a regional or even a national dimension as brick manufacturers source clay from diverse sources for blending purposes. Mineral planning authorities should liaise to ensure that the landbank for brick clay is sufficient to support the region's brick works. There is no evidence that there is a shortage of common clay and shale to meet the Region's requirements for red brick manufacture. However, supplies of fireclay for buff coloured bricks are dependent on being provided from opencast coal sites. Therefore, where opencast coal working is acceptable, provision should be made for the extraction and beneficial use of fireclay.

3.204 Opencast coal extraction has been a particularly controversial issue with extensive areas having been subject to working across the Region. However, production and the number of extraction sites have reduced in recent years in line with the situation nationally. Potential benefits of opencast coal working may include continuity of employment, the supply of coal to meet local needs and the proposals for restoration, although the opportunity for landscape and amenity improvements through the reclamation of derelict or contaminated land is now much less than previously, as the extent of such land has reduced throughout the Region. Nevertheless, over 50 years of experience has shown that opencast coal extraction will inevitably result in disturbance to local communities. This reinforces the need for the environmental acceptability of the proposal to be taken into account as well as benefits. In view of these considerations where development is acceptable, provision should be made for the extraction and beneficial use of fireclay and the minerals should be transported by rail whenever possible.

Policy 44

OPENCAST COAL

Minerals and Waste Development Frameworks, Minerals Development Frameworks and Local Development Frameworks should, in consultation with the coal industry, identify acceptable areas for the opencast extraction of coal, subject to individual proposals meeting relevant development control criteria. Where this is not possible minerals authorities should either indicate broad areas of search or the extent of the shallow coalfield and the constraints within that area.

Minerals Authorities should adopt a presumption against opencast coal extraction unless:

1. the proposal is environmentally acceptable, or can be made so by planning conditions or obligations; or
2. the proposal can provide local or community benefits which clearly outweigh the likely impacts.

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Where opencast coal extraction is acceptable, provision should be made for the extraction, stockpiling, if necessary, and beneficial use of fireclay.

All extracted minerals should be transported by rail whenever possible.

Sustainable Waste Management

3.205 Waste management nationally and in the North East is facing a period of unprecedented change. The amount of waste produced in the Region continues to grow with consequential environmental, social and economic costs. There is a need to limit and eventually to reverse this trend, decoupling the link between economic growth and the growth in waste arisings. Until a few a few years ago, landfill was a cheap form of waste disposal for the Region, often utilising the voids left from previous mineral working. Driven by European legislation, Government targets, environmental concerns, public expectations and rising financial costs there is an urgent need to reduce the Region's dependence on landfill disposal and to move towards more sustainable methods of managing waste.

Whilst the challenges are great, the need to address them is now recognised as a priority in the Region, and all appropriate stakeholders have agreed to establish a Regional Sustainable Waste Board to ensure delivery of RSS policies as far as possible. The Regional Planning Body is committed to the preparation and implementation of a sustainable regional waste management plan and the Board will take forward this process . It will aim to:

- promote a fundamental change in the way waste is dealt with;
- minimise the quantities of waste produced in the Region;
- increase awareness, influence attitudes and promote waste minimisation, reuse and recycling;
- promote the development of new markets for recycled products;
- ensure that the Region is served by a reliable, integrated waste management infrastructure that serves the collection, management and disposal requirements of all waste producers;
- seek that waste be disposed of in one of the nearest appropriate installations;
- ensure that communities take more responsibility for their own waste ; and
- reduce the environmental impact of waste management practices.

3.206 The Regional Waste Management Plan will have regard to the policy principles and targets set out in the Government's Waste Strategy 2007; the Landfill Directive; and PPS10. It will develop these within the context of the North East to provide a sustainable waste management system that allows the Region to prosper whilst avoiding or minimising harm to the environment and preserving resources for future generations.

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3.207 In order to achieve the required step change in the way waste is managed in the Region, regional initiatives are needed in relation to waste minimisation and the re-use of products and materials. Local authorities in the Region are already committed to working with appropriate organisations on waste minimisation initiatives. A variety of mechanisms will be needed in relation to waste minimisation, most of which will extend beyond the land use policy framework. However, new built development must be planned in accordance with waste minimisation principles to minimise the production of waste during the construction process and maximise the use of recycled and secondary aggregates. The guide to sustainable construction and development in the North East 'Building in Sustainability' sets out principles which embrace these issues.

Policy 45

SUSTAINABLE WASTE MANAGEMENT

Strategies, plans and programmes, and planning proposals should give priority to initiatives which encourage behavioural change through:

- a. developing and implementing waste minimisation plans and schemes;
- b. implementing waste awareness and education campaigns;
- c. developing reuse schemes; and
- d. minimising the use of primary construction materials and the production of waste;

and should be based on the following key principles:

- a. the waste hierarchy with minimisation at the top, then reuse, recycling, composting, waste to energy and landfill;
- b. enable waste to be disposed of in one of the nearest appropriate installations; and
- c. ensuring communities take more responsibility for their own waste.

Waste Management Provision

3.208 A consultant's report 'Towards a Waste Management Strategy for North East England' was prepared in 2003 to establish the preferred option for dealing with the Region's waste. A number of options were assessed with stakeholder involvement and a preferred option was identified. The preferred option is to meet and exceed recovery targets by 5% through recycling, composting and digestion with minimum disposal to landfill. The preferred option established specific targets for the different waste streams:

3.209 Municipal Solid Waste – to increase recovery to 72% by 2016
 Commercial & Industrial – to increase recovery to 73% by 2016
 Construction & Demolition – to increase recycling to 80% by 2016

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3.210 Further technical work was undertaken during 2004 to revise the projections of waste arisings in the light of updated information, and to revise the estimates for the number, type and capacity of waste management facilities required in the Region and sub-regions. Details of this work will be included in the Regional Waste Management Plan .

3.211 It is estimated that in 2002/03, 10.5 million tonnes of controlled wastes were produced in the Region, of which 34% was commercial and industrial waste, 46% construction and demolition waste, 16% municipal waste and 3% special waste. Agricultural waste became controlled waste in 2005 and it is estimated that approximately 2 million tonnes is produced in the Region each year, the majority of which is in Northumberland. Even with waste minimisation at the heart of the waste strategy it is estimated that the volumes of controlled waste produced in the Region could increase to more than 14 million tonnes in 2021.

3.212 In line with the provisions of PPS10, further technical work provides forecasts of the annual waste arisings in the Region for municipal solid waste and commercial and industrial waste. These requirements are set out in Table 3 & 3A. However, the requirements have not been calculated based on an annual average increase in GVA growth of 2.8%, which would result in a higher level of waste arisings, as a key aim is to decouple the growth in waste arisings with from economic growth through waste minimisation initiatives. Targets for the management of construction and Demolition waste are not listed in RSS, in line with the approach taken in PPS10, however information and data relating to its management still forms and important evidence base for sustainable waste management.

3.213 Significant numbers of new facilities will be needed to manage this waste. The Region is committed to playing its part in delivering the targets set out in the Waste Strategy 2007 and the Landfill Directive, with the preferred option identifying even more challenging targets. It is likely that during the period covered by RSS, new techniques and processes for managing and treating waste will emerge, and therefore it is not appropriate in the RSS to be prescriptive on the type and number of facilities which will need to be provided to manage the waste arisings set out in Table 3 & 3A. Local circumstances will provide local solutions within the overall regional framework provided by the RSS policies.

3.214 The main issue to stress at this stage is that the need for new facilities is urgent and action is needed by the waste industry and local authorities to identify sites and to develop new facilities. LDFs will need to allocate sites for new waste facilities and contain policies, which identify specific criteria for the location of waste management facilities. These should take account of the key principles set out in policy 45 and the planning and locational considerations set out in PPS10 and the RSS.

3.215 The achievement of Government targets will result in substantial increases in the volumes of recycled and composted materials. The lack of available markets for some materials can be a barrier to increased recycling and composting. This is being addressed at a national level through the Waste and Resources Action Programme. However, the development of regional and local markets will drive the recycling process, reduce costs and provide regional opportunities for job creation and the Regional Sustainable Waste Board will seek ways to achieve this, through existing organisations wherever possible.

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3.216 To achieve the targets for recycling and composting will require the provision of new infrastructure. This should include both kerbside collection schemes, civic amenity sites and recycling centres to which people can bring their waste (bring sites). Many of the existing civic amenity sites in the Region have been refurbished recently. This improvement programme needs to be continued and new sites established to serve areas which do not currently have accessible sites. Similarly, the network of bring sites (for example, bottle and paper banks in local authority and supermarket car parks) also needs to be extended. These various sites can play an important role in complementing the continued roll-out of kerbside collection schemes by local authorities to cover as far as possible all households in the Region.

3.217 Planning applications for Major Developments (see glossary) should be required to include a waste audit, demonstrating how waste minimisation principles will be incorporated both during construction and on completion, in terms of on-site sorting and recycling and other in-house management facilities. The process may in some cases may be overtaken by the proposals for mandatory Site Waste Management Plans.

3.218 Land-filling has been the dominant method of dealing with waste in the Region as a whole and it is predicted that adequate landfill capacity is available in the short term. The move towards more sustainable waste management methods together with legislative requirements will mean that in the longer-term waste will not be disposed of directly to landfill. However, it is considered that during the period covered by the RSS there will continue to be a need for the landfilling of the residual waste which remains after treatment. The identification of new landfill sites should have regard in particular to guidance issued by the Environment Agency with respect to groundwater protection.

Policy 46

WASTE MANAGEMENT PROVISION

Strategies, plans and programmes should provide the management capacity for the annual tonnage of waste arisings set out in Table 3 & 3A. The type and number of facilities should reflect local circumstances within the strategic framework established by RSS policies and will be based on:

Household Waste – to increase recycling and composting to 40% by 2010 and 46% by 2016

Municipal Solid Waste – to increase recovery to 53% by 2010 and 72% by 2016

Commercial & Industrial – to increase recovery to 73% by 2016

Waste and Local Development Frameworks should:

- a. allocate sites for waste management facilities and contain policies which identify specific criteria for the location of waste management facilities, having regard to the locational and planning considerations set out in national planning policy, the environmental and social-economic impacts, the suitability of the road network and the potential for access by non-road transport;

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- b. encourage the provision of new waste related businesses to process recycled materials including, where appropriate, defining suitable sites and/or criteria based policies;
- c. facilitate the development of a network of small scale local waste management facilities in accessible locations, and effective methods of waste management such as facilities to separate or store different types of waste, including materials that are required to be separated for kerbside collection schemes;
- d. limit additional landfill sites unless it can be demonstrated that there is insufficient capacity for the deposit of residual wastes: and
- e. assess the capacity gap for the municipal solid and commercial and industrial waste streams.

Minerals and Waste Development Frameworks, Local Development Frameworks and planning proposals should require the submission of a waste audit for major developments and provide details of in-house or on-site waste management facilities.

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3.219 TABLE 3 - Management Capacity for Annual Waste Arisings ('000 tonees)

Year	Northumberland		Durham		Tyne and Wear		Tees Valley		North East	
	MSW	C&I	MSW	C&I	MSW	C&I	MSW	C&I	MSW	C&I
2005/06	236	528	393	679	See Table 3A		452	943	1966	3772
2006/07	248	536	414	689			476	957	2070	3828
2007/08	260	544	433	699			498	972	2166	3886
2008/09	270	552	450	710			517	986	2249	3944
2009/10	277	560	462	721			532	1001	2311	4003
2010/11	283	569	471	732			542	1016	2356	4065
2011/12	286	577	477	742			548	1031	2383	4123
2012/13	288	586	479	753			551	1047	2396	4186
2013/14	288	595	480	765			552	1062	2401	4249
2014/15	288	604	481	776			553	1078	2403	4313
2015/16	288	613	481	788			553	1095	2403	4379
2016/17	288	622	481	800			553	1111	2403	4443
2017/18	288	631	481	812			553	1128	2403	4510
2018/19	288	641	481	824			553	1145	2403	4579
2019/20	288	650	481	836			553	1162	2403	4646
2020/21	288	660	481	849			553	1179	2403	4716

ii Note: MSW – Municipal Solid Waste, C&I – Commercial and Industrial Waste.

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3.220

TABLE 3A - Management Capacity for Annual Waste Arisings ('000 tonnes)

MSW	Gateshead	Newcastle Upon Tyne	North Tyneside	South Tyneside	Sunderland	Total
2005/06	224,800	211,934	153,359	109,532	185,526	885,150
2006/07	236,579	223,039	161,395	115,271	195,247	931,532
2007/08	247,675	233,499	168,965	120,678	204,404	975,221
2008/09	257,037	242,326	175,351	125,239	212,131	1,012,084
2009/10	264,234	249,111	180,261	128,746	218,070	1,040,422
2010/11	269,254	253,844	183,686	131,192	222,214	1,060,190
2011/12	272,351	256,763	185,799	132,701	224,769	1,072,383
2012/13	273,849	258,175	186,821	133,431	226,006	1,078,281
2013/14	274,533	258,821	187,288	133,764	226,571	1,080,976
2014/15	274,643	258,924	187,362	133,818	226,661	1,081,409
2015/16	274,643	258,924	187,362	133,818	226,661	1,081,409
2016/17	274,643	258,924	187,362	133,818	226,661	1,081,409
2017/18	274,643	258,924	187,362	133,818	226,661	1,081,409
2018/19	274,643	258,924	187,362	133,818	226,661	1,081,409
2019/20	274,643	258,924	187,362	133,818	226,661	1,081,409
2020/21	274,643	258,924	187,362	133,818	226,661	1,081,409

C&I	Gateshead	Newcastle Upon Tyne	North Tyneside	South Tyneside	Sunderland	Total
2005/06	393,774	488,753	206,395	182,308	350,731	1,621,960
2006/07	399,680	496,084	209,490	185,042	355,992	1,646,289
2007/08	405,676	503,525	212,633	187,818	361,332	1,670,984
2008/09	411,761	511,078	215,822	190,635	366,752	1,696,048
2009/10	417,937	518,744	219,060	193,495	372,254	1,721,489
2010/11	424,206	526,525	222,345	196,397	377,837	1,747,312
2011/12	430,569	534,423	225,681	199,343	383,505	1,773,521
2012/13	437,028	542,440	229,066	202,333	389,258	1,800,124

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C&I	Gateshead	Newcastle Upon Tyne	North Tyneside	South Tyneside	Sunderland	Total
2013/14	443,583	550,576	232,502	205,368	395,096	1,827,126
2014/15	450,237	558,835	235,989	208,449	401,023	1,854,533
2015/16	456,991	567,217	239,529	211,575	407,038	1,882,351
2016/17	463,845	575,726	243,122	214,749	413,144	1,910,586
2017/18	470,803	584,362	246,769	217,970	419,341	1,939,245
2018/19	477,865	593,127	250,471	221,240	425,631	1,968,334
2019/20	485,033	602,024	254,228	224,558	432,015	1,997,859
2020/21	492,309	611,054	258,041	227,927	438,496	2,027,826

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3.221 In accordance with PPS10, the Secretary of State's proposed changes to RSS include annual tonnages of waste requiring management at a waste planning authority level in Tyne and Wear, shown in Table 3A, derived from the report by ERM "Apportionment of Future Waste Arisings Tyne and Wear and Tees Valley Final" 9 December 2005.

3.222 In accordance with paragraph 14 of PPS10 revised waste apportionment figures have been produced by the Regional Planning Body, following advice from waste planning authorities and their monitoring reports, comments from stakeholders and advice from the Government Office. In preparing Local Development Frameworks, local planning authorities should consider the interim figures in table 3A alongside the revised figures, which should be treated as material considerations.

Special and Hazardous Waste

3.223 Special waste includes a range of waste streams such as acids, alkalis, pharmaceutical compounds, solvents, clinical waste, asbestos and others that are potentially harmful to human health and the environment. Information from the Environment Agency indicates that special waste arising in the Region amounted to 313,000 tonnes in 2002. The majority of this waste was produced in Tyne and Wear (43%) and Tees Valley (35%). During 2002, 223,000 tonnes of special waste was managed in the Region. There is a high level of movement of special waste both into and out of the Region, with the Region being a net exporter of special waste, to fully registered sites in other regions.

3.224 The amount of special waste produced and managed in the North East is not large in comparison with other waste streams. However, because of its nature, it is the most difficult waste to manage. Major changes in waste legislation are having a significant impact on the management of this type of waste. Consequently more treatment and disposal facilities will need to be provided. Special waste is to be known in future as hazardous waste and the number of waste streams classified as hazardous has been increased. Items such as televisions, computer monitors and fluorescent tubes are now hazardous waste requiring appropriate treatment. The implementation of the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment and End-of-life Vehicles Directives over the next two to three years will also impact on the management of hazardous waste. These changes will significantly increase the overall tonnage of waste defined as hazardous. Under the Landfill Directive, co-disposal of hazardous and non-hazardous waste in landfill sites was banned in July 2004 and all hazardous waste must now be treated before disposal. Most landfill sites are in the process of being reassessed by the Environment Agency under the 'Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control' (IPPC) regime. Under this process, there has been a massive reduction in the number and capacity of landfill sites capable of taking hazardous waste. Of the potential twelve remaining commercial landfill sites in England, two are located in the North East.

3.225 Waste minimisation initiatives and new facilities for the treatment and management of hazardous wastes will be required in the Region. Suitable waste management methods include high temperature incineration, other thermal treatment such as gasification and pyrolysis and chemical treatment. Whilst there may be a sharing of some specialist facilities with adjoining regions for certain waste types, facilities for the pre-treatment of hazardous waste, such as stripping down electrical and electronic equipment may be small in scale and would provide opportunities for new business enterprises. Transfer stations will be required to bulk up drummed hazardous waste before transport to treatment plants elsewhere, and Household Waste Recovery Centres will need to provide facilities for the collection of hazardous wastes.

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3.226 It is projected that facilities will be required for the treatment and management of 567,000 tonnes of hazardous waste per annum by 2010/11 rising to 610,000 tonnes per annum by 2015/16 and 671,000 tonnes per annum by 2021/22. It is anticipated that the main requirements will be for landfill capacity, physical/chemical treatment and oil and oil/water recovery. The projected capacity requirements for hazardous waste management in the Region are set out in policy 47. Because of the specialist nature of hazardous waste facilities, it is likely that these facilities will be required Region wide rather than being provided for on a sub-regional basis. In line with the objective of disposing of waste in one of the nearest installations, the majority of the facilities should be developed in Tyne & Wear and Tees Valley, as the largest producers of hazardous waste.

3.227 In accordance with PPS10, Regional Spatial Strategy should provide a strategic framework for preparing local development documents by identifying the waste management facilities needed and their distribution across the Region. The figures for hazardous waste arisings in Policy 47 are at a regional level and do not provide guidance at waste planning authority level. The Regional Planning Body proposes to bring forward more up to date waste apportionment figures during 2007/08. It is proposed that on the basis of the priority in Policy 47 for treatment facilities to be located in Tyne and Wear and Tees Valley, the RPB should understand the balance of hazardous waste arisings between the north and south of the Region. They should also understand the shortfall between existing and required facilities for different methods of management, and, in conjunction with the Regional Sustainable Waste Board, consider publishing further guidance on these subjects to inform the preparation of LDFs.

Policy 47

HAZARDOUS WASTE

Waste and Local Development Frameworks should provide for a range of new facilities for the treatment and management of 567,000 tonnes of hazardous waste per annum by 2010/11, 610,000 tonnes per annum by 2015/16 and 671,000 tonnes per annum by 2021/22.

Waste Management Method	2010/11 '000 tonnes	2015/16 '000 tonnes	2021/22 '000 tonnes
Landfill	156	168	187
Physical/chemical treatment	115	124	136
General hazardous waste incineration	34	37	40
Animal/healthcare waste incineration	1.7	1.9	2
Solvent recovery	76	82	90
Oil & oil/water recovery	132	143	156
Metal bearing waste recovery	15.1	16.2	18

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Waste Management Method	2010/11 ‘000 tonnes	2015/16 ‘000 tonnes	2021/22 ‘000 tonnes
Other recovery/recycling	36	38	42
Total	567	610	671

Note: Figures may not add up due to rounding

Waste and Local Development Frameworks should:

- identify specific sites or criteria for the location of facilities to treat and manage hazardous waste, with priority being given to appropriate industrial areas in Tyne and Wear and Tees Valley;
- identify criteria against which individual proposals will be assessed; and
- provide for the appropriate treatment of hazardous waste where this arises on a regional or sub regional scale.

Theme 3D: Improving Connectivity and Accessibility within and beyond the region

Introduction

3.228 Improving connectivity and accessibility within and beyond the Region is one of the four key themes to deliver a renaissance in the North East, as described in Policy 1. However, it is recognised that this has to be achieved within the principles of sustainable development. The transport strategy that has been developed as part of the RSS has taken into account these sustainability issues. Managing demand, reducing the need to travel, making best use of existing infrastructure and encouraging the use of public transport are central to the transport strategy. However, it is also recognised that there are many problems associated with transport in the North East and investment will be required to overcome these barriers.

3.229 Policy 7 sets out the broad overarching transport strategy for the Region, emphasising the importance of good connections and access both within and beyond the United Kingdom that is imperative to the economic growth of the North East. This section has also taken into account the transport problems facing the North East. Particular barriers and problems specific to the relevant transport policy areas are covered in more detail in this section together with the solutions and outcomes that these improvements can bring. Transport infrastructure has a key role in providing access to employment for all members of society and promoting sustainable patterns of activity, development and movement. The importance of sustainable modes of transport including cycling and walking, particularly for local journeys, is integrated throughout the RSS.

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3.230 The Northern Way Growth Strategy "Moving Forward: the Northern Way" places particular emphasis on continued investment in transport links to contribute to the future prosperity to the North. The Northern Way highlights the need to develop a network of reliable and fast rail and road links between all of the North's city-regions, in partnership with Government, with the overall goal of improving access to jobs, markets and facilities across the North and beyond, by the most efficient means possible.

3.231 In January 2006 the North East Assembly, Regional Development Agency and other partners put together a submission to Government in response to the invitation to give advice on Regional Funding Allocations. This set out proposals for major funding priorities for housing, transport and economic development over a ten year period. Government responded to this submission later in the year and gave a clear indication of the likely levels of funding that would be available in these areas.

3.232 Transport cannot be considered in isolation. The relationship between transport and the broader objectives of economic development, social inclusion and safeguarding the environment have to be taken holistically. The sequential approach to development as outlined in Policy 4 is intrinsically linked to a main strand of the transport strategy, of reducing the need to travel, particularly by car. By prioritising development on suitable previously-developed sites in urban areas, access to employment and essential services, journeys that were previously made by car could be substituted by sustainable forms of travel. Coupled together with demand management measures that encourage behavioural change, the RSS emphasises the importance of making better use of the existing infrastructure, improving the key inter-regional transport connections and improving public transport, ensuring that the wider RSS objectives are met.

3.233 In the short term, the delivery of the strategy will need to focus on smaller scale, lower cost schemes. However, in the longer term, investment in more expensive projects may be required to support sustainable economic growth, reduce regional disparities, help reduce congestion, improve public transport, improve access to the international gateways and improve movement along the strategic inter regional transport corridors. The strategy aims to make the best use of existing infrastructure, particularly through demand management measures whilst also identifying infrastructure schemes that could help to deliver the wider spatial strategy.

3.234 The primary driver of the Region's transport strategy is the need to deliver the Region's wider spatial strategy and the RES. However, in doing this there should be a two way relationship, with transport also having a role in informing the RSS itself. For example, the transport strategy needs to maintain, develop and enhance sustainable modes to ensure that the movement of people and goods is achieved with the minimal social and environmental impact. Conversely the spatial strategy needs to take into account the current and planned future capacity of the transport network, as well as the need to reduce travel to, from and within existing and new development.

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3.235 The RSS adopts this approach, which will set the long-term framework for Local Transport Plans (LTPs) and Local Development Frameworks, and aims to help contribute to delivering the Government's 10 Year Plan for Transport within the framework provided by the Government White Paper, 'The Future of Transport'. The RSS is informed by, but will also provide direction for key delivery agencies' strategies, plans and programmes. Strategies set out in the A1, Tyneside Area and Tees Valley Gateway multi-modal studies have been key considerations in developing transport priorities. Further information regarding these and other evidential based data are referred to in the supporting RSS Transport Technical Paper.

3.236 The supporting text for Policy 7 touches upon the general transport barriers that impair the sustainable economic growth of the Region. Such obstacles include congestion at key points on the strategic inter regional corridors, most notably A1 Newcastle/Gateshead Western Bypass (NGWB), A19 Tyne Tunnel, the A1 in County Durham, the A66/A19 around Middlesbrough and Stockton and the A66 Darlington bypass. The A1 NGWB has been prioritised against broader RSS objectives and requires action to alleviate the congestion. However, any improvements to the A1 NGWB will have to be co-ordinated with conurbation-wide demand management as a key component of packages of measures to reduce congestion, improve public transport provision and look to new technology to provide innovative solutions to the problems associated with increased car use. Tyne and Wear Local Authorities have been successful in obtaining funding from the Government's Transport Innovation Fund to undertake a study into such issues across the conurbation and this will need to be closely linked to any proposals for the A1 NGWB.

3.237 Direct rail access between the two conurbations of the city-regions of Tyne & Wear and Tees Valley is poor and has been reduced further by cuts in direct services. Improvements are sought to the direct rail links between the two. In addition, Sunderland, the Durham Coast and parts of Tees Valley City-Region are poorly served by direct rail services to London. Recent proposals to introduce direct services between Sunderland and London via the Tees Valley - supported by the North East Assembly - have been accepted. Further details of specific transport barriers are highlighted in 'Technical Paper No. 10: Transport'. Better integration and availability of sustainable modes of travel are needed for the movement of people. The RSS focuses upon a core and feeder public transport network that would support an integrated infrastructure and improve social inclusion amongst the population which would increase accessibility to jobs and services.

Key Objectives

3.238 The key objectives for the transport strategy component of the RSS are to:

- improve access to markets and contribute to the competitiveness of North East businesses;
- improve sustainable access to the North East for inbound tourism;
- improve access to employment, learning, health facilities and services for all sections of society;
- support the development of a dynamic labour market for North East businesses;
- minimise the impact of the movement of people and goods on the environment and climate change;
- reduce the need to travel, particularly by private modes of transport;
- promote and increase the proportion of journeys made by public transport, cycling and walking including through demand management measures; [Proposed Changes under Key objectives:

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- improve connectivity and accessibility between the Tyne & Wear and Tees Valley City-Regions;
- improve access and connectivity to the North East's international gateways;
- make best use of resources and existing infrastructure; and
- ensure safe transport networks and infrastructure.

3.239 These objectives fully embrace the national policy objectives of the Government's 'Future for Transport White Paper' (2004) of maximising the benefits of transport while minimising the negative impacts on people and the environment. These are also aimed at contributing to the achievement of the Government's PSA targets of tackling rising congestion; improving rail service performance; providing reliable, accessible local public transport; and improving road safety and air quality.

3.240 In 2002 the Government and Local Government Association agreed seven overarching shared priorities for local government to focus efforts on improving public services, one of these being transport. Specifically, the transport shared priority involves 'sustainable improved access to jobs and services, particularly the most needy'. Tackling congestion, delivering accessibility, improving road safety and air quality are at the core of the second round of LTPs submitted in 2006. All local transport modes are important to the delivery of these transport priorities. The emphasis on the second round of LTPs is placed on modes being integrated in sections that are objective related. This approach is also advocated in RSS whereby different modes of transport are intertwined throughout different policy areas. As with the RSS, accessibility planning is also being developed as a core element of the second round of LTPs.

3.241 Through achieving these objectives, regional transport policy will also support the national climate change programme's target to reduce CO₂ emissions as part of the UK's commitment to the Kyoto Protocol. Nationally, transport is one of the main producers of greenhouse gases contributing to climate change.

International Gateways

3.242 It is important that in future the North East has a transport network that supports the accelerated economic growth. The international gateways include the Region's airports and ports but the Region also needs to have high quality inter-regional networks, including strategic road and mainline rail links to the conurbations, main settlements, and ports and airports, which provide fast and reliable access to national and international destinations. This will be important to improve the competitiveness of the Region and improve access to existing and potential markets for business, as well as supporting inbound tourism, which is emerging as an increasingly important sector in the regional economy. The Region's two airports and its ports, in particular Teesport and Port of Tyne, have opportunity to expand and this can help to deliver wider economic benefits such as more employment in direct and spin off industries.

3.243 Policies 21 and 22 support the need for growth of the Region's airports and ports respectively. To support their growth, improvements in surface infrastructure may be needed to improve connections.

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3.244 The Northern Way Growth Strategy recognises the importance of airports both as key economic drivers which are essential to successful city-regions and for transporting leisure and business passengers and freight. Durham-Tees Valley Airport and Newcastle International Airport both provide this role for the Region's two city-regions and function as international gateways for the North East. Continued access to London Heathrow from the two regional airports will be important, as Heathrow offers destinations to other parts of the world that provides passengers with the opportunity for international interchange.

3.245 The Future of Air Transport White Paper anticipates significant growth at the Region's airports up to 2030 and suggests that impacts associated with growth are expected to be limited. Therefore, the White Paper supports the development of terminal capacity, runway extensions and improved taxiway systems needed to cater for this growth. Forecasts, particularly in the case of Newcastle International Airport, indicate a significant increase in growth. Socio-economic factors, amongst others, are expected to contribute to an increase in passenger numbers as set out in Policy 21. The increase in demand for low cost air travel has also contributed to the airports' rapid growth.

3.246 With the levels of growth anticipated, new routes, new markets and new opportunities will become accessible. These will have a positive impact on the Region's economy in terms of job creation and access to other key international locations. Any expansion that is proposed will need to be subject to the relevant sustainability and environmental impact assessments.

3.247 The RSS supports the growth of the Region's ports although it recognises that market forces will be the key influence rather than public policy. The Region's ports are also considered important international gateways vital to the Region's economic growth although only one, the Port of Tyne caters for passengers. Teesport is the second largest port in the UK, in terms of tonnage handled and has aspirations to develop a deep sea container terminal; this is discussed in more detail in the Sustainable Freight Distribution section. The Northern Way recognises the opportunity for growth at ports and policy 22 provides more detail on how strategies plans and programmes can support the growth of the Region's ports. The RSS strategy focuses upon enhancing rail loading gauge capacity to Teesport that would enable the 9' 6" container market to be expanded providing the opportunity to re-route some of the container traffic destined for Southern ports to the North East. This could relieve some of the congestion in the South and would provide more employment opportunities in the North East through more traffic and more business. Policy 57 also refers to the sustainable distribution of freight that has an impact upon the Region's airports and ports. Policy 48 sets out the regional surface access improvements, required to support the growth of the Region's airports and ports.

Policy 48

INTERNATIONAL GATEWAYS

48.1. Airports

To support the growth of the Region's airports, strategies, plans and programmes and planning proposals should take due account of the possible need to improve surface access links by all modes, particularly by public transport.

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At Durham-Tees Valley Airport priorities for consideration will be to:

- a. improve bus services to Darlington, Middlesbrough, Stockton and Durham City;
- b. improve rail services and rail integration with the main terminal buildings; and
- c. improve access on the surrounding road network, including Long Newton Junction, the A66 Darlington bypass and the Darlington Eastern Transport Corridor.

At Newcastle International Airport, priorities for consideration will be to:

- d. improve public transport access to the airport;
- e. overcome the constraints on the wider road network including the A1 Newcastle/Gateshead Western Bypass;

48.2. Ports

To support the Region's ports, strategies, plans and programmes should seek to achieve good surface access and multi-modal links to all the Region's ports. Particular priorities will be:

- a. rail loading gauge enhancements to Teesport;
- b. development of existing infrastructure at ports for strategic multi-modal road-rail and rail-sea freight interchanges, together with passenger facilities; and
- c. support and encourage the sustainable development of Teesport.

Regional Transport Corridors

3.248 The Regional Transport Corridors are the strategic road and rail arteries that run through the Region and connect to the main centres of economic activity and population. As part of the 'Devolved Decision Making – Regional Funding Allocations Consultation', the Highways Agency has developed a categorisation of their network, which designates routes as either Routes of Strategic National Importance or National. In the North East, only the A1 from the south to the Seaton Burn junction is classified as a route of strategic national importance. (However the A19 between the major conurbations of Tyne & Wear and the Tees Valley is considered, by the Region, to be a route of strategic national importance.) Maintaining and improving the core network for inter and intra regional purposes, particularly catering for the longer distance, strategic traffic, are important. The RFA process has provided the Region with a means to advise Ministers on the allocation of funds to deliver transport priorities as set out in the RSS.

3.249 The focus of the transport strategy is to target investment to improve public transport and increase the role of demand management in the Region. Together these aim to promote greater movement by more sustainable modes of transport, and seek to maximise the potential of existing transport networks. However, to complement these measures there is still a need for additional infrastructure investment in key locations to support regional economic growth and competitiveness, for delivery within the RSS period.

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3.250 The RSS strategy recognises and supports progress already being made to address barriers to the delivery of wider RSS objectives, for example, the proposed New Tyne Crossing; A19 Junction Improvements in Tyne & Wear; and proposals to upgrade the power supply for the East Coast Main Line. The Tees Valley Gateway Study also recommended a package of improvements including public transport measures around Darlington, together with early implementation of the Darlington Eastern Transport Corridor to accommodate the additional travel demands forecast to result from new development proposals - but also to improve accessibility. The proposed improvement schemes north of Newcastle on the A1, although not prioritised by the region as part of the RFA process, and the A69 Haydon Bridge bypass should help to resolve safety concerns and environmental problems at these locations. They should also help with the flow of strategic traffic along regional transport corridors to Scotland and to the North West of England.

3.251 Future major transport investment in the four strategic corridors of the A1/ECML, A66/Tees Valley rail line, A69/Tyne Valley rail line, and the A19/Durham Coast rail line will be required for both public transport and highways infrastructure. Investment in these corridors, which form the 'spines' for the development of the Northern Way Growth Strategy would help to improve accessibility to external markets. However, to encourage more sustainable travel, the priority is to improve public transport provision, particularly making better use of the significant opportunities afforded by the Tyne-Tees rail links. Where major investment in the regional highway network is provided, the benefits of reduced congestion should be 'locked in' through a combination of public transport improvements and demand management measures. Improvements in public transport and the introduction of demand management measures will increase opportunities for more sustainable modes to be available for people to access employment, education, leisure and other services.

3.252 However, if transport networks are to support projected growth within the conurbations and wider city-region areas, and ease of movement and access to markets and services is to be sustained, investment is required in the four strategic regional transport corridors and on local highway networks. Measures that encourage travel by public transport, cycling and walking will be required in LTPs to encourage a switch away from the private car, particularly for shorter journeys.

3.253 There are several major highway improvement schemes being taken forward that will benefit the Region. On the A1 south of the Region two upgrade schemes are being proposed, and on the A19 in Tyne & Wear and Northumberland a number of junction improvements will help to tackle congestion and improve traffic flows.

3.254 However, there is a pressing need to address congestion issues on the A66 at Darlington and the A1 Newcastle/Gateshead Western Bypass; to support the growth of the conurbations and to enable economic development to take place. Looking to the longer term, further major transport studies are required for the A1 in County Durham and the A19/A66/A174 junction in the Tees Valley to assess the need for major upgrades to tackle projected congestion and safety issues.

3.255 Rail improvements continue to be needed along parts of the strategic routes to improve access to other areas of the country, as well as enhancing intra-regional connectivity between the conurbations and regeneration areas within the city-regions. These include reliability enhancements to the East Coast Main Line that will improve inter-regional connectivity to the south and to Edinburgh and Scotland. The Regional Rail Study (2004) has suggested that there is a large untapped market in the North East, which does not have access to direct rail services to London; these areas include

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Sunderland and settlements along the Durham Coast via parts of the Tees Valley City-Region. These are being met by the provision of the new direct services from Sunderland to London, following approval by the Office of the Rail Regulator. These proposals support the delivery of the RSS wider objectives. Capacity and power supply issues exist on several parts of the rail network, particularly the East Coast Main Line, which adversely affect the extent and reliability of service provision, and the potential for local and strategic service integration. The sustainable movement of freight along the regional transport corridors is encouraged.

Policy 49

REGIONAL TRANSPORT CORRIDORS

49.1. Local Transport Plans, if appropriate, and other strategies, plans and programmes should focus on improving sustainable accessibility and the efficiency of movement along the strategic transport networks within the following Inter-Regional Transport Corridors:

- A1/East Coast Main Line;
- A19/Durham Coast rail line;
- A66/Tees Valley rail line; and
- A69/Tyne Valley rail line.

49.2. Particular priorities should be:

- East Coast Main Line power supply;
- Rail loading gauge enhancements to Teesport;
- A1Newcastle/Gateshead Western Bypass as part of a Tyne & Wear demand management and investment strategy;
- A19 Junction improvements in Tyne & Wear allied with the New Tyne Crossing; and
- Rail services between the city-regions and beyond to London and Scotland.

49.3. The strategic function of all major routes should be retained and major investment should seek to tackle issues of safety and congestion and to enable opportunities for further development to come forward in accordance with the RSS. Demand management measures should also be considered as part of packages of measures to address congestion, environmental and safety issues.

49.4. Major transport studies should be undertaken for the A1 through County Durham and the A19/A66/A174 in the Tees Valley to consider multi-modal solutions to the problems of increasing congestion levels. The performance and safety of the A1 North of Newcastle should continue to be monitored and a Regional Network Report approach should be adopted for all strategic highways.

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Regional Public Transport Provision

3.256 Increasing the use of public transport is central to the sustainability principles of the RSS, and is particularly important in tackling the rising levels of car use. The North East has a relatively comprehensive bus based public transport network, but services need improvements in many areas, particularly in the Other Regeneration Areas within central parts of County Durham and the rural areas to the west of the Region. In Tyne & Wear, the Metro is a significant asset but revitalisation of the network and rolling stock are required to meet future needs. The regional rail network connects many settlements in the Region, but is an underused asset. Improvements could help it to realise its full potential, particularly where it parallels strategic highway routes. The provision of a regional public transport network could enable people to travel to access employment and services in a more sustainable manner, helping to reduce the number of private cars on the road, leading to less congestion.

3.257 The development of Bus Quality Partnerships will be an important factor in raising the patronage on the bus network within the Region. There is considerable scope for improvements and partnership working between Local Highway Authorities, and the public transport providers. Quality Bus Corridors, bus priority measures, a safe waiting environment and Real Time Information are all factors that can make the bus an attractive alternative to the car, particularly in the urban areas – the Tyne & Wear Superoute network is a good example. Improvements to the bus network will help those that do not have a car access employment and essential services, it will also offer the potential to attract car users, taking private vehicles off the road that could help to reduce congestion, improve journey times and improve the local environment by reducing emissions from private cars.

3.258 Public transport use is declining due to a combination of greater prosperity and car ownership and use, and as a result of the recent trends of the decentralisation of land uses. Public transport has also increased in cost relative to the private car over the past decades. In addition, the network is strongly focused on radial routes into the urban centres and many of the more recent employment and retail developments on the edge of the urban areas are relatively poorly served by public transport. This is a particular barrier to jobs and opportunities for residents from the more deprived areas. Whilst new development should be located where it can be well served by public transport, cycling and walking, with the associated health benefits that these can bring, there is a need to ensure that existing employment and community facilities such as health services and retail are also well served by public transport. The marketing and promotion of public transport will be important factors in attempting to increase patronage.

3.259 In accordance with the strategic transport objectives, particular priority should be given to public transport in meeting travel requirements within the Region. This includes journeys between and within the main conurbations and main settlements; to the regeneration towns within the Other Regeneration Areas; and to rural service centres and their hinterlands. Increasing the number of people using public transport, as well as cycling and walking will help contribute to improving the health and well-being of the population, including tackling obesity.

3.260 In addition to this, access to the Region's cultural, leisure and environmental assets has to be provided in a sustainable manner. Provision should be made to ensure that visitors are able to travel to these attractions and assets by sustainable means of transport, wherever possible as highlighted in the Region's Tourism Strategy.

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3.261 The approach taken for the development of public transport across the Region has been staged in two phases. Priorities have been developed for the RSS plan period with the realism that, in short term, finance is limited and therefore some of more expensive heavy and light rail based improvement schemes will only be able to be implemented in the medium / longer term. This has enabled a focus to be placed on the development of a high quality, high frequency and integrated bus-based network in the short term whilst focusing on the potential development of rail and light rail based schemes for later. The Regional Rail Study, 2004 recommends that, in the short term, an express bus service for Ashington, Blyth and Tyne should be developed to help to improve accessibility in South East Northumberland. There is potential for a rail-based solution in the longer term. In the Tees Valley, the Bus Network Review proposals are now well advanced, and the proposals for a Metro system focus on the Darlington to Saltburn corridor with the potential for links to Hartlepool and Nunthorpe.

3.262 The need and viability of new stations should also be investigated particularly on the Durham Coast line, to improve accessibility and support the viability of rail services. These improvements will be important to secure the benefits of economic regeneration and improve access to key employment areas and the main centres of services and facilities for all North East residents.

Policy 50

REGIONAL PUBLIC TRANSPORT PROVISION

Strategies, plans and programmes should develop public transport provision that encourages a rebalancing of the transport system in favour of more sustainable modes. Local Transport Plans and other strategies, plans and programmes should support that action, which will focus on measures that:

- a. ensure that new development and redevelopment is located and designed to promote and encourage walking, cycling and public transport provision;
- b. support the integration of public transport services across modes, and improved journey time reliability and affordability;
- c. promote the continued development of real time information and Traveline, the regional public transport information service;
- d. develop common Region-wide ticketing across all public transport modes, including through-ticketing;
- e. introduce common bus fares standards, particularly discounted fares for children and older people;
- f. within the Tyne & Wear conurbation, encourage and support the revitalisation of the Metro system;
- g. consider the development of a rail-based metro system for the Tees Valley City-Region

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h. encourage the use and development of Bus Quality Partnerships and where appropriate, Bus Quality Contracts in liaison with operators;

i. encourage and investigate the application of innovative public transport solutions to reduce social exclusion in urban and rural areas;

j. promote and encourage new and improved public transport services, particularly to Key Employment Locations and other employment areas, retail, sports, leisure, tourism and other community facilities, currently poorly served by public transport; and

k. provide adequate levels of revenue to maintain and enhance, where appropriate, the quality of bus, rail, coach and the Tyne & Wear Metro services;

l. investigate the potential for new and expanded Park & Ride facilities to contribute to reducing congestion and to encourage greater public transport use.

Particular priority should be focused upon the development of a high quality, high frequency and integrated bus based network for each city-region. This would include the development of ticketing/smartcard mechanisms, real-time information and innovative marketing.

Strategic Public Transport Hubs

3.263 The need for connectivity improvements – if not addressed - within the Region, particularly between the main centres of employment, can affect the Region's competitiveness. There is a continued need for the regions' regeneration centres and areas to be able to access the main conurbations for employment opportunities. Links between the two conurbations of the city-regions by road is good. Public transport links are poor in comparison and this may be contributing to the congestion problems on the A19, A66 and A1. There is a need to develop public transport between the conurbations of the city-regions to provide an attractive alternative to the car to encourage modal shift. Public transport from the Other Regeneration Areas to the conurbations also needs to be improved to provide social inclusion opportunities.

3.264 To provide integrated networks across the Region, core and feeder networks based on linking key regional and sub-regional transport interchanges, should be developed. The five centres of Newcastle (in particular Newcastle Central station), Sunderland, Durham City, Middlesbrough and Darlington exhibit the highest levels of public transport accessibility at the strategic level within the city-regions. The public transport links between these key interchanges, including links to Stockton-on-Tees and Hartlepool, and to the main urban areas outside the North East, form the core public transport network. The role of other areas such as Gateshead, Hartlepool and Stockton are important in providing a hub for people to access and interchange at the local and sub-regional level and therefore contributing towards the concept of the 'seamless journey'.

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3.265 To support these links, feeder networks should be further developed to link better into the core network, based on the Main Settlements, Regeneration Towns and Rural Service Centres, which act as public transport hubs for their surrounding areas. The focus on interchange approach will increase the opportunity for people to access and connect with other modes of transport from the public transport network. This helps to provide an accessibility-led approach to the location of new development. Increasing the accessibility of these hubs by promoting cycling and walking will have a positive health benefit. Higher densities should be located particularly within close proximity to strategic and local public transport hubs to encourage travel by public transport.

Policy 51

STRATEGIC PUBLIC TRANSPORT HUBS

52.1. Strategies, plans and programmes should support the development of a 'Core and Feeder' public transport system focused on a network of key interchanges. Local Transport Plans and other strategies, plans and programmes should support the development of the interchanges:

52.2. Strategic Public Transport Hubs of Middlesbrough, Darlington, Sunderland, Durham City and Newcastle, particularly around railway stations, should:

- a. be the focus for higher density land uses and/or mixed land uses that require a high level of accessibility, subject to the environmental capacity of the area to accommodate that development;
- b. be prioritised for the development of high quality interchange facilities and service integration between all modes of transport and increase the level of cycling and walking to these hubs; and
- c. be the focus of improved service frequency and journey time reliability along the 'Core Corridors' linking these hubs.

52.3. Particular priorities for sub-regional and local hubs in the Main Settlements, Regeneration Towns, the main Rural Service Centres, metro stations and district level interchanges that act as hubs for their surrounding areas are to:

- a. focus higher density land uses and/or mixed land uses that require a high level of accessibility. The scale of development should reflect the role and function of each hub;
- b. enhance service connections and journey time reliability to the Strategic Public Transport Hubs;
- c. improve public transport service provision around surrounding areas, to develop better integrated 'feeder' service networks; and
- d. increase the level of cycling and walking accessibility to these hubs.

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Demand Management Measures

3.266 The North East has a comparatively un-congested road network, although there are several major congestion hotspots, particularly on the strategic road network at the A1 and A19 within Tyne & Wear and the A19 and A66 in the Tees Valley conurbation. Based on current trends, without interventions, congestion in these areas will increase, impacting on the economy in terms of increased journey times and costs and also on the environment. New infrastructure may be needed to tackle these congested areas but this should be as part of a coordinated approach. The focus will be on encouraging greater use of the public transport network supported by demand management measures and making best use of existing infrastructure. Currently, the cost of private motoring does not discourage use and there is a need to act to make public transport a more attractive option, to encourage a behavioural change to more sustainable travel.

3.267 Demand management and making best use of the existing infrastructure are very much inter-linked. The reallocation of road space, for example, to provide for no-car lanes or bus only lanes is one example of making use of existing infrastructure in a way that is encouraging use of more sustainable modes of travel. 'Technical Paper No. 10: Transport' provides evidence of how these 'softer' policy options can contribute to increases in journeys by public transport, cycling and walking and reductions in car journeys. It is important that all of these potential measures are considered as part of a package of measures developed to address specific problems.

3.268 Demand management measures will be aimed particularly at tackling peak hour congestion, specifically targeting journeys to work and school journeys, as addressing these trips offers the highest potential benefits from congestion reduction, improved journey time reliability and reduced environmental pollution. In addition, the high number of trips associated with commuting provides the best opportunity for switching to public transport, thereby increasing public transport service viability and the prospects for enhancements that will be required to cater for increased demand. Demand management can also have benefits in areas away from the main centres, by helping to reduce traffic growth on strategic routes.

3.269 There is a range of demand management measures that can be used, such as, park and ride, car sharing schemes, car clubs, parking standards and charging, road user charging. Different areas may require different solutions, in conjunction with public transport and behavioural change measures such as the 'softer' transport policy measures of travel awareness campaigns and personalised journey planning. It will be important that demand management measures are identified and implemented through LTPs to help to facilitate a reduction in congestion and other problems associated with increasing car use. Further action may be required if this proves to be insufficient. Additionally, there will be a need for demand management measures to be intrinsically linked to new developments, although it is recognised that further work is required to progress this in greater detail.

3.270 There is already a successful small-scale road-pricing scheme in Durham City. The comprehensive adoption of pricing measures in the Region is not considered necessary or appropriate in the short-term because the benefits of their introduction and the potential socio-economic costs to the Region are uncertain. However, it is important to start considering, at an early stage, the value and possibilities for pricing measures as part of wider demand management strategies. Therefore,

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studies of pricing measures and their contribution to delivering the RSS should be undertaken in conjunction with LTP partners. This should cover the whole Region, but focus particularly on the conurbations within the city-regions where congestion is most severe. It is also important to consider reinvesting any revenue surplus that is generated from such schemes in supporting public transport, cycling and walking measures, including further infrastructure improvements.

3.271 It is, therefore, important that a comprehensive approach is taken at a regional level to the development of a strategic demand management framework, in partnership with others, that will inform the production of sub-regional and local initiatives.

Policy 52

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR DEMAND MANAGEMENT

The Regional Planning Body in conjunction with other authorities and the Highways Agency shall develop a strategic framework for demand management that will:

- a. identify locations where congestion, air pollution or other environmental and social problems related to car traffic are currently, or likely to become, an issue;
- b. reflect and respond to Government initiatives on demand management and road pricing;
- c. cover both the strategic and local transport networks;
- d. identify locations, with an emphasis on city-regions, where appropriate demand management measures should be pursued;
- e. ensure that inter-location competition issues are given appropriate consideration;
- f. ensure that accessibility and the provision of travel options are given appropriate consideration;
- g. ensure that a comprehensive approach is taken to include the provision of public transport alternatives;
- h. identify the full range of demand management measures, including parking policies, that should be considered for implementation through programmes, LTPs and LDFs; and
- i. influence the Region's investment and management priorities.

The framework will also identify contributions that business and other sectors can make to implementing demand management measures.

Policy 53

DEMAND MANAGEMENT MEASURES

53.1. Local Transport Plans and other strategies, plans and programmes should develop integrated demand management measures to address congestion, environmental and safety issues, which include the contribution of:

- a. bus lanes and other highway reallocation and management measures;

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- b. park and ride;
- c. car sharing schemes/car clubs;
- d. parking standards;
- e. 'softer' transport policy measures including personalised travel planning, travel awareness campaigns and tele-working, teleconferencing;
- f. workplace parking levies; and
- g. road user charging.

53.2. Priorities will be the Tyne & Wear and Tees Valley conurbations where the most acute congestion problems exist, and should be targeted at discouraging short distance journeys by private motorised modes of transport.

53.3. The nature of pricing solutions should fully consider both the impact of related policy measures to improve public transport and the contribution of parking policy and travel plans.

53.4. Local Transport Plans and Local Development Frameworks should ensure that under-performance in any one of the measures set out is accounted for by a compensatory increase in other measures.

53.5. Measures should take into account future traffic forecasts, which should include assessments of trip reductions as a result of changes in working practices and increasing local service provision, and e-services that will reduce the need to travel and demand for movement

Parking and Travel Plans

3.272 To complement pricing measures as an emerging demand management tool in the North East and to support the delivery of improved public transport throughout the Region, the promotion of travel plans and the provision and pricing of parking will be essential. Key elements include the marketing of public transport, cycling, walking and car sharing in trying to influence travel behaviour. These should be incorporated into LTPs.

3.273 The journey to work and the journey to school are particular targets for modal shift to public transport. These are predominantly regular journeys with a set route/origin and destination. It is important to promote the implementation of Travel Plans and wider travel awareness campaigns by schools and employers, which encourage the use of sustainable transport for the journey to work and to school.

3.274 Complementary public transport, cycling and walking improvements to larger scale developments should be delivered through Travel Assessment/Travel Plan agreements between operators, developers, planning and transport authorities.

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3.275 Particular care will be needed with the development of the Key Employment Locations and Brownfield Mixed Use Locations. Where these, or other major new sites, are developed, it is important that this does not lead to high levels of parking supply even if the area is currently relatively inaccessible by public transport. Instead, the focus should be on improving public transport accessibility. If any additional parking is needed in the short term this should, where appropriate, be subject to an appropriate charging regime, with any income used to improve alternatives to the car. Key Employment Locations and Brownfield Mixed Use Locations provide a significant opportunity to masterplan for the provision of a parking approach that manages private car use whilst promoting sustainable modes in line with policies 13 and 20.

Policy 54

PARKING AND TRAVEL PLANS

54.1. The Regional Planning Body in consultation with local authorities will prepare statements on parking standards for each city-region and for the rural areas.

54.2. To complement these statements, Local Transport Plans and other strategies, plans and programmes, and planning proposals should:

- a. seek to minimise parking provision for non-residential developments, linked to coordinated proposals for public transport and accessibility improvements and demand management;
- b. apply guidance set out in national planning policy on residential parking standards, reflecting local circumstances;
- c. ensure travel plans are prepared for all major development proposals that will generate significant additional journeys which should seek to maximise travel by public transport, cycling, walking and car sharing. At the Key Employment Locations and Brownfield Mixed-Use Locations consideration should be given to developing a coordinated approach for the whole site, including overall levels of parking provision; and
- d. indicate the nature and extent of contributions that will be necessary to improve transport infrastructure and services as part of development in particular areas or sites.

54.3. To complement these statements Local Transport Plans and other strategies, plans and programmes should also:

- a. set maximum parking standards for non-residential land uses in line with the standards set out in the statements for city-regions and for the rural areas, seeking to reduce provision below these levels in locations with good public transport access, particularly in the Strategic Public Transport Hubs and to a lesser extent in the sub-regional and local hubs;

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- b. develop management strategies in each Interchange hub for the appropriate level of total parking stock that is consistent with the above; and
- c. ensure that the pricing of new parking provision does not undermine local parking regimes.

Accessibility Within and Between the City Regions

3.276 The focus of growth and development within the conurbations of the two city-regions and the anticipated growth in population levels envisaged in the Locational Strategy, coupled to a rise in private car use, will exert increasing pressure on the existing fabric of the conurbations. In particular, the transport network already experiences congestion at hotspots in the core areas and on the main trunk roads of A66 and A19 in the Tees Valley City-Region, and the A19 and A1 through the Tyne & Wear City-Region. In addition to causing local environmental and social problems, congestion is already adversely affecting both ease of movement and the wider regional economy.

3.277 Other barriers that are preventing the delivery of the wider strategy for improved accessibility between the city-regions include the poor public transport between the two conurbations, as addressed in policies 50 and 51, the congestion hotspots on the A19, A1 and A66, poor public transport from some of the Other Regeneration Areas into the conurbations, for example from South East Northumberland and North and East Durham into Tyne & Wear that exacerbate social exclusion by restricting access to employment opportunities from these areas for those that do not have access to private transport.

3.278 It is considered that investment in public transport between the two conurbations and to/from the regeneration areas into the conurbations are key elements to the transport strategy. Policies 50 and 51 provide details on how regional public transport provision can be improved and encourage the concept of strategic public transport hubs and a core and feeder public transport network. It is recognised that bus based measures will offer the soundest value for money investment in the short term, but in the medium to longer term heavy and light rail schemes will need to be considered, particularly to make best use of available local rail network capacity.

3.279 Barriers that are preventing the successful delivery of the wider strategy for access within the city-regions include poor public transport from the more disadvantaged communities to employment areas; business growth and housing, which increasingly is focussed in peripheral areas where public transport accessibility is lower and car use is higher; buses increasingly being held up by traffic congestion, which affects reliability, frequency and journey time; need for improvements to interchange facilities; upgrade of rail rolling stock and infrastructure to improve attractiveness; increasing levels of traffic resulting in increased air and noise pollution within the conurbations; and consequent affect on health and quality of life.

3.280 A considered package of measures is needed to ensure that accessibility and free movement is maintained in the city-regions. However, as part of developing a Region-wide public transport network, the primary focus for transport improvements in the city-regions will be on improving the attractiveness of modes other than the private car to help to reduce congestion, and to manage congestion in a better manner. However, high levels of congestion on the A1 and A19 strategic

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highways within Tyne & Wear and the A66 and A19 in the Tees Valley are a particularly acute problem affecting the strategic function of these routes. New highway investment is likely to be required in addition to complementary public transport improvements and demand management measures to improve their operation. Policies 9 and 10 that refer to the Tyne & Wear and Tees Valley City-Regions detail some of the connectivity issues in both areas. Crossings of the rivers Wear and Tees are pinch points for congestion, particularly at peak times of the day. A new crossing of the Wear in Sunderland is part of the Sunderland Strategic Transport Corridor proposals.

3.281 Proposals for additional crossing capacity of the Tees would also help to alleviate congestion and aid regeneration of the area. Public transport improvements would also need to be incorporated in any future proposals.

3.282 The two city-regions, with the conurbations at their core, form the key areas of economic activity and population in the Region. The Northern Way Growth Strategy advocates that for the North East and its two city-regions to prosper and benefit from economic and labour market interaction, it is important that road and rail links are of high quality between Tyne & Wear and the Tees Valley and to other northern city-regions. The public transport connections between the cores of the two city-regions, particularly by rail, could be improved. The Northern Way Growth Strategy recognises that the economic futures of the two North East City-Region conurbations are strongly inter-linked. Improving connectivity between these areas will support their growth through increased interaction and the broadening of their labour and commercial catchment areas, which is essential for thriving economies. The perceived and actual quality of public transport is a barrier to achieving equal access to jobs, learning and services for all sections of society in the North East.

3.283 The perceived and actual quality of public transport is a particular issue in the towns within regeneration areas outlying the conurbations in each of the city-regions, which have suffered a loss of local opportunities due to the decline in traditional primary industries. There are policies throughout the RSS to restructure the facilities, skills and environment in these areas but these will take time and will need to be developed incrementally. In the short term, there is a need to improve public transport access from these centres within the regeneration areas, to the jobs and opportunities, where economic activity is, and will continue to be, focused and promoted.

3.284 In developing Region-wide integrated public transport systems based on key interchanges and corridor networks, particular priority should be to improve interchange facilities at the key hubs and improve public transport services along corridors connecting the conurbations and regeneration areas to encourage greater use that will help reduce congestion and reduce emissions from the private car.

Policy 55

ACCESSIBILITY WITHIN AND BETWEEN THE CITY-REGIONS

55.1. Local Transport Plans and other strategies, plans and programmes should seek to improve access, particularly by public transport, between:

- a. the Tyne & Wear and Tees Valley City-Regions; and

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b. the conurbations and Regeneration Towns and Rural Service Centres within the city-regions.

55.2. Local Transport Plans and other strategies, plans and programmes should also support a package of measures to improve accessibility within and between the Tyne & Wear and Tees Valley City-Regions, including:

a. demand management measures including road space reprioritisation to modes other than the private car, particularly on the main arterial routes;

b. prioritising high quality public transport measures that improve the frequency, journey time and reliability of services, including the revitalisation of the Metro. In the short term particular priority should be focused upon the development of a high quality, high frequency and integrated bus based network. High quality rapid transit solutions should be investigated as options for longer term improvements;

c. the longer term role of demand management, including pricing measures to restrain private car use;

d. public transport access improvements to Key Employment Locations and Regional Brownfield Mixed-Use Locations particularly from the more deprived areas ; and

e. intervention on the A1 and A19 strategic highway networks to tackle major congestion hotspots, including Newcastle/Gateshead Western Bypass, junctions along the A19 and the New Tyne Crossing.

55.3. Public Transport improvements should focus on introducing measures to improve the frequency, journey time and journey time reliability of existing public transport services particularly to and between the Strategic Public Transport Hubs. Improving interchange facilities, access and safety enhancements to these hubs should also be prioritised.

Accessibility in Rural Areas

3.285 Due to the dispersed nature of much rural activity, the private car will continue to have an important role to play in the Region's remote rural areas. However, there are significant numbers of rural residents in the North East that do not have access to a car either for all or part of the day. Increased car use in rural areas is also affecting rural environments as they contain some of the most sensitive built and natural environments in the country.

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3.286 Consequently, the development of innovative integrated rural public transport is essential to ensure access to services, healthcare and employment for rural residents and to support the sustainable development of the Region's tourism industry. Both of these are key to the North East Rural Action Plan's vision for a rural renaissance. The emphasis is on creating 'seamless journeys' even when this involves transferring between transport modes. The need to travel can be reduced by providing more jobs and services locally and therefore there are important linkages to the work on market towns and community services. The co-operation between local transport authorities is essential in achieving the 'seamless journey' concept and, therefore, cross-boundary planning between local transport authorities will be required.

3.287 The development of a core and feeder network is promoted whereby the main rural service centres as outlined in Policy 11 will provide the hub of a rural transport network with other services feeding into them from the rural hinterlands.

Commuting by private modes of transport from rural areas to the conurbations in the city-regions has continued to increase, for example 42% of people from Tynedale commute into Newcastle upon Tyne (Census, 2001) and only 2% use the Tyne Valley line for the journey to work. The Regional Rail Study, 2004 recommended that smaller rural interchanges along the Tyne Valley line and on the ECML in Northumberland could be developed which would also support the growth of sustainable tourism traffic to locations such as Seahouses and Holy Island, in a manner similar to the Hadrian's Wall bus services already in operation.

3.288 Community Rail Development (CRD) can help to place local and rural railways on a sustainable basis for the long term, so that they can continue to offer a vital service for passengers and freight and can contribute more to the local economy. These partnerships can also help to contribute towards providing increased accessibility, improving social inclusion and ultimately trying to attract more people to travel by rail. Support should continue for CRD such as the pilot on the Esk Valley Line, and investigate the potential for the Bishop Auckland Branch Line to establish the feasibility of small scale improvements via Community Rail.

Policy 56

ACCESSIBILITY IN RURAL AREAS

Local Transport Plans and other strategies, plans and programmes should:

- a. develop core networks of public transport links focused on key hubs, and in particular on the rural service centres, with frequent services from these centres to the Conurbations and Main Settlements within the two city-regions;
- b. develop feeder public transport services from surrounding rural areas to the Rural Service Centres, ensuring integration with core network services;
- c. in more remote rural areas, seek to develop innovative demand responsive public transport, rather than rely on more traditional forms of public transport; and
- d. support the introduction and concept of Community Rail Development, such as the Esk Valley pilot, to offer vital services for passengers and freight enabling them to improve

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accessibility and contribute towards a modal shift away from private motor vehicles, particularly for commuting.

Sustainable Freight Distribution

3.289 Predictable and timely deliveries are important to the competitiveness of North East businesses, whilst fully stocked shops are important to the quality of life of residents. Freight movements differ from passenger transport. When compared with passenger movements a higher proportion of freight travels long distances across regional boundaries. However, there are also shared issues as many freight journeys originate and also finish in the Region. Consequently, it will be important for freight and passenger transport that the key transport corridors continue to operate effectively as highlighted in policy 49.

3.290 A significant proportion of the freight entering the UK and handled by southern ports is heading for the north. The opportunity may exist to increase the northern ports' share of this market which has the potential to deliver a two-fold benefit. A transfer of this freight could relieve congestion at southern ports, and on associated transport networks, and also help northern ports to develop in terms of their size, the freight handled and the spin-off economic benefits. Teesport has aspirations and plans to develop a deep-sea container facility that would enhance its ability to handle increased container traffic. This could help to alleviate congestion problems in the south and also to contribute to the economic development of the Region.

3.291 'Just-in-time' deliveries are important, particularly due to the move towards an economy increasingly based on higher value, time sensitive sectors. It is, therefore, essential to have the widest range of delivery options. Consequently, measures to improve the viability of modal shift of freight from road to rail and, increasingly, short sea shipping will be important in the future. Freight interchanges that support modern operating practices should be safeguarded to support these purposes. However, road transport will continue to be an essential mode for the freight industry, especially for urban deliveries, and it will be important that measures are introduced to prevent deliveries being adversely affected by rising congestion in these areas.

3.292 Two directives, the Working Time Horizontal Amending Directive introduced in August 2003, and the Road Transport Sectoral Directive, introduced in March 2005, will impact significantly on the freight industry. Both Directives apply rules on working time to the road transport sector covering drivers and non-mobile workers. One consequence of this will be the need to ensure an appropriate provision of HGV roadside facilities alongside trunk roads.

3.293 The North East has significant inter-modal freight interchange capacity at existing operational facilities, including rail-connected ports. In accordance with the overall transport aim to make best use of existing infrastructure, the Regional Freight Strategy sets out the priority to develop new services and facilities at these locations. To support the movement of freight by rail, existing rail freight lines should be safeguarded, particularly where re-use could benefit from the introduction of passenger services and releasing capacity on the East Coast Main Line. Any proposals for new

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inter-modal interchange capacity elsewhere in the Region may undermine the viability of existing facilities, and consequently, the wider regional 'offer'. As such, the business case for new sites must be clearly justified. Detailed guidance on developing and implementing freight strategies at the local level is contained in the North East Freight Toolkit and the Regional Freight Strategy for the North East.

3.294 Whilst there is existing interchange capacity in the Region particularly at the ports, longer term trends are likely to encourage more demand for rail-freight in the future both nationally and regionally. There are a number of factors that could encourage more demand for rail-linked distribution/logistics facilities in the long-term. These factors include issues around journey reliability for road-based transport, due to increasing congestion; the rising costs of road-based transport, due to rising fuel prices; and driver shortages.

3.295 In terms of sustainable freight distribution there remains a case to be made for the potential provision, in the long term, of a rail-freight Interchange at Tursdale, Durham. Amongst the issues to be considered would be its justification in terms of potential demand, how it would fit with existing facilities including Teesport, its relationship with other regional priorities for the rail network, and its impact on the City of Durham and its surroundings.

Policy 57

SUSTAINABLE FREIGHT DISTRIBUTION

Local Transport Plans and other strategies, plans and programmes should:

- a. prioritise strategic freight movements, alongside strategic passenger movement on the Regional Transport Corridors;
- b. support rail loading gauge enhancements to Teesport and the Port of Tyne, particularly from the East Coast Main Line;
- c. support and encourage the sustainable development of Teesport;
- d. safeguard existing rail freight lines, for enhanced use by freight and, possibly, passenger services, for example the Ashington, Blyth, Tyne Line, and particularly where this would address capacity issues on the East Coast Main Line;
- e. protect the Leamside Line from development in order to assist its possible reinstatement for freight services and improved public transport accessibility in the longer term;
- f. promote the efficient local delivery of freight by reallocating road space to freight uses, where appropriate, particularly in the conurbations;
- g. prioritise the development of new services and multi-modal freight interchange capacity at existing operational facilities, including rail-connected ports;

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- h. protect land at the former goods yard at Tweedmouth, that may be required as part of the ECML improvements;
- i. encourage local authorities to enter into Freight Quality Partnerships with freight operators to improve the management, and reduce the impacts, of freight movements; and
- j. support provision of HGV driver rest facilities in close proximity to the trunk road network.

Major Regional Transport Priorities

3.296 The successful implementation of the transport strategy within the RSS, to deliver both the RSS and the RES will rely on four key elements:

- revenue support for the existing transport network, including revenue funding for public transport, highway maintenance budgets and Region-wide public transport ticketing and information;
- complementary land use planning policy through the RSS, which promotes, for example, mixed-use development and focussing development on urban areas where public transport accessibility is highest;
- other complementary transport measures such as demand management solutions and behavioural change measures that will be delivered on the ground through, for example, travel plans, school travel plans, and Region-wide parking standards. It is these smaller scale schemes that could provide changes in people's travel behaviour to deliver real benefits in terms of reductions in congestion and improvements in air quality; and
- major infrastructure schemes and measures.

3.297 These points emphasise that major schemes form only a part of a comprehensive package of land use planning policies; demand management and behavioural change measures; and measures to improve the efficiency of existing infrastructure. The overall policy approach and strategic priorities for transport are set out in the preceding policies. There are schemes in Table 4 listed as 'under investigation'. Some of these may involve new build proposals as well as traffic management solutions. Inclusion in Table 4 does not preclude their assessment under the Habitat Regulations early on within the options generation and appraisal process. It should be noted that the results of such an assessment may lead to modification or deletion of the scheme from Table 4.

3.298 Investment priorities for major regional transport schemes will be informed in future by the wider RSS transport objectives taking into account deliverability and affordability.

3.299 Additionally, due account will be taken of national transport objectives and the findings of transport studies undertaken in the Region such as the Regional Rail Study for the North East and the A1, Tyneside and Tees Valley Gateway Multi Modal Studies in order to inform this process.

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3.300 The following table (Table 4) identifies transport actions/proposals that relate to the spatially specific objectives and particular transport problems detailed in the RSS. The status of specific proposals has been informed by Government's response to the RFA process undertaken, and subsequent recommendations submitted, by the Region. Progress on individual projects will be subject to the availability of finance, successful progression through the normal statutory procedures and continued support from the Region.

3.301 The status of any specific schemes identified is shown in order to indicate likely timescales for delivery.

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3.302 TABLE 4 -TRANSPORT OUTCOMES & RELATED INVESTMENT, & MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES

(iii)

Spatially Specific Objective (and specific RSS policy)	Transport problems to be addressed	Transport Actions / Proposals (and current status)
Improve/maintain accessibility to regeneration priority areas/sites (Policies 9 Tyne & Wear City-Region, 10 Tees Valley City-Region and 7 Connectivity & Accessibility	<p>Accessibility between SE Northumberland regeneration areas and the A1 and Tyne & Wear City-Region employment areas</p> <p>Accessibility to priority regeneration sites within the Tyne & Wear City-Region</p> <p>Access to regeneration areas on south bank of River Wear</p> <p>Accessibility to priority regeneration sites within the Tees Valley City-Region</p> <p>Accessibility from E. Durham Coalfields regeneration areas and the A1(M)</p>	<p>Morpeth Northern Bypass (Scheme RFA approved)</p> <p>A19 Seaton Burn Grade Separated Junction (Scheme RFA approved)</p> <p>Improved public transport measures between SE Northumberland and employment areas in Tyne and Wear especially Newcastle city centre (Proposed for Investigation by SENNTRI/Nexus)</p> <p>A1056 Northern Gateway (Scheme RFA approved)</p> <p>A19 Testos Grade Separated Junction (Scheme RFA approved)</p> <p>A19/A189 Moor Farm Junction Improvements (Scheme RFA approved)</p> <p>A19 Coast Road Grade Separated Junction (Scheme RFA approved)</p> <p>Orpheus Bus Corridors (Phases 1 & 2) (Scheme RFA approved)</p> <p>Capacity improvements on the A1 within Gateshead and Newcastle (Under investigation by Highways Agency)</p>

iii Schemes denoted as 'Scheme RFA approved' have been prioritised by the Region through the Regional Funding Allocation process.

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Spatially Specific Objective (and specific RSS policy)	Transport problems to be addressed	Transport Actions / Proposals (and current status)
		<p>Reinvigoration of Tyne and Wear Metro (Under investigation by Nexus)</p> <p>Improved bus services within Tyne and Wear (Under investigation by Nexus)</p> <p>Conurbation-wide package of management to tackle congestion (Under investigation by Tyne and Wear Authorities)</p> <p>New cross Tyne access to Newburn Riverside from Blaydon Station (Proposed Blaydon Newburn Pedestrian/Cycle bridge for investigation jointly by Newcastle City and Gateshead Councils)</p> <p>Sunderland Southern Radial Route (Under construction)</p> <p>Sunderland Strategic Transport Corridor (Scheme RFA approved)</p> <p>Sunderland Central Route (Scheme RFA approved)</p> <p>Darlington Eastern Transport Corridor (Under construction)</p> <p>North Middlesbrough Accessibility Improvements (Scheme RFA approved)</p> <p>Tees Valley Bus Network Improvements (Scheme RFA approved)</p> <p>Tees Valley Heavy Rail/Metro Improvements (Under investigation by Tees Valley JSU/Tees Valley Regeneration)</p> <p>Wheatley Hill to BowburnLink Road (Under construction)</p>

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Spatially Specific Objective (and specific RSS policy)	Transport problems to be addressed	Transport Actions / Proposals (and current status)
		Transit 15 Quality Bus Corridors (Scheme RFA approved)
Improve/maintain accessibility to the NE's international gateways - Newcastle Airport (Policies 21 Airports and 48 International Gateways)	Public transport access and capacity on the strategic road network to support future growth in passenger numbers at Newcastle Airport	Capacity improvements on the A1 within Gateshead and Newcastle (Under investigation by Highways Agency) Reinvigoration of Tyne and Wear Metro (Under investigation by Nexus) Improved Metro/heavy rail interchange at Newcastle Central Station (Under investigation by Network Rail)
Improve/maintain accessibility to the NE's international gateways - Durham TV Airport (Policies 21 Airports and 48 International Gateways)	Access from A66 to Airport Public transport access to DTV Airport	A66 Long Newton Grade Separated Junction [GSJ] Under construction Tees Valley Heavy Rail/Metro Improvements (Under investigation by Tees Valley JSU/Tees Valley Regeneration)
Improve/maintain accessibility to the NE's international gateways - Teesport (Policies 22 Ports and 48 International Gateways)	Road accessibility to Teesport Capacity and signalling constraints of existing rail network	A66/A19/A174 Area Action Plan (Under investigation by Highways Agency/Tees Valley JSU) Gauge enhancement improvements between major northern ports and destinations within the north and midlands (Under investigation by Network Rail and Northern Way) Resignalling of local network (Under investigation by Network Rail)

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Spatially Specific Objective (and specific RSS policy)	Transport problems to be addressed	Transport Actions / Proposals (and current status)
<p>Improve/maintain accessibility to the NE's international gateways - Port of Tyne (Policies 22 Ports and 48 International Gateways)</p>	<p>Local road and rail capacity issues</p>	<p>New Tyne Crossing (Privately funded Scheme)</p> <p>A19 Testos Grade Separated Junction (Scheme RFA approved)</p> <p>A19 Coast Road Grade Separated Junction (Scheme RFA approved)</p> <p>Reinstatement of Boldon curve (Under investigation by Network Rail)</p>
<p>Improve/maintain accessibility between rural areas and major urban areas/employment areas (Policy 11 Rural Areas)</p>	<p>Public transport accessibility from rural areas</p>	<p>Transit 15 Quality Bus Corridors (Scheme RFA approved)</p> <p>Improved bus services and demand responsive public transport funded through Local Transport Plan (Under investigation by various Local Authorities)</p> <p>Conurbation-wide package of management to tackle congestion (Under investigation by Tyne and Wear Authorities)</p>
<p>Improve/maintain efficiency of movement along the four key transport corridors - A1/ECML (Policy 49 Regional Transport Corridors)</p>	<p>A1 strategic corridor congested around Newcastle, Gateshead</p> <p>Safety issues on A1 North of Newcastle</p> <p>Connectivity to national motorway network</p> <p>Reliability of power supply on ECML north of Darlington</p>	<p>Capacity improvements on the A1 within Gateshead and Newcastle (Under investigation by Highways Agency)</p> <p>A1 Morpeth to Felton Dualling (Scheme currently not RFA approved and work not being progressed at present)</p> <p>A1 Adderstone to Belford Dualling (Scheme currently not RFA approved and work not being progressed at present)</p>

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Spatially Specific Objective (and specific RSS policy)	Transport problems to be addressed	Transport Actions / Proposals (and current status)
		<p>A1 motorway upgrade in Yorkshire (Under construction /Schemes within the DfT's Programme of Major Schemes [National] and are not subject to the RFA process)</p> <p>ECML Power supply upgrade (Under investigation by Network Rail)</p>
Improve/maintain efficiency of movement along the four key transport corridors - A66/Tees Valley Rail Links (Policy 49 Regional Transport Corridors)	<p>A66 strategic corridor congested at Darlington and in Tees Valley</p> <p>Lack of capacity on local rail network.</p>	<p>A66 Long Newton Grade Separated Junction (Under construction)</p> <p>Darlington Eastern Transport Corridor (Under construction)</p> <p>A66/A19/A174 Area Action Plan(Under investigation by Highways Agency/Tees Valley JSU)</p> <p>Tees Valley Heavy Rail/Metro Improvements (Under investigation by the Tees Valley JSU/Tees Valley Regeneration</p>
Improve/maintain efficiency of movement along the four key transport corridors - A19/Durham Coast Line (Policy 49 Regional Transport Corridors)	A19 strategic corridor congested at junctions	<p>New Tyne Crossing (Privately funded Scheme)</p> <p>A19 Seaton Burn Grade Separated Junction (Scheme RFA approved)</p> <p>A19 Testos Grade Separated Junction (Scheme RFA approved)</p> <p>A19/A189 Moor Farm Junction Improvements (Scheme RFA approved)</p> <p>A19 Coast Road Grade Separated Junction (Scheme RFA approved)</p>

Delivering an Urban and Rural Renaissance 3

Spatially Specific Objective (and specific RSS policy)	Transport problems to be addressed	Transport Actions / Proposals (and current status)
		<p>A66/A19/A174 Area Action Plan(Under investigation by Highways Agency/Tees Valley JSU)</p> <p>Additional crossing capacity for the River Tees (Under investigation by Tees Valley JSU)</p> <p>Sunderland Station Upgrade (Under construction)</p> <p>New rail services between Sunderland and London</p>
Improve/maintain efficiency of movement along the four key transport corridors - A69/Tyne Valley Line (Policy 49 Regional Transport Corridors)	Environmental and safety problems at Haydon Bridge	A69 Haydon Bridge Bypass (Under construction)
Improve/maintain accessibility within the Tyne and Wear City-Region (Policy 9 Tyne & Wear Region)	<p>Increasing congestion problems across local road network particularly peak time accessibility into Newcastle city centre</p> <p>Ageing infrastructure of Tyne and Wear Metro will lead to increased unreliability of system.</p>	<p>Sunderland Southern Radial Route (Under construction)</p> <p>A1056 Northern Gateway (Scheme RFA approved)</p> <p>Sunderland Strategic Transport Corridor (Scheme RFA approved)</p> <p>New Tyne Crossing (Privately funded scheme)</p> <p>A19 Seaton Burn Grade Separated Junction (Scheme RFA approved)</p> <p>A19 Testos Grade Separated Junction (Scheme RFA approved)</p>

3 Delivering an Urban and Rural Renaissance

Spatially Specific Objective (and specific RSS policy)	Transport problems to be addressed	Transport Actions / Proposals (and current status)
		<p>A19/A189 Moor Farm Junction Improvements (Scheme RFA approved)</p> <p>A19 Coast Road Grade Separated Junction (Scheme RFA approved)</p> <p>Orpheus Bus Corridors (Phase 1) (Scheme RFA approved)</p> <p>Orpheus Bus Corridors (Phase 2) (Scheme RFA approved)</p> <p>Conurbation-wide initiatives to tackle congestion (Under investigation by Tyne and Wear Authorities)</p> <p>Improved bus services within Tyne and Wear (Under investigation by Nexus)</p> <p>New cross Tyne access to Newburn Riverside from Blaydon Station (Proposed Blaydon Newburn Pedestrian/Cycle Bridge for investigation jointly by Newcastle City and Gateshead councils)</p> <p>Reinvigoration of Tyne and Wear Metro (Under investigation by Nexus)</p>
Improve/maintain accessibility within the Tees Valley City-Region (Policy 10 Tees Valley City-Region)	<p>Improved accessibility between major retail and employment areas and housing areas.</p> <p>Increasing congestion problems at specific points on the local road network particularly at peak times</p>	<p>Darlington Eastern Transport Corridor (Under construction)</p> <p>North Middlesbrough Accessibility Improvements (Scheme RFA approved)</p> <p>Tees Valley Bus Network Improvements (Scheme RFA approved)</p>

Delivering an Urban and Rural Renaissance 3

Spatially Specific Objective (and specific RSS policy)	Transport problems to be addressed	Transport Actions / Proposals (and current status)
		<p>Tees Valley Heavy Rail/Metro Improvements (Under investigation by Tees Valley JSU/Tees Valley Regeneration)</p> <p>Conurbation-wide package of measures to tackle congestion (Under investigation by Tees Valley JSU)</p> <p>A66/A19/A174 Area Action Plan(Under investigation by Highways Agency/Tees Valley JSU)</p> <p>Additional crossing capacity for the River Tees (Under investigation by Tees Valley JSU)</p> <p>A66 Long Newton Grade Separated Junction (Under construction)</p>

4 Implementation, Monitoring and Review

Introduction

4.1 The RSS has adopted the plan-monitor-manage approach for its development and future implementation. For this approach to be realistic and successful, the implementation of the policies must be underpinned by an effective monitoring system and evidence base.

4.2 Regional Strategy Integration

4.3 There are a variety of strategies, plans, programmes and associated delivery mechanisms within the Region, which have influenced the RSS, will be influenced by the RSS and collectively will deliver the objectives of the RSS. Over time, the aim is that these will all become more closely aligned and will seek to achieve the same goals and aspirations.

Strategy Assumptions

4.4 One of the most fundamental of all the factors affecting the success of the policies in the RSS is the realism of the adopted assumptions; for example, the strategy is based on an assumption that the rate of economic growth will involve GVA growth increasing from an annual average of 1.8% (2001) towards 2.8% over the plan period, and this growth will be linked to population growth.

4.5 If the assumptions are inaccurate and/or occur faster or slower than anticipated, the delivery of the strategy, as set out through the policies, could be adversely affected and exacerbate current challenges, rather than improve the chances of overcoming them.

RSS Scope

4.6 The RSS represents only one mechanism for achieving overall strategic regional development objectives. As well as integration with other regional strategies, such as the IRF and the RES, the RSS operates within the context of national objectives and contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.

4.7 The extent to which the policies and objectives of the RSS are delivered will be partly reliant on the extent to which they are adopted by Local Development Frameworks and other strategies, plans and programmes. Conformity of these plans with the RSS is fundamental to successfully achieving the RSS objectives. The resulting success of the policies, in terms of real world outputs and outcomes will depend on how they are implemented.

RSS Implementation Plan

4.8 The RSS Implementation Plan is a separate document, which complements the plan, monitor and manage process. The RSS Implementation Plan identifies delivery mechanisms, lead and contributing delivery organisations, and key implementation actions for each policy.

MONITORING

4.9 Implementation will be monitored through a series of targets and indicators associated with all RSS objectives and policies. Under the key headings below, they will collectively set out a robust evidence base for the RSS:

Implementation, Monitoring and Review 4

- monitoring the **delivery** of the RSS objectives and policies through targets and indicators;
- monitoring the **evolving framework** within which the RSS operates and the **assumptions** it is based upon;
- monitoring the extent and exertion of the **powers** held by those who will implement the RSS;
- monitoring the **conformity** of policies and objectives of other regional plans, strategies and programmes with those of the RSS; and
- monitoring the **delivery of objectives of other regional strategies**, plans and programmes.

4.10 The evidence base will be updated annually, or as required, and will be analysed to indicate implementation of the RSS strategy, vision, objectives and policies.

Targets and Indicators

4.11 The implementation and monitoring framework set out in the RSS Implementation Plan incorporates the targets and indicators for the Development Principles, Spatial Principles, Locational Strategy, and the four themes of Economy; Sustainable Communities; Environment; and Connectivity. The collation of evidence will require input from a range of sources.

4.12 These have been taken into account in the preparation of the RSS, although some indicators may require revision when the national indicators are finalised. National headline indicators which do not relate to a policy in this RSS have not been included, but all Regional Core Output Indicators are included.

4.13 The implementation and monitoring framework identifies four types of indicators reflecting various types of targets included in the RSS. These indicator types are:

- **Output indicators:** the direct impact of policy intervention e.g. number of dwelling completions. Data for these types of indicators are generally collected from the delivery agency.
- **Process indicators:** the measure of compliance with RSS policies i.e. the proportion of Local Development Frameworks that have full sustainability appraisals. Data for these types of indicators are generally collected through the auditing of compliance of development plans against the audit standards documented in the Framework.
- **Contextual indicators:** measure a resultant indirect consequence of a specific policy intervention. Data for these are generally generated from further analysis of output level data.
- **Outcome indicators:** measure the regional context in which the RSS policies are being applied. Changes in the regional context cannot be solely attributed to any one policy from any of the regional or national strategies, but are likely consequences of the sum of the total policy intervention. It is intended that the main regional strategies (Regional Economic Strategy, Integrated Regional Framework and the RSS) all use common outcome indicators as the strategies all contribute to common goals, in terms of economic development and quality of life.

4 Implementation, Monitoring and Review

Arrangements for Monitoring

4.14 It is the responsibility of the Regional Planning Body to carry out this monitoring and review in liaison with Government Office North East and other partners. The latter, which among others include One NorthEast, the Regional Observatory and the statutory agencies, have important roles to play in monitoring the progress of the RSS. Their roles will be co-ordinated by the RPB in order that, where possible, a common evidential base is created and duplication avoided.

4.15 The Regional Planning Body will publish an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), which will be submitted to the Secretary of State by the end of February each year. The Annual Monitoring Report, together with Government's headline and good practice guide indicators will provide the context for measuring progress towards the key objectives of the RSS.

4.16 An Annual Monitoring Report for Local Development Frameworks is to be produced by local planning authorities by December each year. The Local Development Frameworks will include indicators that will assist in the monitoring of the RSS.

Review

4.17 The RSS sets out the long term strategy for the spatial development of the North East. Some policies have an end date of 2021, but the overall vision, strategy and policies should guide development over a longer timescale. Through careful and targeted monitoring on a regular basis, the need for a review will be constantly examined. For example an assessment of progress towards achieving the growth assumptions and accelerated growth in the economy together with the progress on meeting the key challenges of the RSS will help to inform the Regional Planning Body and other organisations in assessing the need for a partial or full review.

4.18 A partial review may involve a review of a group of policies to make an adjustment in line with actual trends or to take account of a change of circumstance. A full review of the RSS should be undertaken every five years, although a major change in circumstances may 'trigger' the need for an earlier full review. One such situation may be a major change in growth assumptions on the economy which may trigger the need to revise the release of land for employment and housing land at a regional and sub-regional level.

4.19 The Sub National Review, published in July 2007, proposed that there should be a Single Regional Strategy which sets out the economic, social and environmental objectives for the region. Subject to legislation, this will bring together the RSS and the Regional Economic Strategy in order to provide a clear framework which enables the public and private sectors to understand regional objectives for sustainable development.

4.20 It is envisaged that the Regional Development Agencies will have responsibility for developing the Single Regional Strategy, working closely with local authorities and other partners. Under planning reform, they will also assume executive responsibilities currently held by regional assemblies for planning, housing and transport strategy development.

Implementation, Monitoring and Review 4

4.21 Under local government reorganisation, by April 2009 the region will have moved to having 12 unitary authorities. Joint working between counties and districts is underway in Northumberland and Durham to prepare new Local Development Schemes for the new unitary authorities.

Community Participation

4.22 As part of the national planning guidance (Planning Policy Statement 11: Regional Planning), the Assembly was required to illustrate how it engaged with stakeholders in preparing the RSS. The RSS statement of public participation, which accompanied the submission draft RSS revision, provided these details

4.23 In consulting on the Proposed Changes and Further Proposed Changes to the draft RSS, Government has distributed the RSS documents to all those who made representations, attended the Examination in Public or otherwise expressed an interest.

4.24 Maintaining dialogue with the community through the stages of implementation may make it easier to re-engage people in subsequent revisions and help foster a common ownership of the strategy.

4.25 As detailed in the RSS Implementation Plan a number of organisations will have a share of responsibility for the delivery of targets. For others, progress against indicators and targets will be a matter of interest and concern, but not their direct responsibility. The Regional Planning Body will ensure that the community is kept informed of the results of monitoring and has the opportunity to actively participate in the any review of the document throughout its life.

5 Maps

Key Diagram and Insert Map Key

Context			Other Regeneration Areas		
Regional Boundary		none	Rural Coalfield		9
Motorway		none	Durham Coalfield		9, 10
Trunk Road		none	SENNTRI		9
River		none	East Cleveland		10
Settlements			Connectivity		
Conurbation—Diagrammatic		4, 6, 9, 12	Regional Transport Corridor		7, 57
Regional Centre		25	Gateway		7
Sub-regional Centre		25	Railway - passenger & freight		49
Main Settlements		25	Railway - freight only		57
Other settlements referred to in Green belt/strategic gap policies		9.5 & 10.5	Metro		9
Regeneration Town		4, 6, 9, 10, 11	Airport		9, 10, 21
Rural Service Centre		4, 6, 12	Port		9, 10, 22, 48, 57
Designated and other environmental policy areas			Strategic Transport Hub		9, 10, 51, 54
National Park		6, 8, 31	Major Transport Scheme - Road		9, 10, 11, 48, 49, 57
Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty		6, 8, 31	Major Transport Scheme - Rail		11, 57
Heritage Coast		6, 8, 31	Esk Valley Pilot Rail Scheme		56
World Heritage Sites		8, 32	Employment Locations		
Candidate World Heritage Sites		8, 32	Key Employment Locations		9, 10, 20, 54
Green Belt		9.5	Brownfield Mixed used Locations		13, 54
Strategic Wild life Corridors		8	Renewable Energy - Areas of least constraint		
Border Forest Park			Strategic Renewables Resource Area		41a
Community Forest		8	Broad area of least constraint for medium scale wind energy development		41b
Internationally Designated nature Conservation site		10	Urban/Urban-rural fringe resource area		41c
Strategic Gaps		10.5	Conurbation Core Regeneration Areas		
Other			Bridging Newcastle/ Gateshead Area		9
Metrocentre		26	Sunderland Arc		9
Further & Higher Education Establishment		14	Stockton Middlesbrough Initiative		10

Key to Major Transport Scheme Proposals

KEY TO PROGRAMMED TRANSPORT SCHEMES

Road

- H1 A19/A1/A1068 Seaton Burn Junction Improvement
- H2 A19/A189 Moor Farm Junction Improvement
- H3 A19/A1058 Coast Road Junction Improvement
- H4 A19/A184 Testo's Junction Improvement
- H5 A1 Morpeth to Felton Dualling
- H6 A1 Adderstone to Belford Dualling
- H7 A1056 Northern Gateway
- H8 A69 Haydon Bridge Bypass
- H9 New Tyne Crossing
- H10 Orpheus Bus Corridors Phases 1 & 2
- H11 Sunderland Strategic Transport Corridor
- H12 Sunderland Central Route
- H13 Sunderland Southern Radial Route
- H14 A66 Long Newton Grade Separated Junction
- H15 North Middlesbrough Accessibility Improvements
- H16 Tees Valley Bus Network
- H17 Wheatley Hill to Bowburn Improvement
- H18 Transit 15 Quality Bus Corridors
- H19 Darlington Eastern Transport Corridor
- H20 Morpeth Northern Bypas

Rail

- R1 Metro Reinvigoration
- R2 Sunderland Station Upgrade

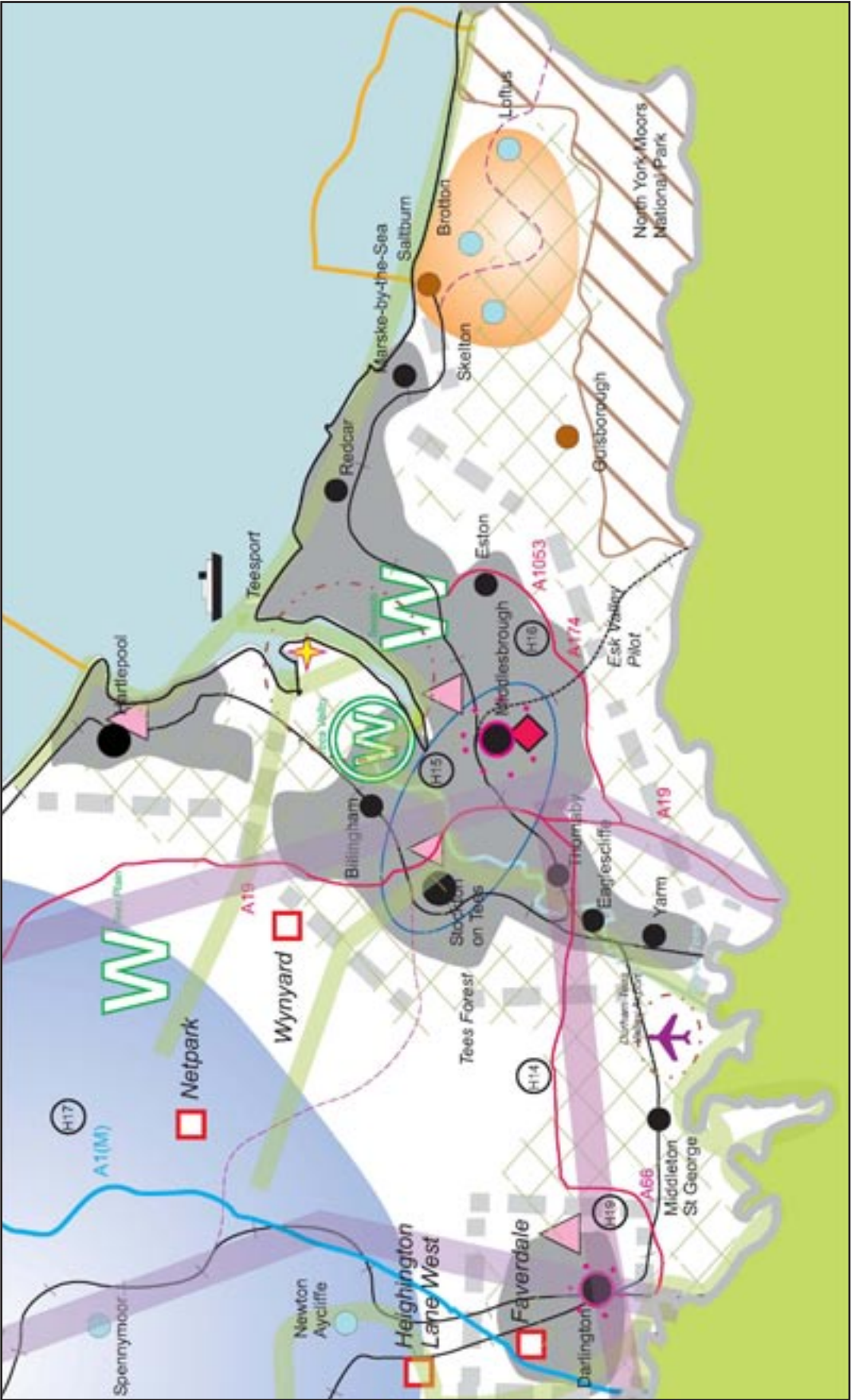
5 Maps

Key Diagram



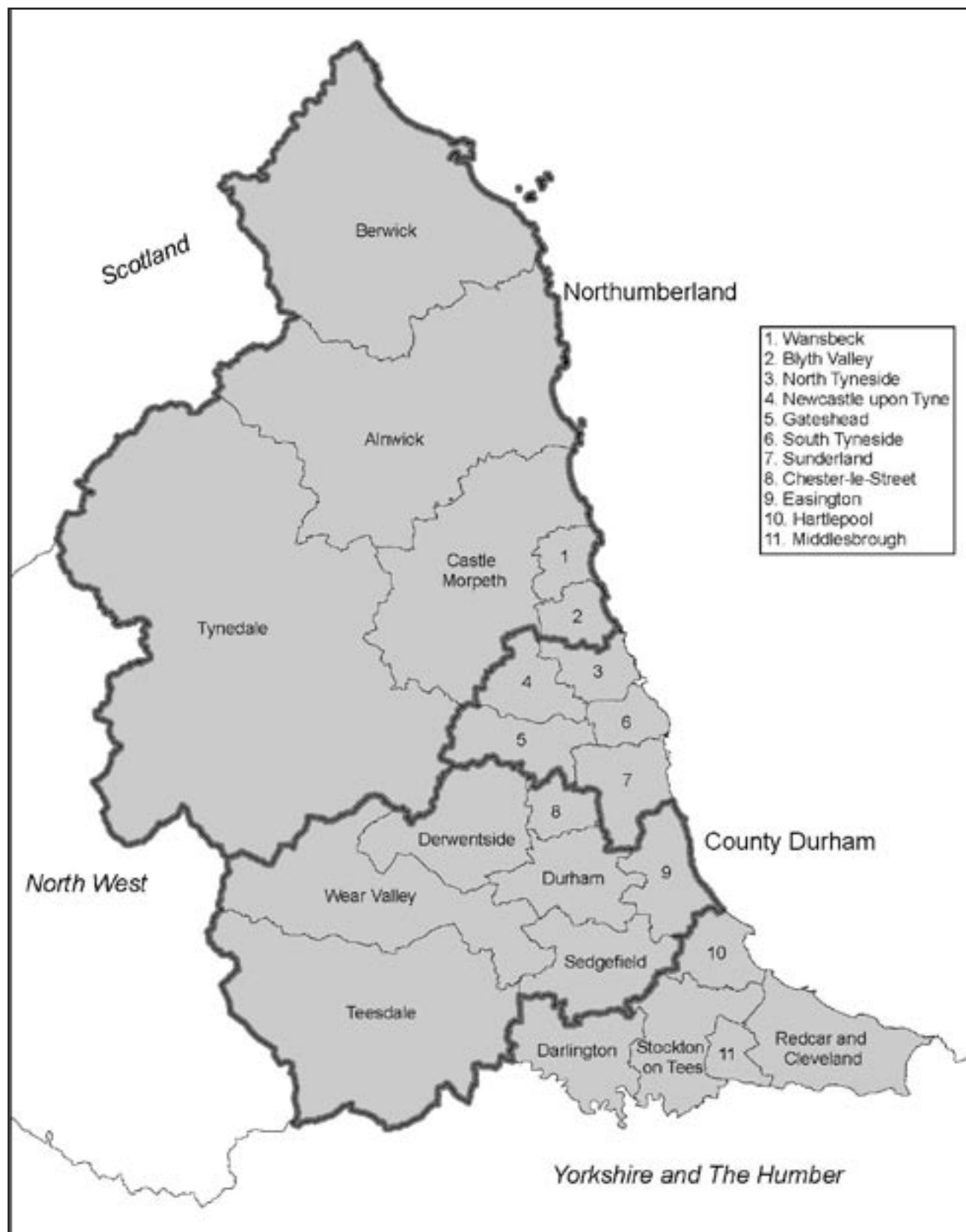
5 Maps

Inset (S)



5 Maps

Boundaries Information Map (v)



- v As a result of local government reorganisation in the region, from 1st April 2009 the district councils in Northumberland and Durham will be replaced by single unitary authorities.

Abbreviations 6

AMR	Annual Monitoring Report
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
BREEAM	Building Research Establishment's Environmental Assessment Method
CO ₂	Carbon Dioxide
CLG	Communities and Local Government (formerly ODPM)
CRD	Community Rail Development
DEFRA	Department of Environment, Farming and Rural Affairs
DPD	Development Plan Document
ECML	East Coast Main Line
ENRgl	East Northumberland Regeneration Initiative
ERM	Environmental Resources Management
ESDP	European Spatial Development Perspective
EU	European Union
GONE	Government Office for the North East
GP	General Practice
GVA	Gross Value Added
HGV	Heavy Goods Vehicle
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment
ICT	Information Communication Technology

6 Abbreviations

ICZM	Integrated Coastal Zone Management
IPPC	Integrated Pollution, Prevention and Control
IRF	Integrated Regional Framework
IRM	Integrated Regional Matrix
LBAP	Local Biodiversity Action Plan
LDD	Local Development Document
LDF	Local Development Framework
LGAP	Local Geodiversity Action Plan
LTP	Local Transport Plan
MPG	Minerals Planning Guidance
MPS	Minerals Planning Statement
NaREC	New and Renewables Energy Centre
NE	North East
NEA	North East Assembly
NERAWP	North East Regional Aggregates Working Party
NESE	North East State of the Environment Report
NGWB	Newcastle Gateshead Western Bypass
NVQ	National Vocation Qualification
ODPM	Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (now Communities and Local Government).

Abbreviations 6

ONE	One NorthEast
PPG	Planning Policy Guidance
PPS	Planning Policy Statement
PSA	Public Service Agreement
RDA	Regional Development Agency
RES	Regional Economic Strategy
RFA	Regional Funding Allocations
RHB	Regional Housing Board
RHS	Regional Housing Strategy
RPB	Regional Planning Body
RPG	Regional Planning Guidance
RPP	Rail Passenger Partnership
RRES	Regional Renewable Energy Strategy
RSS	Regional Spatial Strategy
RTS	Regional Transport Strategy
SA	Sustainability Appraisal
SE	South East
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SENNTRI	South East Northumberland North Tyneside Regeneration Initiative

6 Abbreviations

SHINE	Shaping Horizons in the North East
SME	Small-Medium sized Enterprise
SMP	Shoreline Management Plan
SRA	Strategic Rail Authority
SRP	Sub-Regional Partnership
SUDS	Sustainable Drainage Systems
TPI	Targeted Programme for Improvement
UK	United Kingdom

Glossary of Terms 7

Accessibility	The ability to conveniently reach key services at reasonable cost, in reasonable time and with reasonable ease.
Additional Dwellings	These are new or net dwellings that are built and add to or increase the Region's existing dwelling stock.
Affordable Housing	Housing provided at a cost considered affordable in relation to average incomes or the price of general market housing. Sometimes considered as falling into two subcategories: "social housing" - where rent levels are set in line with the Government's rent influencing regime; and "intermediate housing" – a mix of low cost home ownership products (for example shared ownership) and other reduced cost rental products primarily in the form of key worker housing.
Aggregates	Sand, gravel, crushed rock and other bulk materials used by the construction industry.
Allocation	An RSS allocation refers to a development requirement allocated to a local planning authority (for example policy on housing numbers or employment land). In the context of local planning, an allocation can mean similarly and can also mean an area of land identified on a proposals map for a particular land use.
Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) for RSS	A report submitted to Government by the RPBs assessing regional spatial strategies progress and policy effectiveness.
Apportionment (amount of minerals needed)	The splitting of regional supply guidelines for minerals demand between planning authorities or sub regions.
Appropriate Assessment	In response to the EU Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC, the purpose of an Appropriate Assessment is to ensure that the protection of the integrity of European sites is a part of the planning process at a regional and local level. The assessment should be confined to the effects on the internationally important habitats and species for which the site is classified.
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)	Designated under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 to conserve and enhance beauty, including landscape, biodiversity, Geodiversity and cultural heritage.
Biodiversity	The whole variety of life encompassing all genetics, species and ecosystem variations.

7 Glossary of Terms

Biodiversity Action Plan (BAPs)	Strategy prepared for a local area aimed at conserving and enhancing biological diversity.
Biomass	The total mass of living matter within a given unit of environmental area, for example, plant material, vegetation, or agricultural waste used as a fuel or energy source.
Broad Area of Least Constraint (For Wind Energy Development)	A broad area, without precise boundaries, where wind energy development may be considered appropriate.
Broadband Internet	The capacity (or bandwidth) of broadband is larger and faster than dial-up and allows a shared line between telephone and internet.
Brownfield Land and Sites	See 'Previously Developed Land'.
Catchment Management Flood Plans	Voluntary plans through which the Environment Agency works with other key decision-makers with river catchments to identify and agree policies for sustainable flood risk management plans. First generation is due for completion by 2008.
City Centre	The highest order centre, often a regional or sub-regional retailing and service centre, serving a wide catchment.
City-Region	Recognises that large towns and cities act as the focus for jobs, services and facilities for extensive hinterlands. In the North East two have been identified, based on Tees Valley and Tyne & Wear conurbations.
Climate Change	Changes in climatic conditions, largely brought about through the increase in human emissions. Consequences of climate change for the UK could include more extreme weather events, including hotter and drier summers, flooding and rising sea-levels increasing the risk of coastal erosion.
Clusters	Networks of specialised creative, industrial or high-tech businesses concentrated within a particular location, or linked through 'Innovative Cluster Areas'

Glossary of Terms 7

Coastal Squeeze	A result of rising sea levels, which are in turn a consequence of climate change. Coastal squeeze occurs when rises in sea level affect areas where the landward side of the coast comprises hard infrastructure such as coastal defences, and land uses which depend on these. As sea levels rise the coastal strip becomes narrower and is in effect squeezed between the sea and the land. This can be important to natural processes of erosion and deposition on the coast, and to any sites of nature conservation importance which include the coastal strip.
Commitments (or committed development)	All land with current planning permission or allocated in adopted development plans for development (particularly residential development).
Communities and Local Government (CLG - Government Department)	The CLG is a central department of Government responsible for policy on housing, planning, devolution, regional and local government and the fire service. It replaces the former Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.
Community Involvement	A principle of sustainable development, whereby local communities are actively involved in developing the vision for an area and how this vision can be achieved.
Community Forest	A wooded landscape created by a partnership of local authorities, national agencies and private, voluntary and community organisations to support employment, recreation, education and wildlife.
Conservation Area	Areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character, appearance or setting of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, designated by Local Authorities.
Conservation Area Character Appraisal	A document defining the special architectural or historic interest that warranted the area being designated.
Construction and Demolition Waste	Controlled waste arising from the construction, repair, maintenance and demolition of buildings and structures.
Contaminated Land	Land that has been polluted or harmed in some way making it unfit for safe development and usage unless cleaned.
Conurbation	A large densely populated contiguous urban area formed by the growth and coalescence of individual towns or cities.

7 Glossary of Terms

Conversions	Generally means the change of use of a building from a particular use, classified in the use classes order, to another use. Can also mean the sub-division of residential properties into self-contained flats or maisonettes.
Core and Feeder Public Transport Networks	A network of bus routes serving major strategic public transport hubs and destinations/corridors often having certain standards for frequency, times of operation, vehicle quality, levels of bus priority and passenger information. Feeder networks link into the core networks.
Countryside Character Areas	Areas of distinctive landscape, wildlife and natural features as defined by the Countryside Agency.
County Council	A 'higher tier' local authority providing strategic planning functions in non-unitary local authority areas.
Cultural Strategy	A Cultural Strategy aims to "promote the cultural well-being" of the area it covers.
Culture	Culture includes arts, media, sports, libraries, museums, parks, and the countryside, built heritage, tourism, and the creative industries.
Cumulative Impact	A number of developments in a locality or a continuous activity over time that together may have an increased impact on the environment, local community or economy.
Demand Responsive Transport	A local transport service tailored to passenger needs with advanced booking on non fixed routes. Can be provided where conventional bus services do not operate and with the use of GPS (Global Positioning Systems) the most sustainable interlinked routes to key services can be operated.
Density	In the case of residential development, a measurement of either the number of habitable rooms per hectare or the number of dwellings per hectare.
Design Quality	Good design ensures attractive, usable, durable and adaptable places and is a key element in achieving sustainable development.
Development	Development is defined under the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act as "the carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operation in, on, over or under land, or the making of any material change in the use of any building or other land." Most forms of development require planning permission.

Glossary of Terms 7

Development Plan	Sets out a local planning authority's policies and proposals for the development and use of land and buildings in local planning authority area. The Development Plan consists of the RSS and development plan documents prepared by district councils, unitary authorities, national park authorities and minerals and waste development plan documents prepared by city councils.
Development Plan Documents (DPDs)	DPDs are Local Development Documents that have development plan status. Once adopted, development control decisions must be made in accordance with them unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The DPDs which local planning authorities must prepare, include the core strategy, site-specific allocations of land and, where needed, area action plans. There will also be a proposals map, which illustrates the spatial extent of policies that must be prepared and maintained to accompany all DPDs. All DPDs must be subject to rigorous procedures of community involvement, consultation and independent examination, and adopted after receipt of the inspector's binding report.
District Centres	Usually comprising groups of shops and some services, separate from the town centre, but with more variety than local centres. Can include suburban centres.
Edge-of-Centre	A location that is within easy walking distance (often considered 200-300 metres) of the primary shopping area.
Employment land	Land reserved for industrial and business use.
English Heritage	Government body with responsibility for all aspects of protecting and promoting the historic environment.
Environment Agency	A governmental body that aims to prevent or minimise the effects of pollution on the environment and issues permits to monitor and control activities that handle or produce waste. It also provides up to date information on waste arising and deals with other matters such as water issues including flood protection advice.
Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), and Environmental Statement (EA)	Applicants for certain types of development are required to submit an "environmental statement" accompanying a planning application. This evaluates the likely environmental impacts of the development, together with an assessment of how the severity of the impacts could be reduced.

7 Glossary of Terms

EU Structural Funds	The European Union provides Structural Funds for supporting social and economic restructuring across the Union. They account for over a third of the European Union budget. Structural funds are delivered through agreed operational spending programmes and strategies. These comprise the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Social Fund (ESF) and the European Agricultural Guarantee and Guidance Fund (EAGGF).
European/ Global Geopark	Areas which have been formally accepted into UNESCO European and Global Geoparks Networks, having a coherent local management organisation, outstanding geological heritage and where there is considerable local effort to use Geodiversity as a tool for sustainable development.
European Spatial Development Perspective	Policy document based on the EU aim of achieving balanced and sustainable development, in particular by strengthening economic and social cohesion. It is legally non-binding and has a policy framework aimed at better co-operation between community sectoral policies with significant impacts, and between member states, their regions and cities. National spatial development policies of the member states and sectoral policies of the EU require clear spatial development guidelines that transcend national boundaries. They are provided by the ESDP.
Evidence Base	The information and data gathered by local authorities to justify the “soundness” of the policy approach set out in Local Development Documents, including physical, economic, and social characteristics of an area.
Examination in Public (EIP)	An examination of a draft plan, held in public by independent planning inspectors.
Flood plain	A generally flat low-lying area adjacent to watercourses or tidal rivers which are periodically flooded, or would without flood defences.
Flood Risk Assessment	An assessment of the likelihood of flooding in a particular area so that development needs and mitigation measures can be carefully considered.
General Conformity	A process by which Regional Planning Bodies consider whether a Development Plan Document or a major planning application is in “general conformity” with the Regional Spatial Strategy. Also, all other DPDs must conform to a Core Strategy DPD.

Glossary of Terms 7

Geodiversity	The variety of geological environments, phenomena and processes that make those landscapes, rocks, minerals, fossils, soils which provide the framework for life.
Geodiversity Action Plans	Strategy prepared for a local area aimed at conserving, enhancing and interpreting Geodiversity.
Government Office for the North East	One of nine regional offices that together with the Regional Co-ordination Unit, represent central government in the regions.
(The) Great North Forest	One of the Region's two community forests covering the area of South Tyne and Wear and North Durham and which is part of the North East Community Forest.
Green Belt	Areas of open land surrounding existing built up areas, the purpose of which is to check the unrestricted sprawl of the built up area to safeguard the surrounding countryside against encroachment. There is a presumption against inappropriate development.
Green Corridors / Green Wedges	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.
Green Infrastructure	The sub regional network of protected sites, nature reserves, green spaces, and greenway linkages. Such linkages include river corridors and floodplains, migration routes and features of the landscape of importance as wildlife corridors. Green Infrastructure has many uses, not only benefiting wildlife, but also enhancing recreational and cultural experiences and delivering ecological services such as flood protection and microclimate control. It operates on all spatial scales from urban centres to open countryside.
Green Wedges	Green wedges comprise the open areas around and between parts of settlements, which maintain the distinction between the countryside and built up areas, prevent the coalescence (merging) of adjacent places and can also provide recreational opportunities.
Greenfield Land or Site	Land (or defined site) that has not previously been developed.

7 Glossary of Terms

Greenhouse Gases	Gases which when emitted to the atmosphere can increase the likelihood of global warming. Naturally occurring examples include water vapour, carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide and ozone. Some human activities increase these gases, including fossil fuel combustion within motor vehicles and some power stations.
Gross Additional Housing Stock	The total increase in the housing stock over a period of time by the construction of new dwellings or sub-division, without taking account of demolitions.
Groundwater	An important part of the natural water cycle present underground, within strata known as aquifers.
Habitat	An area of nature conservation interest.
Hazardous Waste	Wastes that have the potential to cause harm to human health or the environment, for example, contaminated soil. In future televisions and fridges will be considered as hazardous waste.
Heavy Rail	Traditional rail using fixed rail networks and standard rolling stock.
Heritage Coast	Designated by the Countryside Agency to focus attention on the management of the finest stretches of undeveloped coast where the needs of conservation, pressures of recreation and problems of pollution need to be considered in a co-ordinated way.
High Demand Housing Areas	Locations with a high demand for housing resulting in expensive pricing and rents making it difficult to enter the housing market. For example some rural locations, commuter areas, and popular suburbs within the Region's conurbations.
Household Waste Recovery Centres/ Civic Amenity Sites	A facility provided by the Waste Disposal Authority that is available to the public to deposit waste which cannot be collected by the normal household waste collection round.
Housing Land Availability (HLA)	The total amount of land reserved for residential use awaiting development.
Housing Market Renewal Pathfinders	Nine sub-regional projects to tackle low demand and abandonment, administered by a group of local authorities working in partnership and in receipt of funding from the Housing Market Renewal Fund. For example, "Bridging Newcastle-Gateshead" is developing strategies and actions to restore neighbourhoods as attractive places to live.

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Housing Market Restructuring/ Renewal (HMR)	Public sector intervention (in partnership with others) to restore the housing market in areas of low housing demand for example the NewcastleGateshead Pathfinder.
Incineration	The controlled burning of waste. Energy may also be recovered in the form of heat (see Energy from Waste).
Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)	A ward level index made up from six indicators (income; employment; health deprivation and disability; education, skills and training; housing; and geographical access to services). IMD can help to identify areas for regeneration.
Industrial Waste	Waste from a factory or industrial process.
Inert Waste	Waste not undergoing significant physical, chemical or biological changes following disposal, as it does not adversely affect other matter that it may come into contact with, and does not endanger surface or groundwater.
Information Communication Technology (ICT)	A phrase used to describe technologies that handle information and aid communication.
Infrastructure	The physical features (for example highways, fixed rail, cycle routes, stations, interchanges and bus stops) that facilitate the overall transport network.
Interchange	To transfer between different transport modes to complete a single journey. Transport Interchanges are places where the change between modes of travel is easy, for example a Bus/Rail station or an airport with rail access.
Integrated Coastal Zone Management	This brings all those involved in the development, management and use of the coast within a framework that facilitates integration of their interests and responsibility.
International & Regional Gateways	These are the entry points to the Region for example Airports, main rail stations, ports, and major trunk roads.
Integrated Regional Framework	Sets the framework that places sustainable development principles firmly at the heart of the Region's policies, plans and programmes.
Inward Investment	New business investment or expansion of an existing investment into a Region from a source outside of the Region.

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Issues, Options and Preferred Options	The “pre-submission” consultation stages on DPDs with the objective of gaining public consensus over proposals ahead of submission to Government for independent examination.
Key Employment Locations	Those locations that the RSS identifies as critical to delivering accelerated growth in the regional economy.
Knowledge Based Industry	High technology industries (such as computers and office equipment, and pharmaceuticals) and knowledge based services (for example telecommunications, information technology, finance, insurance, and business services), which are important to economic development.
Landfill (including land raising)	The permanent disposal of waste into the ground, by the filling of man-made voids or similar features, or the construction of land forms above ground level (land-raising).
Landfill Directive	European Union requirements on landfill to ensure high standards for disposal and to stimulate waste minimisation.
Landscape Appraisal	A method to assess the landscape’s sensitivity to a particular type of development and its capacity to accommodate it.
Landscape Character	The distinct and recognisable pattern of elements that occur consistently in a particular type of landscape. It reflects particular combinations of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use and human settlement.
Light Rail	A local railway or tram system designated direct, accessible and sometimes capable of sharing roads with traffic and heavy railways, for example Tyne and Wear Metro.
Listed Building	A building of special architectural or historic interest. Graded I, II* or II.
Local Centre	Includes a range of small shops and perhaps limited services of a local nature, serving a small catchment. Sometimes also referred to as a local neighbourhood centre.
Local Agenda 21	A comprehensive programme of action prepared by local authorities designed to achieve sustainable development.

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Local Development Documents (LDDs)	These include Development Plan Documents, which will form part of the statutory development plan, and Supplementary Planning Documents, which do not form part of the statutory development plan. LDDs collectively deliver the spatial planning strategy for the local planning authority's area, and they may be prepared jointly between local planning authorities.
Local Development Framework (LDF)	The overarching term given to the collection of Local Development Documents (LDDs) prepared by a local planning authority.
Local Development Scheme (LDS)	The local planning authority's time-scaled programme for the preparation of Local Development Documents that must be agreed with Government and reviewed every year.
Local Landscape Designation	Non-statutory and locally designated areas outside the national landscape designations, which are considered to be of particular landscape value to the local area.
Local Plan	An old-style development plan prepared by District and other Local Planning Authorities. These plans will continue to operate for a time after the commencement of the new development plan system, by virtue of specific transitional provisions.
Local Planning Authority	The local authority is empowered by law to exercise planning functions. This is normally the local borough or district council, but in National Parks and some other areas there is a different arrangement.
Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)	An overall partnership of people that brings together organisations from the public, private, community and voluntary sector within a local authority area, with the objective of improving people's quality of life.
Local Transport Plan	A local plan for transport prepared by local authorities which includes a bid to Central Government for funding to help provide local transport projects.
Locational Strategy (See PPS11 for Definition)	The approach that identifies general locations where development will be focused based on sustainability principles and the sequential approach.
Low Demand Housing(or areas of housing abandonment)	When the private housing sector is suffering from significant long-term void or abandonment; and social housing exhibits symptoms of high rates of voids and tenancy turnover.

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Major Development	Major development is that which is of more than local significance. It can also include development which may be of regional or sub-regional significance. For the purposes of policies that refer to major development within this RSS, it can be considered as new developments of more than 10 dwellings or 1000m ² of non-residential floorspace.
Market Towns	Towns that hold a regular public market of varying catchment areas. These are often rural service, social and economic centres.
Masterplan	A type of planning brief outlining the preferred usage of land and buildings, as a framework for planning applications.
Mineral	Rock or other material that has a commercial value when extracted.
Mineral Planning Authority (MPA)	The planning authority responsible for planning control of minerals development.
Mineral Planning Statement (MPS)	Minerals Planning Statement published by CLG. MPSs will eventually replace Minerals Planning Guidance Notes.
Mineral Resources	A potential mineral deposit where the quality and quantity of material present has not been tested.
Mixed uses	Provision of a mix of complementary uses, such as residential, community and leisure uses, on a site or within a particular area.
Multimodal Study	A detailed study of options to address the transport problems of specific areas. A multi-modal study assesses a range of options across a number of modes of transport against the Government transport objectives of environment, safety, economy, integration and accessibility.
Municipal Solid Waste	Household waste and any other waste collected by a Waste Collection Authority such as municipal parks and gardens waste, beach cleansing waste and waste resulting from the clearance of fly-tipped materials.
National Land Use Database (NLUD)	Aims to provide central and local government with key information on the amount of previously-developed land that may be available for development.

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National Nature Reserves	Areas designated with the aim of securing protection and appropriate management of the most important areas of wildlife habitat, and to provide a resource for scientific research. All NNRs are Sites of Special Scientific Interest.
National Park	Designated under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Acts to conserve and enhance their natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage; and to promote opportunities for public understanding and enjoyment of their special qualities.
Natural England	Government advisors on nature conservation, Natural England's objectives are to seek conservation and enhancement of the natural environment, for its intrinsic value, the wellbeing and enjoyment of people and the economic prosperity that it brings.
Nature Conservation	The protection, management and promotion of wildlife habitat for the benefit of wild species, as well as the communities that use and enjoy them.
Need (in retail terms)	The balance of supply and demand between retailers and consumers. Often measured in terms of excess expenditure (or money) available to allow new shops to be built.
Neighbourhood Renewal	A national strategy setting out the Government's vision for narrowing the gap between deprived neighbourhoods and the rest of the country, to reduce disadvantage.
Net change in housing stock	The total increase in the housing stock over a period of time by the construction of new dwellings or sub-division, minus the number of demolitions.
Non-Fossil Fuels	Sources of energy not derived from the combustion of fossil fuels. Examples include renewable energy resources such as wind or hydroelectric (water) power.
North East Assembly (NEA)	At the centre of the regional agenda on a range of issues affecting the lives of people who live and work in the North East, including regional development and economic regeneration; health; social; educational; and European issues. The NEA is the Regional Planning Body responsible for the preparation the Regional Spatial Strategy for the North East. (Note: Subject to legislation, planning reform proposes to transfer these powers to the Regional Development Agency).

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North East Community Forest	A regional public interest company owned and operated by local authority partners. The company is limited by guarantee, with charitable status. It aims to deliver community forestry within the Region and acts as the strategic partner to the Great North Forest.
North East Regional Technical Advisory Body on Waste (NERTAB)	Provides specialist advice on waste to the RPB on options and strategies for dealing with the waste that needs to be managed within the Region.
Northern Way	A cross-regional strategy created by the three Northern Regional Development Agencies (RDAs); North East, North West and Yorkshire and Humberside and their partners in response to the CLG 'Sustainable Communities Plan' progress report 'Making it Happen: the Northern Way', the purpose of which is to create a step-change in economic growth across the North of England.
Objectives, Targets and Indicators	Objectives are what are trying to be achieved, and indicators are measures that show whether or not objectives are being achieved. They can be used to help show whether planning policy is effective, or be used in helping to conduct a Sustainability Appraisal.
Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM)	Now replaced by Communities and Local Government.
Offshore Renewable Energy Projects	Projects that involve electricity generation methods such as offshore wind or wave generators. Central Government may deal with these rather than local planning authorities.
One NorthEast	The Regional Development Agency for the North East.
Open Space	All space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs, which can offer opportunities for sport and recreation. They can also act as a visual amenity and a haven for wildlife.
Out-of-Centre	In retailing terms, a location that is clearly separate from the primary shopping area of a town centre but not necessarily outside the urban area.
Out-of-Town	In retailing terms, an out-of-centre location on land not clearly within the current urban boundary.

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Passenger Transport Authority	An independent joint board, responsible for overseeing the co-ordination of public transport through the formulation of passenger transport policies. Established under the Local Government Act 1985. PTAs obtain the majority of funding through a levy on each of constituent metropolitan district councils.
Phasing or Phased Development	The phasing of development into manageable parts. For example, an annual rate of housing release for a large development that may need to be controlled so as to avoid destabilising housing markets and causing low demand.
Plan, Monitor and Manage (PMM)	Approach to regional planning involving: Plan for spatial development in the Region; Monitor progress against targets and indicators; and Manage the process.
Plan-led System	The principle that decisions upon planning applications should be made in accordance with adopted development plans (and DPDs), unless there are other material considerations that may indicate otherwise.
Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004	Government legislation bringing a new approach to development planning, control, compulsory purchase and procedure. The Act updates elements of the 1990 Town & Country Planning Act.
Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs)/ Statements (PPSs)	Documents issued by the CLG setting out government policy and advice on planning issues such as housing, transport, conservation etc. (PPGs are currently being replaced by PPSs).
Port	A harbour or sheltered piece of water into which boats can enter for repair, to trade or to allow passengers to board and depart.
Previously Developed Land (PDL) or 'Brownfield' land	Previously developed land is that which is or was occupied by a permanent structure (excluding agricultural or forestry buildings), and associated fixed surface infrastructure. The definition covers the curtilage of the development. Annex C of PPS3 ' <i>Housing</i> ' has a detailed definition.
Primary Aggregates	Naturally occurring sand, gravel and crushed rock used for construction purposes.

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Public Open Space	Urban space, designated by a Council, where public access may or may not be formally established, but which fulfils or can fulfil a recreational or non-recreational role (for example, amenity, ecological, educational, social or cultural usages).
Ramsar Sites	Designated by the UK Government under the Ramsar Convention to protect wetlands that are of international importance, particularly as waterfowl habitats.
Real Time Information (RTI)	Electronically displayed and up to the minute bus/train arrival information at public transport stops.
Reclamation (in terms of minerals operations)	Operations designed to return an area to an acceptable environmental state, whether for the resumption of the former land use or for a new use. It includes restoration, aftercare, soil handling, filling and contouring operations.
Recovery	Value can be recovered from waste by recovering materials through recycling, composting or recovery of energy.
Recycling	The reprocessing of waste into the same product or a different one.
Regeneration Area	An area that has been specifically identified for its regeneration needs concentrated particularly on its main settlements.
Regeneration Town	A main settlement within the specifically identified 'Other Regeneration Areas' to which particular policies apply
Regional Aggregates Working Party (RAWP)	A working group consisting of local authority officers, representatives of the aggregates industry and central government established to consider the supply and demand for aggregate minerals.
Regional Brownfield Mixed Use Developments	Major brownfield regeneration schemes, which comprise of large mixed use developments. These projects are significant and will provide the catalyst for wider regeneration.
Regional Cultural Strategy	The Regional Cultural Strategy aims to highlight the contribution and importance of tourism, sporting businesses and creative industries for the economic and social regeneration of the north east.

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Regional Development Agency (RDA)	An RDA is responsible for regional economic strategy and implementing the agenda for economic and business development, regeneration and improvement in English regions. (Note: Subject to legislation, planning reform proposes to transfer some regional planning powers to the Regional Development Agencies).
Regional Economic Strategy	A strategy taking an integrated and sustainable approach to economic development and regeneration by tackling business competitiveness, productivity and the underlying problems of unemployment, skills shortages, social exclusion and physical decay.
Regional Funding Allocations	The process through which the Government announces how much funding it intends making available to each of the English regions for certain types of projects over several years, including on housing and transport. Under this process each region advises Government as to which particular projects in their region should be given priority for receiving this funding.
Regional Housing Strategy	Prioritising the needs of the Region (by location and/or types of expenditure) to allow decisions to be taken on how housing resources should be allocated within the Region.
Regional/Local Gateways	Airports, main rail stations, ports, and motorways that form the travellers' first point of contact with the area.
Regional Observatory (North East Regional information Partnership, NERIP)	Provides a strategic resource to improve on the existing capacity in the Region to use sound evidence for developing strategy at a regional level.
Regional Planning Body (RPB)	The Regional Planning Body responsible for drafting the new RSS, in addition to other functions. In the North East of England, the RPB is the North East Assembly. (Note: Subject to legislation, planning reform proposes to transfer these powers to the Regional Development Agency.)
Regional Planning Guidance for the North East (RPG1)	RPG1 was regional planning policy and guidance issued for the North East Region in England by the Secretary of State. It became the Regional Spatial Strategy upon enactment of the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, but RPG1 has now been reviewed and replaced by this RSS.
Regional/Sub-Regional Significance	Any development defined within the RSS conformity procedures – for example any retail development over 2,500m ² of retail floorspace.

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Regional Transport Corridors	The strategic road and rail corridors that run through the Region and connect to the main centres of economic activity and population.
Regional Transport Strategy	Produced by the RPB, informing local transport plans, and providing a strategic overview of transport strategies and investment priorities. The RTS is an integral part of the RSS.
Renaissance	Giving rural and urban communities the opportunity to reach their full potential through engaging with local people in a partnership.
Renewable Energy	Energy which occurs naturally and repeatedly in the environment, for example from the sun, the wind and the fall of water.
Replacement Dwellings	These do not add to the Region's dwelling stock but re-built to replace a demolished dwelling.
Residual Waste	Waste remaining after materials for re-use, recycling and composting have been removed.
Restoration (in terms of minerals operations)	Steps to return land to its original or former condition following mineral working by using subsoil, topsoil or soil-making material.
Retail Floorspace	Total floor area of the property that is associated with all retail uses. Usually measured in square metres.
Retail Impact	The potential effects of proposed retail development upon existing shopping, businesses and the local environment.
Retail Impact Assessment	An assessment of the overall potential effects of new retail developments on existing centres, including retail trade diversion (one shop taking trade from another).
Retail Park	A grouping of at least 3 retail warehouses.
Retail Warehouses	Large, usually out-of-town or out-of-centre units selling non-food items such as DIY, furniture, leisure and household goods.
Rural Diversification	The expansion, enlargement or variation of rural business to branch out from traditional farming activities.

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Rural Service Centre	A settlement that provides jobs, services and facilities for a wider rural hinterland.
Saved Policies/ Saved Plan	Policies within Unitary Development Plans, Local Plans, and Structure Plans that are saved for a time period during replacement production of Local Development Documents.
Scheduled Monuments	Nationally important monuments that enjoy greater protection against inappropriate development through the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979.
Secondary Aggregates	Includes by-product waste, synthetic materials and soft rock used with or without processing as a secondary aggregate.
Sequential Approach to Development	Criteria based approach for the selection of development sites focused on bringing previously developed land forward first.
Single-pot	A pot of funding provided by Regional Development Agencies to support regeneration activities administered by groups such as local authorities.
Single Regional Strategy	Subject to legislation, under the sub-national review and planning reform a new Single Regional Strategy will be prepared by the Regional Development Agency integrating previous coverage of the Regional Spatial Strategy and Regional Economic Strategy.
Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	A site, notified by English Nature, identified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as incorporated in the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000) as an area of special interest by reason of any of its flora, fauna, geological or physiographical features.
SME (Small to Medium Enterprise)	An independent business managed by its owner or part owners and having a small market share either by number of employees or turnover.
Social Inclusion	Positive action taken to include all sectors of society in planning and other decision-making.
Spatial Development	Changes in the distribution of activities in space and the linkages between them in terms of the use and development of land.

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Spatial Planning	Spatial planning goes beyond traditional land use planning to bring together and integrate policies for the development and use of land with other policies and programmes which influence the nature of places and how they function. That will include policies which can impact on land use, for example by influencing the demands on, or needs for, development, but which are not capable of being delivered solely or mainly through the granting or refusal of planning permission and which may be implemented by other means.
Special Areas Of Conservation (SAC)	Designated by the UK Government under the EC Habitats Directive, to protect internationally important natural habitats and species listed in Annex 1 and 2 of the Directive. Part of the Natura 2000 network.
Special Protection Areas (SPA)	A site classified under the EC Directive on Wild Birds to protect internationally important bird species. Part of the Natura 2000 network.
Statutory	Required by law (statute), usually through an Act of Parliament.
Strategic Development Control Policies	These policies are implemented directly through the grant and refusal of planning permission and are part of the Regional Spatial Strategy.
Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)	Assessments carried out by local authorities which support the delivery of sufficient land for housing to meet the community's need for more homes. These assessments are required by national planning policy, set out in Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing(PPS3).
Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)	Assessments of housing need and demand carried out by local authorities and regional bodies which inform the housing mix and requirement policies of local development documents and regional strategies, as set out in Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing(PPS3).
Strategic Public Transport Hubs	Key centres offering the highest level of public transport services to a range of destinations, where people can change public transport modes. In the North East the key centres are identified as Newcastle, Sunderland, Durham City, Middlesbrough and Darlington.
Structure Plan	An old-style development plan, which sets out strategic planning policies and forms the basis for detailed policies in local plans and Development Plan Documents. These plans will continue to operate for a time after the commencement of the new development plan system, due to transitional provisions under planning reform.
Sub-Regional Partnership	A sub-regional strategic body directing, influencing and co-ordinating a range of economic development and regeneration activities often made up of key private, public and other interests.

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Sustainability Appraisal & Strategic Environmental Appraisal	The process of weighing all the policies in developments plan for their global, national and local implications. This also includes the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to comply with the EU Directive 2001/42/EC.
Sustainable Communities	Places where people want to live and work, now and in the future.
Sustainable Communities Plan	A long-term programme of action, published in February 2003, to tackle the shortage of housing in London and the South East and low demand and abandonment in the North and Midlands and to create sustainable communities.
Sustainable Development	Meeting the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.
"Sustainable"	Where this term is used it refers to the activity meeting the requirements of the UK Sustainable Development Strategy.
Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS)	A range of techniques used to control surface water run-off as close to its origin as possible before it enters a watercourse.
Sustainable Economic Development	Development which promotes a strong, stable and productive economy and aims to bring jobs and prosperity for all, recognising that economic development can also deliver social and environmental benefits.
Sustainable Freight Distribution	The movement of freight by modes less damaging to the environment for example, sea and rail.
Sustainable Travel/ Sustainable Transport	Often meaning walking, cycling and public transport (and in some circumstances "car sharing"), which is considered to be less damaging to the environment and which contributes less to traffic congestion than one-person car journeys.
(The) Tees Forest	One of the Region's two community forests, covering the area of the lower Tees Valley and which is part of North East Community Forest Ltd.
Town Centres	Includes a range of different sized centres, including market and country towns, traditional suburban centres, and quite often, the principal centre(s) in a local authority's area. Town centres contain a Primary Shopping Area, the area where retail development is generally concentrated.
Tranquil Areas	Areas sufficiently remote from the visual or audible intrusion of development or traffic to be considered unspoilt by urban influences.

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Travel Demand Management	A package of measures that reduce the demand to travel by private vehicles.
Travel Plan	Help people to assess and simplify their travel patterns and behaviour and then provide a package
Unitary Development Plan	An old-style development plan prepared by a Metropolitan District and some Unitary Local Authorities which contains policies equivalent to those in both a Structure Plan and Local Plan. These plans will continue to operate for a time after the commencement of the new development plan system, by virtue of specific transitional provisions.
Urban Housing Capacity Study (UHCS)	A study produced for or by a local planning authority area examining the potential capacity of urban areas to accommodate extra housing on new or redeveloped sites at various densities, or by the conversion of existing buildings.
Urban Regeneration	Making an urban area develop or grow strong again through means such as job creation and environmental renewal.
Use Classes Order	The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order (as amended) puts uses of land and buildings into various categories. Planning permission is not needed for changes of use within the same use class.
Vacancy rate	The percentage of the housing stock which is currently unoccupied.
Viability/Vitality	A town centre that is capable of success or continuing effectiveness/the capacity of a centre to grow or develop.
Vitality	In terms of retailing, the capacity of a centre to grow or develop.
Waste	Waste is any material or object that is no longer wanted and which requires disposal. If a material or object is re-usable, it is still classed as waste if it has first been discarded.
Waste Hierarchy	A framework for securing a sustainable approach to waste management. Wherever possible, waste should be minimised. If waste cannot be avoided, then it should be re-used; after this value recovered by recycling or composting; or waste to energy; and finally landfill disposal.
Waste Minimisation/Reduction	The most desirable way of managing waste, by avoiding the production of waste in the first place.

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Waste Planning Authority	The local authority responsible for ensuring that an adequate planning framework exists. They are required to prepare Local Development Document(s), or development plans, relating to Waste and are responsible for determining planning applications for waste management facilities.
Water Framework Directive	EC water legislation. Requires all inland coastal water to reach 'good status' by 2015. It establishes a river basin district structure within which demanding environmental objectives will be set, including ecological targets for surface waters.
Windfall Site	A site not specifically allocated for development in a development plan but which becomes available for development or is granted planning permission during the lifetime of the plan.
Wind farms	Groups of wind turbines located in open, exposed areas. The sizes of farms are influenced by site and local factors.
Wind Resource Area	An area of search (or an area of least constraint) where wind turbines may be built subject to planning permission.
World Heritage Site	Cultural or natural site of outstanding universal value, designated by ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites).

