

INDUSTRY AND BUSINESS

Economy of the Borough

During the 1980s the economy of Sedgefield Borough underwent a process of restructuring with a net loss of 4,500 jobs which is equivalent to a 12% reduction in total employment. This compares with a 5% fall in the UK overall. The early 1980s saw major redundancies in the manufacturing sector, most notably the closure of British Rail Engineering Limited's works at Shildon. By 1986, unemployment had risen to a peak of 7,000.

However, by the end of the decade the local economy was more stable with the prospect of increasing employment in a wider range of occupations and from inward investment, exemplified by the Fujitsu plant at Newton Aycliffe. In 1991 there were 30,600 jobs in the Borough.

Manufacturing continues to dominate the local employment structure, but has fallen back to providing around 50% of all jobs. Nevertheless, this concentration of employment in manufacturing occupations is more than twice the UK average of 22% and represents about 30% of all such jobs in County Durham, emphasising the Borough's sub-regional economic importance.

Service sector employment provides the remainder of the jobs in the area outside of agriculture and energy and water industries. Since 1981 employment in this sector has increased slightly by some 5%, exclusively in white collar occupations. Many of the Borough's residents engaged in service industries do, however, travel to the neighbouring centres of Durham, Darlington and Bishop Auckland.

Sedgefield Borough's employment base clearly lacks the broad diversification evident in the national economy, where service sector jobs are more prominent. This situation makes the area vulnerable in two respects: firstly, the national long term trend in manufacturing is one of contraction and it is this sector that is often worst affected in periods of recession; and secondly, employment growth in the UK has tended to be service sector led via economic activity areas not well represented locally. In other respects, however, this concentration of manufacturing is a strength. There has been continuing investment in manufacturing industry in the Borough. A broad range of companies from major multi-nationals to small firms with well developed trading links now exist, and with the substantial growth in small firms, the sector is more robust than at the beginning of the 1980s.

Availability of Industrial Land

With the Borough's importance as a manufacturing centre, the maintenance of an adequate supply of available industrial land in a range of locations is a key factor. The availability of an attractive choice of modern industrial sites able to accommodate both manufacturing and service industries, is one of the Borough's assets.

At April 1993 there was 570 hectares of industrial land (net) in the Borough with nearly 70% developed and occupied. The amount of land and buildings available for new industrial development totalled 113 hectares, of which almost 75% is serviced and capable of accommodating development immediately.

Around 52% of the industrial land is on Aycliffe Industrial Park, Newton Aycliffe. Other major industrial sites include Green Lane Industrial Estate, Spennymoor, All Saints Industrial Estate, Shildon and Chilton Industrial Estate, Chilton. Just over 50% of the Borough's

industrial land comprised 'brownland' sites; land that utilises former industrial or colliery sites. The continuing availability of these sites is an important component of the Borough's industrial land supply.

On the basis of past development rates, the present supply of industrial land provides about a 12 years' supply, with 9 years' supply immediately available. There are, however, more localised shortages of serviced land in Spennymoor, Shildon and Chilton.

Economic Strategy

The onset of the 1991-92 national recession has underlined the need for the Council to maintain a vigorous programme of economic promotion.

The Borough Council remains committed to strengthening, regenerating and diversifying the economic base of the Borough, as a major priority. The Council's Economic Development Strategy has as its aim:

"To maintain and promote employment and economic development in the Borough so as to achieve a stable and diverse employment base that is self sustaining."

Key measures to achieve this include:

- To maintain the Borough's manufacturing base as being of vital importance to the local economy.
- To encourage a variety of employment opportunities by supporting existing companies, encouraging new firms and servicing inward investment.
- To improve the industrial infrastructure and physical environment of the Borough.
- To enhance the Borough's image as a location for new investment.
- To seek to develop the skills of the Borough's workforce.
- To encourage the development of commercial, office and service sector employment.

In seeking to achieve these measures, the Council recognises the need and value of working in partnership with the private sector and other public sector agencies such as the European Commission, Durham County Council, SASDA Limited, (The Development Agency for Sedgefield Borough), English Partnerships, Northern Development Company, County Durham Training and Enterprise Council and the Rural Development Commission.

Planning Strategy

The Borough Local Plan provides the land use planning context for the implementation of the Council's Economic Development Strategy and the plans and policies of others such as Durham County Council. In the longer term the Local Plan will provide the framework for the review of these strategies and policies.

The Durham County Structure Plan's approach to employment and industry is to maintain a good range of industrial sites to allow firms a choice of location and identifies three types of site - prestige, general and local. In locational terms these sites should be situated in the vicinity of major centres, towns and villages. Three areas are identified for prestige estate developments in Sedgefield Borough - Newton Aycliffe, Spennymoor and Chilton.

The Borough Local Plan's Development Strategy takes this forward by giving priority to the identification of an attractive range of employment sites with the locational and environmental characteristics able to meet the demands of both existing firms and inward investment opportunities.

In accordance with the Plan's Spatial Strategy, a majority of the industrial sites (some 90% of the industrial land supply) are well related to the Borough's four towns. This distribution of industrial land assists in maintaining a compact urban development pattern, minimises travelling and provides employment locations well related to the major communication routes, residential areas and town centres.

The Industry and Business policies and proposals are concentrated upon:

- Identifying and designating different types of sites where the majority of industrial development will take place.
- Allocating Prestige Business Areas along the A167 corridor.
- Maintaining the supply of General and Local Industrial Sites.
- Promoting Business Areas in Shildon and Winterton Hospital Estate.
- Improving the appearance and operational conditions of existing industrial areas.

The Borough Council is also concerned to maintain economic activity in the rural parts of the Borough, outside of the four urban centres. Industrial estates exist in all the larger villages including Chilton, Fishburn, Sedgefield, Trimdon Grange and West Cornforth. Some of these estates have been the locations for advance factory provision by the Rural Development Commission, English Partnerships and the Borough Council, and have assisted in the maintenance of employment opportunities in rural communities.

It is also recognised that measures to help diversify the rural economy in areas such as tourism need to be pursued to assist economic activity. Developments that will help to create employment should normally be located within villages so as to help maintain their vitality and to safeguard areas of open countryside. Accordingly, new industrial or other enterprises outside of villages need to be strictly controlled.

Locations for Industry and Business

POLICY IB1 THE BOROUGH COUNCIL WILL NORMALLY APPROVE PLANNING APPLICATIONS THAT MAINTAIN IN APPROPRIATE LOCATIONS A RANGE OF LAND AVAILABLE FOR INDUSTRY AND BUSINESS COMPRISING THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF SITES:

- (A) PRESTIGE BUSINESS AREA;**
- (B) GENERAL INDUSTRIAL AREAS;**
- (C) LOCAL INDUSTRIAL AREAS;**
- (D) BUSINESS AREAS.**

PROPOSALS THAT WILL ASSIST THE REGENERATION OF EXISTING INDUSTRY AND BUSINESS AREAS WILL BE ENCOURAGED.

Reasons for the policy

With the Borough's economy being based on manufacturing and the importance it has for the wider areas of south west and central Durham it is essential that industrial and business development is not restricted by the lack of available land. An attractive range of sites in terms of location, size and environmental quality needs to be maintained. Such a supply will assist the expansion of existing companies, facilitate inward investment and encourage new businesses. It will also aid the provision of jobs to help reduce unemployment in the Borough and adjacent areas which continues to remain high.

This range of sites includes:

- Prestige Business Areas - high quality major industrial sites capable of competing against attractive sites elsewhere in the country. In order to meet the locational requirements of new technology manufacturing and service industries such sites require a high standard of accessibility in terms of road connections to the motorway and primary road network, and telecommunication links; availability of a skilled workforce and proximity to areas of housing, shopping, education and leisure facilities; and the maintenance of a high standard of building design and landscaping.
- General Industrial Areas - well located major industrial estates able to cater for a wider range of industrial activities than Prestige Business Areas.
- Local Industrial Areas - smaller industrial estates within towns and villages able to accommodate small and medium sized enterprises in the manufacturing and service sectors.
- Business Areas - small, high quality sites suitable for business and office use that have a good standard of road access and environmental setting. These sites will complement general industrial areas and office development opportunities in town centres.

Policy IB2 designates existing industrial areas in the Borough as Prestige Business Areas, General Industrial Areas or Local Industrial Areas. Policies governing the development and uses appropriate to each of these types of sites are set out in Policies IB5 to IB8.

The majority of industrial and business activities will continue to take place on existing industrial areas. It is important that these sites are maintained and remain attractive to companies. Policy IB14 encourages measures that will assist the continuing upgrading and regeneration of older industrial sites. In many instances these sites have been developed by the re-use of former colliery areas or single user industrial sites as with the Shildon Wagon Works. Approximately 54% of the Borough's industrial land can be classified as redeveloped or 'brown land' sites.

However, in maintaining an attractive range of industrial land it is equally important to have available 'greenfield' sites to meet the requirements of inward investment projects and the expansion of existing companies. Indeed, the locational characteristics of prestige sites - attractive environment and ease of access - necessitate the allocation of new sites that are in conformity with the Plan's environmental policies. Policy IB3 allocates additional sites for industry and business development.

How it will be put into practice

Deciding planning applications

Monitoring the supply of land suitable for industrial and business development in comparison with past and expected development trends with the intention of maintaining about a five years' available supply overall in the Borough.

Acquiring land and providing roads, drainage and utility services to provide development sites and improving such services to existing sites to remove development constraints.

Preparing planning briefs for individual sites as necessary to maintain high standards of estate layout, building design and landscaping, appropriate to the nature and type of site and best practices on the design and appearance of employment areas. In certain instances this will be complemented by the Council using its controls as owners of industrial areas.

Working with others to bring forward development sites.

POLICY IB2 EXISTING INDUSTRIAL ESTATES IN THE BOROUGH AS SHOWN ON THE PROPOSALS MAP ARE DESIGNATED AS ONE OF THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF SITES:

(A) PRESTIGE BUSINESS AREAS

**AYCLIFFE INDUSTRIAL PARK (PART), NEWTON AYCLIFFE (109 HA).
GREEN LANE INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, SPENNYMOOR (83 HA).**

(B) GENERAL INDUSTRIAL AREAS

**AYCLIFFE INDUSTRIAL PARK (PART), NEWTON AYCLIFFE (236 HA).
MERRINGTON LANE INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, SPENNYMOOR (44 HA).
ALL SAINTS' INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, SHILDON (28 HA).
DALE ROAD INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, SHILDON (4 HA).
HACKWORTH INDUSTRIAL PARK, SHILDON (16 HA).
LAMBTON INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, SHILDON (17 HA),
CHILTON INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, CHILTON (40 HA).
MAINSFORTH INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, FERRYHILL (10 HA),
SALTERS LANE INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, SEDGEFIELD (15 HA).
FISHBURN INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, FISHBURN (5 HA).**

(C) LOCAL INDUSTRIAL AREAS

TUDHOE INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, SPENNYMOOR (5 HA).
WESLEYAN ROAD, SPENNYMOOR (2 HA).
FURNACE INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, SHILDON (5 HA).
SHILDON INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, SHILDON (6 HA).
MIDDRIDGE DRIFT INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, SHILDON (1 HA).
DEAN AND CHAPTER INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, FERRYHILL (5 HA).
TRIMDON GRANGE INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, TRIMDON GRANGE (3 HA).
THRISLINGTON INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, WEST CORNFORTH (5 HA).
SEDFIELD STATION, SEDGFELD (2 HA).

Reasons for the policy

Existing industrial areas will continue to provide the main locations for employment in the Borough and comprise a stock of buildings and sites for industrial and business use activities. These sites collectively total some 641 hectares (gross) of industrial land of which 65% was developed and occupied at April 1993, and provided employment for nearly 20,000 people. The Council attaches priority to maintaining a choice of land to meet the differing needs of various job creating activities in terms of location and site characteristics.

Policies IB5 to IB8 detail the type of industrial and business uses appropriate to each of these types of sites.

How it will be put into practice

Deciding planning applications

POLICY IB3 LAND AT THE LOCATIONS INDICATED BELOW AND SHOWN ON THE PROPOSALS MAP WILL BE DEVELOPED AS:**(A) PRESTIGE BUSINESS AREAS**

AYCLIFFE INDUSTRIAL PARK (PART) NEWTON AYCLIFFE (56 HA).
CHILTON PRESTIGE ESTATE, CHILTON (21 HA).

(B) GENERAL INDUSTRIAL AREAS

LAMBTON INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, SHILDON (13 HA).

(C) BUSINESS AREAS

WINTERTON HOSPITAL ESTATE, SEDGFELD (PART) (MIN. 12.2 HA).
ALL SAINTS', SHILDON (2 HA)

Reasons for the policy

This policy supports policies IB1 and IB2 by identifying new industrial and business land releases to maintain a varied supply of industrial land throughout the Plan period. The level of industrial land required takes account of past industrial development rates, expected development trends and environmental considerations related to the physical containment

and setting of sites. There is also a need to ensure that the flow of the new land being brought forward is maintained, so that a target of a five years' supply of serviced land can be achieved.

The Prestige Business Area allocations at Newton Aycliffe and Chilton will maintain a supply of high quality industrial land along the important A1(M)/A167 corridor through the Borough. The sites benefit from good connections to the primary road network and to the main urban centres of the Borough. They will also add to the locational choice for major employment projects.

The extension area of the Aycliffe Industrial Park will build upon the success of the present site and widen the range of industrial sites that can be made available at Newton Aycliffe. In particular it will provide an area able to accommodate a single user requiring a large site or a limited number of major projects. The Borough Council considers it important to have available sites that are able to compete with other locations in the United Kingdom and Europe to attract major inward investors that can have significant employment and economic benefits for the area in which they choose to locate. Such major projects often require a site greater than that which is available on existing estates.

Chilton is identified as a location for a possible prestige industrial site in the Durham County Structure Plan. The site allocated between the A167 and the existing Chilton Industrial Estate would widen the choice of available land in the Chilton-Ferryhill area, and build upon the success of the present estate as an industrial location serving adjacent areas. The Department of Transport has abandoned the A167 Improvement Scheme from Croxdale to Aycliffe but the 1956 line of the A167 Chilton bypass has not been withdrawn. As such, detailed planning permission for development at the Chilton Prestige Estate should not be granted until such time as the prospect of the implementation of the A167 Chilton bypass has been clarified. The development is therefore likely to take place in the latter part of the Plan period. This is consistent with the Council's Economic Development Strategy.

The General Industrial Area allocated at Lambton Street, Shildon will provide additional land to assist in the continuing employment regeneration of the town. The Council will continue to monitor the development of land for general industry in Shildon.

There is a growing trend of decentralisation of offices out of major urban areas into attractive locations in smaller towns and onto sites that are prominent, and have a high standard of road connections. In addition, other Business use activities (offices, research and development and light industry) often require small sites with similar characteristics. The All Saints' site in Shildon forms an attractive "gateway" location on the southern approach to the town and will complement the adjacent general industrial estate.

The attraction of business and office developments would also serve to strengthen service sector job opportunities which are under-represented in the Borough. Office developments will also be encouraged in the Borough's town centres as provided by Policy S2. A Business Area allocation is proposed in conjunction with Policy L15 that considers appropriate uses for inclusion in a comprehensive planning scheme to govern the redevelopment of the site of the Winterton Hospital Estate. Business uses are expected to form a significant part of the redevelopment proposals.

Policy D4 sets out factors to be taken into account in the layout and design of new industrial and business developments. Policy D7 sets out the requirements for structural landscaping around major new industrial areas.

How it will be put into practice

The Council bringing forward sites and undertaking infrastructure works, as well as working in partnership with others.

Promoting sites as suitable for development.

Deciding planning applications.

POLICY IB4 PLANNING PERMISSION FOR AN INDUSTRIAL OR BUSINESS USE REQUIRING A LARGE SITE OUTSIDE OF AN EXISTING PRESTIGE BUSINESS AREA OR GENERAL INDUSTRIAL AREA WILL NORMALLY BE APPROVED ONLY IF THERE ARE SIGNIFICANT EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC BENEFITS TO THE ECONOMY OF COUNTY DURHAM AND THE SITE:

- (A) DOES NOT SIGNIFICANTLY PREJUDICE ANY ENVIRONMENTAL RESTRAINT POLICIES OF THE LOCAL PLAN;**
- (B) IS LOCATED CLOSE TO AN EXISTING PRESTIGE BUSINESS AREA OR GENERAL INDUSTRIAL AREA IN ONE OF THE BOROUGH'S MAIN TOWNS;**
- (C) HAS A SATISFACTORY STANDARD OF ACCESS TO THE STRATEGIC ROAD NETWORK.**

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS FOR SUCH SITES WILL BE EXPECTED TO COMPRISE A HIGH STANDARD OF SITE LAYOUT, BUILDING DESIGN AND LANDSCAPING IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY D4.

Reasons for the policy

Policies IB1 and IB3 are concerned with ensuring that a supply of available land is maintained for industrial and business activities in the Borough. However, it is not possible to plan ahead for the locational requirements of all potential inward investors, especially single firms seeking large sites that cannot be accommodated within existing industrial areas.

Sedgefield Borough, because of its locational advantages, particularly in terms of accessibility, is likely to prove attractive to mobile projects such as the Fujitsu development at Newton Aycliffe. It is not feasible to identify such sites in advance, as they are dependent upon the requirements of individual investment projects. Accordingly the policy provides guidance on the special circumstances for the release of such large sites that are in general conformity with other policies of the Local Plan.

The approval of a large, single, new site would be appropriate when the development would benefit the economy of County Durham in terms of direct job creation as well as other economic linkages that benefit existing companies, attract new related industrial activity (e.g. component suppliers) or help to increase skill levels in the local area. Identified sites should not prejudice any major environmental policies concerned with protecting the best and most versatile agricultural land, wildlife or landscape resources. They should be related to existing industrial areas around the Borough's four towns, so that the development is capable of being integrated with the existing built up area. This should also serve to minimise travelling and help to support other local town centre and leisure facilities. It is also important that access is available to the strategic road network because of the likely levels of traffic generation.

Development should accord with Policy D4 and the Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 2 on the Development of Prestige Business Areas.

How it will be put into practice

Deciding planning applications through planning agreements as appropriate.

Industry and Business Areas

POLICY IB5 IN PRESTIGE BUSINESS AREAS THE FOLLOWING USES WILL NORMALLY BE ACCEPTABLE:

BUSINESS, GENERAL INDUSTRY AND WAREHOUSING.

PLANNING PERMISSION FOR MATERIALS RECLAMATION, LORRY PARKS AND RETAIL DEVELOPMENTS WILL NORMALLY BE REFUSED.

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS FOR OTHER USES WILL BE DECIDED TAKING ACCOUNT OF THE PURPOSE OF PRESTIGE BUSINESS AREAS AS SET OUT UNDER POLICY IB1.

A HIGH STANDARD OF SITE LAYOUT, BUILDING DESIGN AND LANDSCAPING WILL BE REQUIRED IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY D4.

Reasons for the policy

Prestige Business Areas constitute an important but limited part of the supply of industrial land in the Borough, as explained in Policy IB1. It is necessary to ensure that such land is maintained available for companies requiring a high standard of access and environment. This will normally comprise developments involving offices, new technology and modern manufacturing concerns and warehousing related to regional distribution.

A high standard of site layout, design and landscaping will be maintained by the control of development and the exclusion of activities that would detract from an estate's appearance in accordance with Policy D4. Development should accord with the Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 2 on the Development of Prestige Business Areas.

How it will be put into practice

Deciding planning applications.

Preparation of site development briefs to maintain standards of layout, building design and landscaping appropriate to the functions of a Prestige Business Area.

POLICY IB6 IN GENERAL INDUSTRIAL AREAS THE FOLLOWING USES WILL NORMALLY BE ACCEPTABLE:

BUSINESS, GENERAL INDUSTRY AND WAREHOUSING.

RETAIL WAREHOUSES, PREMISES FOR THE SALE OF VEHICLES AND VEHICLE PARTS, AND LORRY PARKING WILL ALSO BE ACCEPTABLE PROVIDED THAT THE DEVELOPMENT DOES NOT LEAD TO:

- (A) SUCH USES INDIVIDUALLY OR COLLECTIVELY FORMING MORE THAN A SMALL PART OF THE TOTAL ESTATE AREA;**
- (B) EXISTING USES OF ADJOINING LAND BEING ADVERSELY AFFECTED;**
- (C) A LOSS OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ON THE ESTATE; AND**

- (D) IN RESPECT TO RETAIL WAREHOUSES SUCH DEVELOPMENT SHOULD ACCORD WITH THE PROVISIONS OF POLICY S12.**

PLANNING PERMISSION WILL NORMALLY BE REFUSED FOR:

- (E) LARGE FOOD RETAIL UNITS; AND**
- (F) SCRAPYARDS AND CAR BREAKING YARDS EXCEPT ON THE ESTATES IDENTIFIED IN POLICY IB16.**

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS FOR OTHER USES WILL BE DECIDED TAKING ACCOUNT OF THE PURPOSE OF GENERAL INDUSTRIAL AREAS AS SET OUT UNDER POLICY IB1.

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS SHOULD CONFORM WITH POLICIES D4 AND D10.

Reasons for the policy

This policy develops the aim of policies IB1 and IB2 to accommodate general industry and warehouse development mainly in General Industrial Areas so as to cater for existing firms wishing to expand and those wishing to locate in the Borough.

The Council does not wish to unnecessarily inhibit job creating activities by imposing restrictions on the mixture of industrial activities on any one site.

The location and characteristics of some of the General Industrial Areas is such that lorry parking and retail warehouses (that accord with Policy S12) are capable of being satisfactorily accommodated within certain safeguards, concerning the effect on the estate in overall terms. This will be achieved by limiting such uses to no more than 30% of the area of an individual estate and taking account of the presence of such activities on adjacent general industrial uses. In giving consideration to these factors account will be taken of the characteristics of each industrial estate and of the operation of individual companies. On all estates those industrial uses, that by way of processes and activities carried out, might cause environmental problems will be carefully considered in order to safeguard the amenities of existing businesses and of adjacent areas, in accordance with Policy D10.

New industrial developments should be laid out and designed to take account of the factors set out in Policy D4.

How it will be put into practice

Deciding planning applications.

Providing appropriate advice to businesses and to developers.

POLICY IB7 IN LOCAL INDUSTRIAL AREAS THE FOLLOWING USES WILL NORMALLY BE ACCEPTABLE:

BUSINESS, GENERAL INDUSTRY, WAREHOUSING AND LORRY PARKING.

PLANNING PERMISSION FOR SCRAPYARDS AND CAR BREAKING YARDS EXCEPT ON THE ESTATES IDENTIFIED IN POLICY IB16 WILL NORMALLY BE REFUSED.

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS FOR OTHER USES WILL BE DECIDED TAKING ACCOUNT OF THE PURPOSE OF LOCAL INDUSTRIAL AREAS AS SET OUT UNDER POLICY IB1.

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS SHOULD CONFORM WITH POLICY D4.

Reasons for the policy

Local Industrial Areas provide an important source of accommodation for small businesses and new start up firms which serve local markets. They also help to create local employment opportunities. Because of their locations in towns and villages they tend to adjoin residential areas. It is important that the activities carried out on these sites do not create environmental problems. As such it is necessary to exclude from these estates certain uses that can be bad neighbours.

New industrial developments should be laid out and designed to take into account the factors set out in Policy D4.

How it will be put into practice

Deciding planning applications.

Providing advice to small businesses.

POLICY IB8 IN BUSINESS AREAS, BUSINESS USES WILL NORMALLY BE APPROVED.

PLANNING PERMISSION FOR GENERAL INDUSTRY AND WAREHOUSING WILL NORMALLY BE REFUSED.

A HIGH STANDARD OF SITE LAYOUT, BUILDING DESIGN AND LANDSCAPING WILL BE REQUIRED IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY D4.

Reasons for the policy

There are only a limited number of business area allocations in the Plan. In order to promote these sites it is necessary that careful control is exercised over the uses permitted. These will be limited to office and business uses. Their development is intended to assist the creation of service sector employment.

A high standard of site development will also be promoted. Advice in the layout and design of business developments is set out in Policy D4.

How it will be put into practice

Deciding planning applications.

Preparing planning briefs for sites brought forward.

Industry and Business Development Outside of Industrial Areas

POLICY IB9 BUSINESSES, GENERAL INDUSTRY AND WAREHOUSE USES MAY BE APPROVED ON SITES OUTSIDE OF THE INDUSTRIAL AREAS SHOWN ON THE PROPOSALS MAP WITHIN A TOWN OR VILLAGE PROVIDED THAT THE PROPOSAL:

- (A) **IS NOT HARMFUL TO THE GENERAL CHARACTER OF THE LOCAL AREA;**
- (B) **DOES NOT CREATE A SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECT IN TERMS OF THE LIVING CONDITIONS OF NEARBY RESIDENTS, OR TRAFFIC MOVEMENTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY T7; AND**
- (C) **DOES NOT PREJUDICE THE SATISFACTORY DEVELOPMENT OF A LARGER AREA.**

Reasons for the policy

The Borough has a range of industrial estates that are able adequately to accommodate general industrial activities. These developments are not acceptable outside such sites because of problems of noise, smell, safety or excessive traffic generation.

Business, offices and warehouse developments can, however, be acceptable in areas such as town centres, near to residential areas or in villages, but it is important that such development do not have an adverse effect on the character and amenity of any nearby residential properties in terms of noise, smell, dust or vibration, or cause traffic problems because of inadequate access, parking or loading arrangements.

Policy D4 set out factors to be taken into account in the layout and design of industrial and business development.

How it will be put into practice

Deciding planning applications.

POLICY IB10 OUTSIDE OF TOWNS AND VILLAGES PLANNING PERMISSION FOR NEW INDUSTRY AND BUSINESS USES WILL NORMALLY BE APPROVED ONLY IF IT INVOLVES:

- (A) **THE PROCESSING OF AGRICULTURAL OR FORESTRY PRODUCTS AND IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT THE ACTIVITY TAKES PLACE CLOSE TO THE SOURCE OF RAW MATERIALS;**
- (B) **AN ACTIVITY THAT CAN DEMONSTRATE AN ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENT FOR A RURAL LOCATION; OR**
- (C) **THE USE OF AN EXISTING BUILDING IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY IB11.**

PROPOSALS SHOULD BE IN LOCATIONS THAT DO NOT HAVE AN ADVERSE EFFECT ON THE SURROUNDING COUNTRYSIDE IN TERMS OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS OR TRAFFIC GENERATION.

PLANNING PERMISSION FOR SUCH USES WILL BE RELATED TO THE LIFE OF THE RAW MATERIAL OR TO THE SPECIFIC ACTIVITY AS APPROPRIATE.

Reasons for the policy

The promotion of economic activity in rural areas is recognised by the Council as a means of providing jobs, preventing the loss of services and maintaining balanced and viable communities. Government planning policy advice places emphasis on the promotion of small firms and has indicated that such activities are acceptable in rural areas when it is related to the built-up area of villages and the operations do not give rise to an unacceptable level of disturbance or adversely affect the setting of villages. Adequate land is available for industry, business and warehouse developments in designated industrial estates in villages as indicated in Policy IB2.

New build industrial and business development in the countryside, away from villages needs to be strictly controlled. This is in accordance with national planning policy guidance. Such developments can detract from the appearance of the countryside and cause a loss of land of agricultural, nature conservation or landscape interest. It is also difficult to provide services economically to such sites and they tend not to be served by public transport.

There are, however, limited circumstances when new industrial development might be appropriate: when there is a requirement to be close to a source of raw materials; or the need for a rural location can be demonstrated. Such exceptions will need to conform with other policies of the Local Plan and in particular those aimed at the conservation of the Borough's environmental resources. Planning conditions will also be imposed to limit the period of the industrial activity to the availability of the raw material justifying the countryside location; to limit the activity to that approved; and to control any intensification of the activity, that might otherwise have an unacceptable impact on the local environment. Regard will also be given to the requirements of Policy D4.

How it will be put into practice

Deciding planning applications.

Provision of advice and assistance to farmers, landowners and firms where appropriate.

POLICY IB11 OUTSIDE OF TOWNS AND VILLAGES THE USE OF EXISTING BUILDINGS FOR BUSINESS, GENERAL INDUSTRY AND WAREHOUSING WILL NORMALLY BE APPROVED PROVIDED THE PROPOSAL:

- (A) IS CAPABLE OF BEING ACCOMMODATED WITHOUT MAJOR EXTENSIONS OR REBUILDING;**
- (B) WOULD NOT CREATE SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS IN TERMS OF THE LIVING CONDITIONS OF NEARBY RESIDENTS, OR TRAFFIC MOVEMENTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY T7; AND**

(C) IS NOT HARMFUL TO THE CHARACTER OF THE LOCAL COUNTRYSIDE.

WHERE THE BUILDING IS OF VISUAL, ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE THE CHARACTERISTICS THAT MAKE THE BUILDING WORTHY OF PRESERVATION SHOULD NORMALLY BE RETAINED.

Reasons for the policy

Agricultural buildings and other premises either forming part of a farmstead or in the open countryside can be usefully brought into a new use through their conversion to provide accommodation for firms and businesses. Such new uses can serve to aid rural diversification as well as assist to safeguard buildings that contribute to the character of the area. Any features of the building that contribute to its character should normally be retained,

It is expected that such business activities will normally be of a small scale and perhaps be related to, or provide a service for, rural industry.

How it will be put in practice

Deciding planning applications.

Provision of advice and assistance to farmers, landowners and firms where appropriate.

POLICY IB12 WHERE THE OPERATION OF SMALL BUSINESS USES FROM A RESIDENCE REQUIRES PLANNING PERMISSION THIS WILL BE APPROVED ONLY WHERE THERE IS NO DETRIMENTAL EFFECT ON THE AMENITIES OF NEARBY RESIDENTS OR THE CHARACTER OF THE AREA CAUSED BY NOISE, FUMES, VIBRATION, HOURS OF OPERATION, OR TRAFFIC GENERATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY T7.

Reasons for the policy

The encouragement of new and existing small businesses will assist in attempting to diversify the economy and create new job opportunities. Businesses are often started by people in their own homes. This does not necessarily require planning permission provided there is no change in the overall character of the property's use as a residence.

Many businesses can be carried out in residential areas without disturbance to the occupiers of neighbouring properties. Others, however, can cause significant problems. It is important, therefore, to ensure that those activities run from the home do not create a nuisance outside of the property for adjoining residents due to the nature of the activity itself such as motor vehicle repairs or taxi businesses, or by the level of deliveries and callers to the property.

How it will be put into practice

Deciding planning applications. Conditions will be placed on permissions to ensure that the use does not become unacceptable having regard to the character of the area. Appropriate conditions could cover hours of operation, car parking and property extensions.

Other Industry and Business Policies

POLICY IB13 EXTENSIONS TO INDUSTRIAL AND BUSINESS PREMISES WILL NORMALLY BE APPROVED PROVIDED THAT:

- (A) ADJACENT INDUSTRIAL OR BUSINESS PREMISES ARE NOT ADVERSELY AFFECTED;**
- (B) THE SITE IS NOT OVER INTENSIVELY DEVELOPED; AND**
- (C) THE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECT IN TERMS OF RESIDENTIAL AMENITY OR TRAFFIC MOVEMENT IS NOT SIGNIFICANTLY DETRIMENTAL TO THE GENERAL CHARACTER OF THE AREA.**

PROPOSALS THAT WOULD RESULT IN AN EXTENSION OF AN EXISTING INDUSTRIAL AREA INTO THE COUNTRYSIDE OR THE EXTENSION OF AN EXISTING ACTIVITY IN THE COUNTRYSIDE SHOULD NOT HAVE AN ADVERSE EFFECT ON THE CHARACTER OF THE LOCAL AREA.

Reasons for the policy

The Council wishes to facilitate the growth and expansion of companies. In the consideration of proposals for the extension of premises or sites it is necessary to ensure that this does not affect the operations of adjacent businesses, or result in a worsening of conditions for occupants of nearby residential properties, or lead to excessive levels of traffic movement or parking problems.

An over intensive development of sites needs to be avoided. Any new buildings should not cause the loss of landscaped or operational areas required for storage, car parking or vehicle manoeuvring so that problems of car parking and vehicular movements are created outside of the site.

Proposals that would extend an existing industrial area into an area of countryside, or involve an extension of an existing activity located in the countryside need to be carefully controlled in order that the impact in terms of landscape and nature conservation interests is minimised.

How it will be put into practice

Deciding planning applications.

POLICY IB14 THE IMPROVEMENT OF GENERAL AND LOCAL INDUSTRIAL AREAS WILL BE ENCOURAGED AND ASSISTED BY:

- (A) GRANTING PLANNING PERMISSION THAT LEADS TO:

THE CONSTRUCTION OF INDUSTRIAL PREMISES;
THE REDEVELOPMENT, CONVERSION, OR MODERNISATION OF
PREMISES;**
- (B) CARRYING OUT:

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS, IMPROVEMENTS TO ACCESS,
TRAFFIC CIRCULATION AND PARKING ARRANGEMENTS; AND**

(C) UNDERTAKING ESTATE IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES WITH PRIORITY GIVEN TO AYCLIFFE INDUSTRIAL PARK, NEWTON AYCLIFFE.

Reasons for the policy

The Borough's older industrial areas, in many instances based upon former colliery sites are important sources of low cost start up premises and provide local employment opportunities. Improvements have proved successful in the past and have assisted in giving areas renewed confidence, investment and growth. Such measures will be continued as resources permit. For many small firms in older industrial areas, property improvements are necessary to permit modernisation and growth.

Aycliffe Industrial Park is one of the largest industrial areas in the region. It provides employment for over 8,000 people and accommodates some 250 companies. However, despite its many positive aspects - ease of access and range of premises - parts of the Park have a deteriorating appearance and image as an industrial location. In view of the size of the estate and the range of premises with many old buildings, there is a continuing need for measures that will assist in promoting the redevelopment and renovation of the Park. Attention is required to tackle those parts of the Park where issues of vacant floorspace, unsuitable large buildings and environmental conditions are of concern.

How it will be put into practice

Inclusion of improvements schemes in the Council's Economic Development expenditure programmes.

Discussions with private sector owners and English Partnerships as appropriate.

Deciding planning applications.

POLICY IB15 THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO SECURE THE DEVELOPMENT OF ADVANCE FACTORY PROVISION ON INDUSTRY AND BUSINESS SITES BY:

- (A) DIRECTLY PROVIDING PREMISES;**
- (B) WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH OTHER DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES; AND**
- (C) ENCOURAGING PRIVATE SECTOR DEVELOPMENTS.**

Reasons for the policy

It is important that a supply of modern factory accommodation of differing sizes is maintained to assist small businesses which are important in improving the economic prosperity of the Borough. The Council continues to work closely with English Partnerships and in the eastern part of the Borough with the Rural Development Commission on factory building programmes. It will also consider financing the development of premises itself as well as encouraging private sector investment.

How it will be put into practice

Through the Council's Economic Development Programme.

The submission of development proposals to English Partnerships, Rural Development Commission and other Development Agencies.

Discussion of proposals with the private sector.

Making land available for factory developments.

POLICY IB16 PROPOSALS FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MATERIALS RECLAMATION FACILITIES AND SCRAPYARDS WILL BE PERMITTED ONLY AT THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS:

- (A) COMPOUND AREA OF CHILTON INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, CHILTON;
- (B) COMPOUND AREA OF FURNACE INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, SHILDON; AND
- (C) COMPOUND AREA OF DEAN AND CHAPTER INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, FERRYHILL.

STRINGENT CONDITIONS WILL BE APPLIED TO THESE SITES TO GOVERN THEIR APPEARANCE, RELATIONSHIP TO ADJOINING LAND USES, THE DESIGN OF BUILDINGS, LANDSCAPING, SCREENING AND ACCESS IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY D4.

Reasons for the policy

The Borough's economy is dominated by manufacturing activities that lead to the production of waste materials, capable of being processed and re-used. There is in addition a need to accommodate other bad neighbour activities such as scrapyards and vehicle breaking. Such activities are most appropriately located on selected general and local industrial areas, where the detrimental effects on the overall appearance of these estates can be regulated by the careful control of such activities.

The Council has operated a policy of providing a limited number of industrial compounds, capable of accommodating such uses. These sites are situated away from residential areas. Strict controls apply over the appearance and operation of these sites.

The operation of this policy should contribute towards the achievement of environmental benefits elsewhere in the Borough, as it will permit uses that have a detrimental effect on a local neighbourhood to be offered alternative locations.

How it will be put into practice

Deciding planning applications.

By the operation of landlord controls over the majority of sites that are in the Council's ownership.

POLICY IB17 PLANNING PERMISSION WILL NORMALLY BE GRANTED FOR SMALL SHOPS AND FOOD AND DRINK OUTLETS IN PRESTIGE BUSINESS AREAS AND GENERAL INDUSTRIAL AREAS.

Reasons for the policy

Local shops and services are needed by people working in the larger Prestige Business Areas and General Industrial Areas. Such developments should, however, be of a small scale, normally less than 100 square metres.

How it will be put into practice

Deciding planning applications.

POLICY IB18 PROPOSALS INVOLVING DEVELOPMENT AT EXISTING NOTIFIABLE HAZARDOUS INSTALLATIONS OR THE INTRODUCTION OF NEW NOTIFIABLE HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES REQUIRING PLANNING PERMISSION WILL NORMALLY BE APPROVED ONLY WHEN:

- (A) **THE PROPOSED SITE IS WITHIN A GENERAL INDUSTRIAL AREA OR AN EXISTING INDUSTRIAL ESTABLISHMENT;**
- (B) **THERE WOULD BE NO SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN THE POTENTIAL RISK TO EXISTING AND PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL AREAS OR TO OTHER LAND USES INVOLVING A CONCENTRATION OF POPULATION; AND**
- (C) **THE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES OF OTHER ADJACENT INDUSTRIAL SITES OR NEARBY DEVELOPMENT SITES IS NOT INHIBITED.**

DEVELOPMENTS NEAR TO NOTIFIED HAZARDOUS INSTALLATIONS WILL NORMALLY BE PERMITTED ONLY WHEN FOLLOWING CONSULTATION WITH THE HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE THE COUNCIL IS SATISFIED THERE WOULD BE NO SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN THE POPULATION POTENTIALLY AT RISK.

Reasons for the policy

The Health and Safety Executive has notified the Council of six installations handling hazardous substances in the Borough. These are located on General Industrial Areas at Newton Aycliffe (two sites), Shildon (two sites), Westbrick Eldon Brickworks, Eldon and the Northern Gas depot at Wear Street, Spennymoor. The Health and Safety Executive has defined consultation zones around each of these installations and requires to be consulted upon certain types of planning application. These installation are notified because of the processes carried out or the substances being stored.

The Council is concerned to ensure that these installations do not give rise to an increase in the potential population at risk, create a constraint upon employment creation or limit the use of sites being developed in the vicinity of an installation.

Policy D10 relates to the location of potentially polluting development.

How it will be put into practice

Deciding planning applications in consultation with the Health and Safety Executive.

POLICY IB19 THE COUNCIL WILL NORMALLY GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR AGRICULTURAL OR FORESTRY BUILDINGS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE PROVIDED THAT THEY ARE:

- (A) LOCATED NEAR TO EXISTING BUILDINGS OR ARE WELL SCREENED AND ARE NOT DETRIMENTAL TO THE APPEARANCE OF THE LANDSCAPE; AND
- (B) APPROPRIATE IN SCALE, DESIGN AND OF MATERIALS IN KEEPING WITH THE SURROUNDING LANDSCAPE.

Reasons for the policy

Agriculture and forestry are important sectors of the rural economy which are undergoing change, for example, through farm diversification.

New buildings in the countryside can have an impact on the landscape particularly if they are prominent in terms of size, location or materials. New buildings should, therefore, be sited close to existing ones if possible.

If, for operational reasons new buildings must be located in isolation, special attention will need to be made to the siting, scale, design and materials of the building in relation to the landscape. Screening by trees may help to assimilate a building into the landscape.

Development in the countryside should take account of the archaeological, historic and nature conservation interest as set out in Policies E2, E3, E10, E11, E13 and E17.

How it will be put into practice

Deciding planning applications.

POLICY IB20 PRIOR APPROVAL OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT FOR FARMING OR FORESTRY PURPOSES WILL NOT NORMALLY BE REQUIRED UNLESS THE DEVELOPMENT IS:-

- (A) VISUALLY PROMINENT;
- (B) INTRUSIVE IN THE LOCAL LANDSCAPE;
- (C) WITHIN A CONSERVATION AREA OR LANDSCAPE AREA DEFINED BY POLICY E2 OR E3;
- (D) IN THE VICINITY OF KNOWN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE OR SITES OF NATURE CONSERVATION INTEREST UNDER POLICY E10 OR E11.
- (E) LOCATED WHERE IT MAY ADVERSELY AFFECT A LISTED BUILDING OR ITS SETTING; OR
- (F) IN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO HOUSES.

WHERE PRIOR APPROVAL IS REQUIRED FOR DETAILS, THE FOLLOWING FACTORS WILL BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN DETERMINING THE APPLICATIONS:-

- (G) THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE DEVELOPMENT TO OTHER BUILDINGS IN TERMS OF SITING, SIZE AND COLOUR.**
- (H) THE VISUAL IMPACT ON THE LANDSCAPE.**
- (I) THE COMPATIBILITY OF THE DESIGN OF THE DEVELOPMENT WITHIN ITS SETTING AND THE LANDSCAPE GENERALLY.**
- (J) THE USE OF TRADITIONAL OR SYMPATHETIC MATERIALS.**
- (K) THE OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS OF THE AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY INDUSTRIES.**

Reasons for the policy

Many agricultural or forestry buildings do not require a specific planning permission because of permitted development rights. Such developments are, though, subject to a process of prior approval. This permits the Council to consider the effect of such developments on the landscape and appearance of the local area and its relationship to areas of importance such as conservation areas, listed buildings, sites of nature conservation value. Where it is considered a development is likely to have an impact on these interests the Council can require the submission of details of the proposal in regard to siting, design and appearance. The principle of whether the development should be permitted or not, is not for consideration under the prior approval process.

New buildings should usually be sited close to existing ones and use compatible materials so as not to be visually intrusive in the local landscape.

How it will be put into practice

Deciding whether prior approval will be required for proposals submitted under Parts 6 and 7 of Schedule 2 to the Town and Country Planning General Development Order 1988.