

CITY OF DURHAM - LOCAL PLAN
ADOPTED PLAN
WRITTEN STATEMENT

**(As amended by the Secretary of State's Direction
under paragraph 1(3) of Schedule 8 to the Planning &
Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 in respect of saved
policies at 27th September 2007)**

**Mr D Thornborrow, Head of Planning Services
City of Durham Council, 17 Claypath, Durham, DH1 1RH**

19th May 2004

FOREWORD

The Council's vision for the People and City of Durham is of Flourishing Communities and Durham as a Capital City. Twenty-six villages and a town with its very different constituent parts, make up the District of Durham. Each one of these parts of our whole has different histories, characteristics, aspirations and needs which must be respected so that they can all flourish. The Local Plan provides the framework within which growth, change and new opportunities can develop.

Durham is uniquely special, offering us a good place to live, to shop and to visit, as well as being the driver of economic development, not only for the whole of the District but also throughout the Region. Our World Heritage site and nationally renowned University give us important assets on which to build to achieve economic well being and secure our futures. This Plan must protect and enhance what is good, and improve and evolve Durham where desirable, and ensure that our best assets continue to improve all our lives.

The City of Durham Local Plan, which replaces the 1988 Local Plan, sets out a land use policy framework that will guide new development over the period to 2006, its two core aims intend to express this vision. It seeks to encourage sustainable economic growth and regeneration, promote inward investment and conserve and enhance the unique character of the City and District. By doing so we seek to ensure the quality of life for future generations.

This will be achieved through ensuring that development is properly and effectively planned to continue the protection and enhancement of Durham City, and the surrounding villages and the countryside. At the same time the plan provides the opportunity to integrate economic, environmental and social factors into decisions about where to locate growth, improve the quality of the environment and enable an enduring quality of life. It provides certainty for both the community and developers as to future development in the district.

This document was the subject of extensive public consultation, which was followed by a Public Local Inquiry; this gave parties who had made comments and objections to the Plan the chance to put their case to an independent Inspector from the Planning Inspectorate. The Council carefully considered all comments made, through the various stages of the plan preparation process, and this plan reflects, where appropriate, those comments. The Council would like to take this opportunity to thank all the individuals, organisations and groups who contributed to the policies and proposals throughout the local plan preparation process. The document is the stronger for that participation.



Clr S Pitts
Leader of the Council

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1. INTRODUCTION AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

PROFILE OF THE DISTRICT

- 1.1 The City of Durham¹ is a relatively small District containing a population of approximately 87,700². This population comprises both the main urban area of Durham City and the surrounding settlements. The District covers a total area of about 18,700 hectares, making it one of the more compact local authorities in the County. It is situated mid-way between the industrial conurbations of Tyneside and Teesside astride both the A1(M) and East Coast Main Line and is consequently very accessible to all parts of the region. It is the administrative centre for the County as well as being an important ecclesiastical, educational, tourist and commercial centre. The City of Durham contains many fine buildings (approximately 630 are Listed) and the City Centre is famous for the quality of its architecture and townscape. The Norman Cathedral and Castle in their spectacular setting on the Peninsula above the wooded banks of the River Wear are acknowledged as being of international importance by their designation as a World Heritage Site. The quality of the landscape surrounding Durham City and the fingers of open countryside which penetrate along the valley of the River Wear into the City Centre afford it a unique setting amongst the historic cities of England.

ROLE AND PURPOSE OF THE LOCAL PLAN

- 1.2 Under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by the Planning and Compensation Act 1991, all land use planning decisions made by a local authority must be based on Development Plans unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for Durham is formed by the Durham County Structure Plan, the Durham County Minerals Local Plan, the Durham County Waste Disposal Local Plan and the City of Durham Local Plan.

Within the context of this legislative framework, the purpose of the City of Durham Local Plan is to:

- set out the Council's Policies for the control of development; and
 - make proposals for the development and use of land and allocates land for specific purposes.
- 1.3 The City of Durham Local Plan has been through several extensive consultation exercises since February 1998. These involved statutory consultees, interest and community groups. The final draft of the Plan was approved by the Council for adoption at the Cabinet meeting on 9th February 2004 and was adopted in May 2004.

¹ City of Durham will be referred to as the District and covers the whole administrative area.

Durham City comprises the main urban area of the District, including the City Centre as described in Paragraph 11.2, as well as Belmont, Carrville, Framwellgate Moor, Newton Hall and Pity Me. It is also referred to as the City.

Durham City Council (City of Durham District Council) will be referred to as 'the Council' or 'the City Council'.

² This figure is Census 2001 resident population and includes students and those residing in institutions.

POLICY FRAMEWORK

1.5 The City of Durham Local Plan has not been prepared in isolation but within the context of a broad policy framework that encompasses:

- **National Planning Policy Guidance**
- **Regional Planning Guidance**
- **Durham County Structure Plan (Adopted 1999)**
- **City of Durham Local Plan (Adopted 1988)**
- **Other Plans and Policies of the Council and Other Local Authorities.**

National Planning Policy Guidance

1.6 Central Government planning policy advice is issued in the form of Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs). Local planning authorities are expected to have regard to PPGs in the exercise of their planning functions.

1.7 A list of all current PPGs is set out in Appendix 1.

Regional Planning Guidance

1.8 Regional Planning Guidance for the Northern Region (RPG7) was issued by the Secretary of State for the Environment in September 1993. Its overall theme is to balance the need to regenerate existing urban areas, attract employment to the Region and improve its economic base with the need to safeguard the countryside, forests and coastline. Specific reference is made in it to strengthen Policies aimed at safeguarding the character and the special setting of Durham City. The Council is required to have regard to RPG7 in the preparation of its Local Plan.

1.9 The draft Regional Planning Guidance for the North East was published for consultation in May 1999 and final version was published in November 2002. This replaced RPG7. The new Guidance, which covers the period to 2016, emphasises the value of Durham Cathedral and Castle World Heritage Site and the need to protect it, along with the value of the City as a whole in attracting inward investment and helping to promote the region.

Durham County Structure Plan

1.10 The Durham County Structure Plan provides the strategic planning basis for the City of Durham Local Plan. The Local Plan is required to be in general conformity with the Structure Plan.

1.11 The Durham County Structure Plan was adopted in March 1999 and covers the period up to 2006. The aims of the Structure Plan are:

- (i) to generate and provide for development to meet the social and economic needs of the County's residents in ways which do not compromise the quality of the environment and the quality of life of future generations, in accordance with the principles of sustainability;
- (ii) to create for the people of County Durham the best possible opportunities for work, housing, shopping, education and leisure and for meeting social and community needs, including assisting those within the community with particular disadvantages to improve their quality of life; and
- (iii) to improve and protect the built and natural environment of the County.

City of Durham Local Plan

- 1.12** A City of Durham Local Plan was adopted by the Council in June 1988. It covered the whole District and contained the planning policies which the Council has sought to implement over the past decade. This revised Plan affords the Council the opportunity to re-appraise and re-evaluate these Policies in the light of current planning guidance and changing circumstances. The Consultation Draft of the Revised Local Plan was published in February 1998 and the First Deposit Draft was published in February 2000.

Other Plans and Policies

- 1.13** The Local Plan has also incorporated, where appropriate, the policies and strategies contained in the following documents which the Council has published and adopted:

- City of Durham Environmental Charter (1991)
- Cycling in the City of Durham (1995)
- City of Durham Leisure Strategy (1996)
- City Centre Strategy (1997)
- City of Durham Economic Strategy (1999-2000)
- City of Durham Corporate Plan (1999)
- Licensing Strategy for Durham City Centre (1999)
- City of Durham Housing Strategy and Investment Programme (Annual)
- City of Durham Local Agenda 21 Strategy (2001)

- 1.14** In addition, the recommendations of the following three studies have been taken into account in the preparation of the Local Plan:

- **Durham City Travel Study (1997)** - commissioned by the Durham County Council and prepared by Colin Buchanan and Partners

- **Decriminalised Parking Enforcement Study (1997)** - commissioned by Durham City Council and prepared by RTA Associates
- **A Development Framework for the Heart of Durham (1998)** - the Framework is a master plan prepared for the Durham City Partnership (comprising Durham City Council, Durham County Council and English Partnerships) to provide an over-view of development opportunities within the City Centre over the next 15-20 year period. It was prepared by a number of specialist consultants and is a non-statutory planning document.

1.15 The Local Plan is first and foremost a land use plan. It is not a compendium of all the Council's Policies on its other non-planning functions. Aspects of these matters are included only when the policies and proposals directly relate to the development and use of land.

1.16 The following Plans and Policies of other local authorities have also been taken into account in the preparation of the Local Plan:

- **Durham County Waste Disposal Local Plan**
- **Magnesian Limestone Escarpment Local Plan**
- **County Durham Local Transport Plan**
- **County Durham Tourism Strategy**
- **Economic Development Strategy For County Durham**
- **East and West Durham Rural Development Areas Strategy**
- **Durham Biodiversity Action Plan**
- **Adjoining District Council's Local Plans**

ENVIRONMENTAL APPRAISAL

1.17 The Planning and Compensation Act 1991, requires that development plans should include policies for the conservation of the natural beauty and amenity of land and for the improvement of physical environment. The Town and Country Planning Act (Development Plans) Regulations 1991, also require attention to environmental considerations and PPG12 - Development Plans and Regional Planning Guidance recommends that authorities should carry out an Environmental Appraisal as part of the Plan preparation process.

1.18 The Appraisal assesses how the environment has been taken into account in the formulation of the policies and proposals and defines what might be the impact of the Plan's implementation. An Environmental Appraisal has been carried out in the preparation of the City of Durham Local Plan and is published as a separate document.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

- 1.19** Monitoring is the process used to measure the effectiveness of the Plan. It involves assessing the extent to which the Policies are being followed and whether they are having the desired results. It is a continuous process which involves the collection of data on selected indicators of land use and development. These include population change, housing completions, industrial development, progress on major projects and implementation of the Transport Strategy.
- 1.20** Monitoring will highlight issues which will justify amendment of the Plan. Amendments could be covered by the issue of supplementary planning guidance, such as an interim policy, or formal alterations where:
- there are fundamental changes of national and strategic policy;
 - the Plan becomes outdated as a result of small, incremental changes;
 - major unforeseen development needs arise.
- 1.21** In accordance with Government advice, the Plan will be reviewed regularly, and rolled forward to beyond 2006. A review could encompass the types of alteration referred to above, or may involve the replacement by a completely new Plan if many fundamental alterations are required.

2 AIMS AND GENERAL OBJECTIVES

INTRODUCTION

- 2.1** The Local Plan sets out a broad land use framework that will guide new development over the period to 2006. As such, it provides the parameters within which investment decisions can be taken by the Council, other public agencies, businesses and developers. Whilst the Plan has to be realistic and tangible, it also has to be sufficiently flexible to try and deal with the uncertainty of change about to take place both now and in the future, which will impact upon Durham and the planning system in which it operates.
- 2.2** Local Planning Authorities have a responsibility to anticipate and accommodate change although it is acknowledged that this process of change is complex, making accurate predictions difficult, since it is the subject of many variables beyond both local influence and the scope of planning control. Nevertheless, for the Plan to be successful it is essential that it has a clear view of what it is seeking to achieve and how this can be brought about. The aims, strategy and general objectives of the Plan are contained within this Chapter together with a synopsis of the main issues which it needs to address over the Plan period.

PLAN ISSUES

- 2.3** The City of Durham is justifiably proud of its heritage but equally it cares for its future and recognises the extent of investment required to achieve these commitments. Although the Council has an important legacy to respect and retain, for present and future generations, it is a progressive authority looking forward to the challenge of the next millennium. It is a District which embodies many different functions and experiences. The special character, setting and architectural quality of the City Centre dominated by the World Heritage Site is a marked contrast with areas of mineral despoliation in the rural parts of the District. The role of Durham as the County Town, its importance as a religious and university centre, its bustling City Centre, the buoyant local economy and the quality of life for its residents which is reflected in the relatively low levels of deprivation and unemployment compared with many other parts of the County, all combine to give the District a vitality and vibrancy which the Council is anxious to maintain and build upon.
- 2.4** These positive attributes however, have to be balanced against the difficulties faced by Durham in common with many historic cities. Traffic congestion, the pressure for new development with its impact upon both the built and natural environment and the management of tourism are all examples of the issues which need to be addressed by the Council and its major partners over the Plan period.
- 2.5** During the Plan period the population of the District is expected to remain stable. The trend towards the formation of new smaller households and its implication for new housing development will continue. The strategy of the Plan regarding the location of housing is to continue that which has operated for many years and involves a considerable measure of restraint within Durham City and attempts to guide most new housing into the surrounding villages. Whilst Durham City is the

main focus for housing demand, the Plan needs to recognise that its unique character and setting make it physically and environmentally unable to absorb the level of housing which market forces pressure might otherwise attract.

- 2.6** The District will continue to offer specialist employment opportunities in the field of research and technology and business development throughout the plan period. The Plan, however, must recognise that there is a need to provide land for all types of employment purposes and whilst it allocates sufficient provision during the Plan period, it acknowledges that consideration will have to be given to the longer-term requirement post 2006.
- 2.7** Although the City of Durham is primarily an urban authority, it includes a rural hinterland containing over 300 farms. The Common Agricultural Policy and changing patterns in rural land use, farm management and countryside recreation have combined to leave many of these farms either redundant or marginally economic, and consequently open to new forms of rural diversification. The Plan must recognise that the successful conversion of traditional farms will preserve the local heritage, make good use of sound buildings and stimulate the rural economy.
- 2.8** The continued vitality and viability of the City Centre remain a fundamental objective of the Council and Policies and Proposals contained in the Plan reflect this. Major projects such as the recent Prince Bishops retail development adjacent to the Market Place (see Chapter 7) and the proposed Millennium City Project and Walkergate redevelopment (see Chapter 11), are examples of the Council's long-term commitment towards maintaining the health and economic wellbeing of the City Centre.
- 2.9** Whilst the Plan also seeks to ensure the continued vitality and viability of the existing district and local centres throughout the District, it recognises that individual shops play an important role within some of the smaller rural villages. Given the relatively low level of car ownership in many of these villages, and the need to redress social exclusion in general, the Plan must seek to support the retention of small shops and community facilities.
- 2.9A** Many of the settlements in the District, particularly the former colliery settlements, suffer from a poor physical environment. The Council has pursued a number of initiatives to improve conditions for communities, and it is currently spearheading a multi-agency partnership in the Lower Deerness Valley (under SRB5) intended to bring physical, environmental, educational, social and community benefits. Further improvements are still needed in this and other areas of the District and the Council will examine opportunities for funding and implementing schemes for village improvements subject to the availability of financial resources. Since Council finance is likely to be limited over the Plan period, emphasis will need to be placed on encouraging other public bodies and private owners to improve sites or buildings in their ownership.
- 2.10** The Plan needs to recognise the problems caused by the hitherto unrestrained growth in traffic and should seek to provide longer-term solutions to traffic movement within the District and particularly the City Centre by encouraging and promoting measures which are orientated towards greater use of public transport and private vehicle restraint. These measures reflect the recommendations of the

Durham City Travel Study, the philosophy behind the Government's White Paper on Transport and the emergent County Durham Local Transport Plan.

- 2.11** The University has a special role in the development and life of the City. It is a major employer and makes a considerable contribution to the local economy. It is an institution of academic excellence which is recognised throughout the country. Whilst limited expansion of the University is foreseeable during the Plan period it is likely that further development will be sought in the long-term and this will need to be reflected in the policies of the Plan. Accommodating increased student numbers places a considerable burden upon the older housing stock of Durham City's inner urban area and the resulting concentrations of student occupants create tensions among the diminishing non-student resident population.
- 2.12** The growth and importance of the City of Durham as a tourist destination during the last decade and the influence this has upon the District's economic and social life needs to be recognised by the Plan.
- 2.13** The Plan needs to acknowledge the importance of the countryside and the need to protect it from inappropriate development. It must also recognise that the interests of nature conservation include both the rural and urban environment, thereby adding diversity and value to the quality of life. Within that broad context, the protection of the character and setting of Durham City will be afforded the highest priority.
- 2.14** A detailed analysis of the specific issues of relevance to the various topic related elements of the Plan is contained in the general background to each Chapter.

AIMS OF THE PLAN

- 2.15** The aims of the Local Plan are fundamental statements of what it sets out to accomplish and are set out below:
- 1. To maintain the City of Durham as an attractive place to live, work and visit through the creation of a vibrant City and District whose unique character is conserved and enhanced in ways which do not compromise the quality of the environment or the quality of life of future generations.**
 - 2. To promote and provide opportunities for development in the interests of attracting inward investment and encouraging sustainable economic growth for the benefit of existing residents and future generations.**
- 2.16** The concept of sustainable development and sustainability are clearly expressed within the aims of the Plan and are fundamental to these aims. Sustainability has become synonymous with the need to balance and reconcile environmental concerns against the pursuit of development and growth. Considerable importance is therefore attached to the planning system as a means of managing these processes and dealing with the consequential changes of land use. There is an acceptance by the City Council, that the principles of sustainable development and increasing biodiversity have an over-arching relevance to policy making and the

day to day decision or management of the Authority. Sustainable development requires social, economic and environmental objectives to be met together at the same time, rather than giving greater weight to one at the expense of others.

- 2.17** The City Council attaches great importance to environmental issues and the concept of sustainability through the Local Agenda 21 process. Support for this has manifested itself in its capacity as a founder partner of the County-wide initiative as well as through the preparation of its forthcoming Local Agenda 21 Statement. The Council recognises, however, that responsibility for stewardship of the environment is shared among many organisations, groups and individuals. Whilst it will play its part to broaden public awareness of the wider issues, the Authority will expect a strong lead to be taken at both national and international level to bring about change.
- 2.18** The Local Plan provides the opportunity to integrate the economic, environmental and social factors in decisions about where to locate growth, improve the quality of the environment and enable an enduring quality of life. However, not all issues concerned with the environment, the use of resources and human equity are associated with 'development'. Therefore, the principle of sustainability is also applied to ensure that use and enjoyment of the District's natural and cultural resources does not diminish nor destroy them.
- 2.19** In practical terms the principle of environmentally sustainable development manifests itself in a number of ways which include; seeking to ensure that the need to travel to work, shops, social and leisure facilities is minimised by locating new development in areas which are well related to existing centres and transport routes; and facilitating the accessibility of new development to all sectors of the community by seeking to ensure the availability of public transport links and the promotion of alternative modes of environmentally sustainable transport such as cycling and walking. The Plan also seeks to reduce the demands on finite natural resources through policies which encourage the utilisation of renewable sources of energy, the regeneration of previously developed sites and the recycling of waste materials.

STRATEGY OF THE PLAN

- 2.20** In seeking to achieve its overall aims, the Plan embodies a strategy based on the principles of environmental protection, economic regeneration, integrated transport and community advancement, all underpinned by the concept of sustainability.

Environmental Protection

- 2.21** The City of Durham has an unique historic and cultural heritage, an environment rich in nature conservation interests and a landscape which is of a quality which has a major influence on the overall character of the District. The protection and enhancement of the built and natural environment is a commitment of equal status to that of promoting and providing opportunities for development.

Economic Regeneration

- 2.22** Economic regeneration is a key principle of the Plan in order to ensure that the District's local economy remains diverse and robust during and beyond the Plan period. The local economy derives considerable benefit from the quality of environment and quality of life that this cultivates for businesses and the workforce. The benefit serves to reinforce the commitment towards investments which take advantage of these attributes and are linked to strengthening employment, prosperity and tourism. At the same time, however, it underlines the balance or priority required in respect of environmental protection and enhancement, alongside the merits of sustainable development. Notwithstanding the importance of needs and issues in the urban context, it is recognised that outlying villages and the rural area merit special attention in order to tackle isolation, pockets of deprivation and the need to strengthen and diversify the rural economy.

Integrated Transport

- 2.23** Reconciling the often conflicting relationship between unrestricted traffic growth and parking restraint is a vital issue in an historic city such as Durham. A balanced approach to movement patterns and modal split, through the development of an integrated land use and transport strategy which meets future economic and social needs in an environmentally friendly and sustainable manner is essential to reflect the needs of both residents and visitors to the City.

Community Advancement

- 2.24** Whilst the strategic principles of environmental protection and economic regeneration will ultimately benefit the residents of the District through improvements to the quality of the environment, the quality of life and employment opportunities, the Plan must recognise the importance of achieving realistic and sustainable community and social objectives through the provision of affordable and social housing, the retention of community and other facilities, (particularly in rural communities), and the maintenance, and wherever possible, the improvement of existing recreation/open space and leisure facilities.

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

- 2.25** The overall aims and strategy of the Local Plan are interpreted in the following general objectives which set out in broad terms what the Council is seeking to achieve over the Plan period.
- **To provide for a stable level of population within the District.**
 - **To provide for the development of a sustainable, diverse and robust local economy.**
 - **To strengthen and diversify the rural economy.**
 - **To protect the character and setting of Durham City.**

- **To protect and enhance the natural, historic and built environment of the District.**
- **To provide for the supply of land commensurate with the needs of new development.**
- **To maximise the regeneration of brownfield sites and minimise the loss of greenfield land.**
- **To ensure the continued vitality and viability of the City Centre.**
- **To support the City of Durham as a centre of excellence for higher education.**
- **To provide for the minimisation of travel and transport needs.**
- **To encourage the development and management of tourism in a sustainable manner.**
- **To protect the social infrastructure of the District.**
- **To provide for the efficient use of the existing infrastructure within the District and reduce the consumption of non-renewable resources.**

2.26 The Council recognises that many of these general objectives are inter-related and that whilst some are complementary, others will cause potential conflict. The challenge facing Durham today is to be able to respond positively to the need to facilitate development whilst at the same time seeking to conserve the quality of the district's environmental heritage. Where choices are necessary environmental considerations will be afforded high priority in order to ensure that any potential net environmental loss will be exceptional and fully justified.

2.27 Development plans must make adequate provision of development and at the same time take account of the need to protect the natural and built environment. Development and the environment are inextricably linked as development may involve the depletion of natural resources. If needs are to be met on a sustainable basis both the resources and their use must be controlled and managed.

2.28 The general objectives identified in paragraph 2.25 are complemented by a series of more specific topic related objectives within the introduction to each Chapter of the Plan. It is from these that the individual policies and proposals of the Local Plan have been formulated.

3 ENVIRONMENT

INTRODUCTION

- 3.1** This Chapter of the Plan examines the natural, historic and built environment of the District and includes a series of Policies aimed at fulfilling the Council's objectives of environmental protection, conservation and enhancement

GENERAL BACKGROUND

- 3.2** Durham City lies at the heart of the District and its character and setting is of prime importance both nationally and internationally. Many elements contribute to its unique character including: the Cathedral and Castle which are arrestingly positioned on a wooded peninsula; its historic mediaeval core incorporating many listed buildings and much of the original mediaeval street pattern; its location in a shallow bowl of hills which form a magnificent backdrop to the historic core; and the close proximity of the surrounding countryside to the very centre of the City. Much of the central area is covered by a Conservation Area designation. The interplay of the natural and built environment, with the varied surroundings that this creates, is also a significant attribute to the character of Durham City. The priority will always be to ensure that the outstanding character and setting of this unique City is not compromised.
- 3.3** Beyond Durham City, the District also contains many other features of special importance. Interspersed with open countryside are Conservation Areas, listed buildings, parks and gardens of historic interest, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Ancient Monuments, Areas of Landscape Value and Ancient Woodlands, as well as the countryside outside villages and towns which remains largely unspoilt by inappropriate development.
- 3.4** Whilst much of the District's environment is exceptionally attractive and worthy of protection, there are significant parts of the District which are in need of improvement. Areas of poor environment exist in shopping, housing and industrial areas throughout the District. These are caused by a variety of factors such as changing shopping patterns, a lack of landscaping, the operation of inappropriate activities, poor layout and design of existing developments, and buildings which require investment or have been neglected. The District also suffers from substantial degraded areas of countryside resulting from past mineral extraction operations.
- 3.5** The need to care for the environment and balance this with provision for growth and regeneration or improvement underpins the Development Plan process. The concept of sustainable development which has emerged as a guiding principle in achieving this, seeks to ensure that decisions made about development should not deny future generations the best of today's environment. Government guidance emphasises the importance of sustainability and advises that it should be pursued through a range of approaches including the regeneration of towns, a reduction in the need to travel, greater use of renewable resources and conserving the natural and built heritage.

LOCAL PLAN OBJECTIVES

- 3.6** The Council's objectives for the environment, to be pursued through the Policies and Proposals contained in this Chapter of the Plan are:
- To protect and enhance the outstanding character and landscape setting of Durham City.
 - To reconcile the need for development with the need to maintain the quality of the environment.
 - To protect and where appropriate enhance the historic character, nature conservation interest and landscape of the District.
 - To ensure that new development respects its setting and the wider environment.
 - To improve areas of poor environment.
- 3.7** As can be seen from Chapter 2 of the Plan, the aim of protecting the environment and setting of Durham City underlies the Policy content of all Chapters of the Plan. In the Environment Chapter, Policies specifically aimed at achieving this are grouped at the beginning of the Chapter both for ease of reference and to reflect the importance with which the Council views this key objective.

PROTECTING THE CHARACTER AND SETTING OF DURHAM CITY

Durham City Green Belt - Context

- 3.8** The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts, a national designation which is used to keep land permanently open and prevent urban sprawl by strictly controlling development. Government Advice makes clear that the general extent of Green Belts should first be defined in County Structure Plans. It is then the responsibility of District Councils to define detailed boundaries.
- 3.9** Policy 5 of the County Durham Structure Plan makes provision for a Green Belt in North Durham which extends from Tyne and Wear, includes land to the north of Consett, Stanley and Chester-le-Street and encompasses Durham City. It recognises that all these areas experience significant development pressures related to the Tyne and Wear conurbation. More specifically the general extent to the Green Belt around Durham is to reach south westwards from Chester-le-Street, east of Kimblesworth, south of Witton Gilbert, east of Bearpark, and southwards to Croxdale and then north-eastwards to Sherburn and West Rainton, to encircle Durham City.
- 3.10** The Structure Plan makes clear that an all encompassing Green Belt around Durham City is necessary to preserve its special character and setting which encompasses the high quality landscape and undulating topography of open land

around the City along with strategic gaps between settlements. It highlights the importance of maintaining the strategic gap between Chester-le-Street and Durham City to prevent the linking up of these urban areas.

- 3.11** The Structure Plan recognises that the most appropriate location for new development that cannot be accommodated in Durham City are the larger villages readily accessible to the City. However, it specifically requires the Local Plan to make provision for a Rail Interchange Facility on the Leamside Line, east of Durham City which would otherwise lie within the area of the Green Belt.

Durham City Green Belt - Boundaries

- 3.12** The boundaries of the Durham City Green Belt include land which is vital to the character and setting of Durham City and is likely to be subject to development pressures which cannot be controlled by normal development control policies. It includes green fingers of land that penetrate the City at Aykley Heads and Flass Vale; substantial areas of high landscape value around the City, including parts of the Browney Valley and the Wear Valley; and the strategic gap to the north of the City, adjacent to the proposed Chester-le-Street Green Belt. The detailed boundaries of the Green Belt are shown on the Proposals Map. It is acknowledged that provision should be made for particular development needs in the long term and some Areas of High Landscape Value which are capable of accommodating development of a particular type, scale and in a well designed form are specifically excluded from the Green Belt. Outer boundaries have been defined using easily recognisable features like roads and footpaths, in accordance with relevant Government Advice.
- 3.13** Beyond the defined Green Belt it is considered that normal planning policies will be sufficient to control development pressures. Indeed, more flexible policies are needed in this area to allow unforeseen long-term development needs for housing, employment and community facilities to be met in some of the larger villages around Durham City.

Safeguarded Land

- 3.14** Planning Policy Guidance Note 2 advises the Local Planning Authority that in defining Green Belt boundaries it will need to ensure that they will not be subject to alteration at the end of the Plan period. Once approved, these boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances. The Guidance Note recognises that in order to ensure the protection of Green Belts within this longer timescale, it may be necessary to safeguard land to meet longer term development needs.
- 3.15** The Policies and proposals set out in this Local Plan are designed to ensure that the future development needs of the City of Durham until 2006 are met within the context of the Green Belt boundaries defined on the Proposals Map.
- 3.16** PPG2 suggests that regional strategic guidance should provide the framework for considering the issue of safeguarded land in terms of how much might be needed and where it might suitably be located. The current Regional Planning Guidance for County Durham, Cleveland and Northumberland and the Durham County Structure Plan (1999) do not provide guidance as to the allocation of safeguarded

land within the City of Durham. The Structure Plan does recognise, however, that an encircling green belt will secure the effective protection of the open land surrounding Durham City and will preserve its setting and special character by preventing unplanned outward expansion of the City and coalescence with the surrounding villages. The Structure Plan furthermore acknowledges that the most appropriate location for new development in the District, if it cannot be accommodated within Durham City, is in the larger villages outside the green belt which are readily accessible to the City. This development strategy is fundamental to the Local Plan and is not seen as being prejudicial to the principle of sustainability.

- 3.17** The draft Regional Planning Guidance for the North East published in May 1999 endorsed the extent of the green belt around Durham City as set out in the Durham County Structure Plan. This extent has been vindicated in The Regional Planning Guidance for The North East Panel Report, published in September 2000. It acknowledges that green belt boundaries should reflect up-to-date information on urban capacity and should allow land to be safeguarded for possible future development beyond 2016. The draft Guidance recognises that the appropriate time to identify potential safeguarded land is as part of the Review process of both the Regional Planning Guidance and Durham County Structure Plan. By implication this would be undertaken without compromising the extent of the Green Belt itself.
- 3.18** It is the City Council's intention that the green belt boundaries defined on the Proposals Map should remain permanent and unchanged beyond the current Plan period (ie 2006). Land for longer term development needs for those settlements outside the green belt boundary defined on the Proposals Map will be identified in forthcoming Local Plan Reviews having taken into account the capacity and ability of those settlements to provide for sustainable communities.

Durham City Green Belt

POLICY E1 **WITHIN THE GREEN BELT DEFINED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW BUILDING IS INAPPROPRIATE AND WILL NOT BE PERMITTED UNLESS IT IS FOR THE FOLLOWING PURPOSES:**

- 1. AGRICULTURE OR FORESTRY; OR**
- 2. ESSENTIAL FACILITIES FOR OUTDOOR SPORT AND RECREATION, FOR CEMETERIES, AND FOR OTHER USES OF LAND WHICH PRESERVE THE OPENNESS OF THE GREEN BELT; OR**
- 3. LIMITED INFILLING IN, OR REDEVELOPMENT OF EXISTING MAJOR DEVELOPED SITES CONSISTENT WITH POLICY E2; OR**

4. **REPLACEMENT OF AN EXISTING DWELLING WHERE THIS IS CONSISTENT WITH POLICY H6; OR**
5. **THE RE-USE OR CONVERSION OF AN EXISTING BUILDING WHERE THIS IS CONSISTENT WITH POLICY E8; OR**
6. **LIMITED EXTENSIONS OR ALTERATIONS TO EXISTING DWELLINGS WHERE THIS IS CONSISTENT WITH POLICY Q9.**

Justification

3.19 Government advice makes clear that the fundamental aim of Green Belt Policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. It defines five purposes for the inclusion of land in a Green Belt.

- to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas;
- to prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another;
- to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns;
- to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

3.20 All these purposes are relevant to the Green Belt. However, the purpose of preserving the setting and special character of historic towns is of particular importance to Durham City.

3.21 The construction of new buildings for the purposes set out in Policy E1 accords with Government Advice set out in PPG2 and would not prejudice the openness of the Green Belt. Inappropriate development will only be permitted in the Green Belt in very special circumstances and will be subject to consideration by the Secretary of State.

3.21A New development for the purposes set out in Policy U8B (Sewage Treatment Works in the Green Belt) accords with Government Advice set out in PPG2 (para. 3.4(2)).

3.22 New facilities for Park and Ride and for rail and bus users are likely to be needed in and around Durham City during the Plan period. In particular a Transport Interchange is needed at Carrville to provide passenger services for the Leamside Line. This site has been allocated under Policy T6 and inset from the Green Belt. The Park and Ride sites identified in Policy T7 at Sniperley Grove and Howlands Farm are within the Green Belt. Subject to appropriate landscape impact minimisation, this is an appropriate use in Green Belt as defined in Planning Policy

Guidance Note 13, paragraph 62 and Annex E (which amends PPG2 (Green Belts)).

- 3.23** Generally other transport facilities should be located outside the Green Belt. However, in a number of instances this may not be possible, particularly if the Leamside Line should re-open and give rise to the need for new stations (see Policy T5 and T6). Proposals for such infrastructure will be dealt with as Departures from the Development Plan and the advantage of such schemes will be carefully assessed against any harm they would cause to the openness of the Green Belt.

POLICY E2 LIMITED INFILLING AT MAJOR DEVELOPED SITES IN THE GREEN BELT, SHOWN ON THE PROPOSALS MAP, WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED:

- 1. IT HAS NO GREATER IMPACT ON THE OPENNESS OF THE GREEN BELT THAN THE EXISTING OR PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT; AND**
- 2. IT DOES NOT EXCEED THE HEIGHT OF EXISTING OR PERMITTED BUILDINGS; AND**
- 3. IT DOES NOT LEAD TO A MAJOR INCREASE IN THE DEVELOPED PROPORTION OF THE SITE.**

POLICY E2A THE COMPLETE OR PARTIAL REDEVELOPMENT OF MAJOR DEVELOPED SITES IN THE GREEN BELT WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT:

- 1. IT HAS NO GREATER, AND WHERE POSSIBLE HAS LESS, IMPACT THAN THE EXISTING DEVELOPMENT ON THE OPENNESS OF THE GREEN BELT AND THE PURPOSES OF INCLUDING LAND IN IT; AND**
- 2. CONTRIBUTES TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE OBJECTIVES FOR THE USE OF LAND IN GREEN BELTS; AND**
- 3. DOES NOT EXCEED THE HEIGHT OF THE EXISTING BUILDINGS; AND**
- 4. IT DOES NOT OCCUPY A LARGER AREA OF THE SITE THAN THE EXISTING BUILDINGS.**

ANY MAJOR SITE WITHIN THE GREEN BELT BROUGHT FORWARD FOR REDEVELOPMENT WILL BE THE SUBJECT OF A DETAILED DESIGN BRIEF.

Justification

- 3.24** A number of longstanding institutional uses already exist in the Green Belt. These are at Finchale Training College, East Durham and Houghall Community College, Earls House Hospital, Sherburn Hospital, Frankland Prison and Remand Centre, Durham High School, Stonebridge Dairy and Howlands Farm. These sites remain within the Green Belt and consequently the Green Belt has been washed over them in accordance with the advice set out in Annex C of PPG2. Limited infilling on these sites may be justified without further prejudicing the Green Belt to help secure jobs and prosperity. The developed proportion referred to in Policy E2 should not result in a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original building. The footprint indicated on the Proposals Map represents the limits of existing and foreseeable developments, excluding temporary/insubstantial buildings, peripheral car parking and peripheral housing development.
- 3.25** An initial phase of development by the University of Durham at Howlands Farm has been completed, but further college accommodation may be undertaken at this location in future years. The Green Belt boundary has therefore been drawn to reflect the development site as previously approved. The scheme was granted as an exception to strong landscape policies and was only approved subject to an extremely high quality of design and landscaping. Development within the limits of the site will be required to be of a high standard and follow established design principles.
- 3.26** The complete or partial redevelopment of the major developed sites may offer the opportunity for environmental improvements without adding to their impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land within it. Any such proposal will be the subject of a detailed design brief and will be carefully controlled in order to comply with the criteria set out in Policy E2A.

The World Heritage Site - Protection

POLICY E3 DURHAM CATHEDRAL AND CASTLE WORLD HERITAGE SITE AND ITS SETTING WILL BE PROTECTED BY:

- 1. RESTRICTING DEVELOPMENT TO SAFEGUARD LOCAL AND LONG DISTANCE VIEWS TO AND FROM THE CATHEDRAL AND CASTLE AND PENINSULA IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICIES E1, E5, E6, E10, E23 AND E24; AND**

- 2. APPLYING POLICIES E1, E5, E6, E10, E21, E22, E23 AND E24 RELATING TO GREEN BELT, LANDSCAPE SETTING, CONSERVATION AREAS, LISTED BUILDINGS, AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS; AND**

3. SEEKING THE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF BUILDINGS, ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS, WOODLAND AND OPEN SPACES WHICH MAKE UP THE WORLD HERITAGE SITE AND ITS SETTING.

Justification

- 3.27** The area of the Cathedral and Castle shown on the Proposals Map form one of a select number of sites in Britain to be inscribed as a World Heritage Site in recognition of their outstanding historical international importance. The Government, as a signatory to the UNESCO World Heritage Convention is committed to protect and preserve these sites so that they can be enjoyed by future generations.
- 3.28** The Cathedral and Castle dominate the City and are arrestingly positioned on a high, wooded rocky peninsula rising from a loop in the River Wear. This is set in an intimate landscape bowl, known as the 'inner bowl', with the higher land acting as a backdrop to the World Heritage Site. The surrounding green and wooded hills, ridgelines and green fingers of land which penetrate the City form a magnificent setting for the Cathedral and Castle and include Flass Vale, Aykley Heads, Whinney Hill, Observatory Hill, Maiden Castle, Mountjoy and The Sands together with the River Wear which meanders through the City. These areas are so important to the character and setting of the City that they are protected from most types of development by Policy E1 relating to green belt, and Policies E6 and E10 relating to the protection of important landscape areas. However, it is important to ensure that even the minor forms of development that may be permissible within these Policies are not allowed to detract from the World Heritage Site.
- 3.29** The built environment of the City is vital to the setting of the World Heritage Site. In the Durham (City Centre) Conservation Area the character of any proposed development that might affect the World Heritage Site is strictly controlled by Policies E3 and E6. However, there are many developed areas extending beyond the Conservation Area to surrounding ridgelines which are also important in public views to and from the Cathedral and Castle, for example at Gilesgate, Newton Hall and Neville's Cross. In these areas it is important to ensure that future development or redevelopment is sympathetic to the World Heritage Site. Particular attention will need to be given to the height and roofing materials of development and to its impact on the skyline. Similarly its effect on the open space and wooded slopes of the City and its wider surroundings will need to be assessed.
- 3.30** As well as the 'inner bowl' there is an 'outer bowl' of hills and ridgelines, and these provide an important visual context to the City. There are many points in this outer bowl, for example at Silent Bank and New Brancepeth which provide impressive public views to and from the World Heritage Site. In the context of these long distance views there is also a need to safeguard the landscape from inappropriate development.

The World Heritage Site - Extension

POLICY E4 THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK AN EXTENSION TO THE INSCRIBED AREA OF THE DURHAM CATHEDRAL AND CASTLE WORLD HERITAGE SITE.

Justification

- 3.31** Preparation and subsequent review of a Management Plan for the World Heritage Site will provide a means to ensure that its buildings, archaeological remains and open spaces are maintained. This will be undertaken in consultation with the University, and the Cathedral Chapter who own and maintain the land and buildings, which form the World Heritage Site along with the adjoining riverbanks. ICOMOS, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, English Heritage and other agencies that have an interest in the site will also be involved. Policy E4 provides for the potential for widening the boundary of the World Heritage Site which will be pursued through the Management Plan. The creation of a "buffer zone" around a modest extension to the World Heritage Site will be similarly investigated. The current boundary of the World Heritage Site is very narrowly defined and does not include areas such as Palace Green and various buildings on the Peninsula which are integral elements that combine with the Cathedral and Castle to provide a dramatic setting at close quarters within the City and in views from surrounding countryside.
- 3.32** The Council will also work with owners and managers to ensure that tree cover is maintained on the wooded slopes and horizons around Durham City which are so important to its landscape setting.

Open Spaces within Durham City

POLICY E5 OPEN SPACES WITHIN THE SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY OF DURHAM CITY WHICH FORM A VITAL PART OF ITS CHARACTER AND SETTING WILL BE PROTECTED BY:

- 1. NOT PERMITTING ANY DEVELOPMENT AT OBSERVATORY HILL OR ALONG THE RIVERBANKS EXCEPT FOR MINOR DEVELOPMENT RELATED TO EITHER THE USE OF EXISTING BUILDINGS OR OUTDOOR SPORT AND RECREATIONAL USE;**
- 2. ONLY PERMITTING DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE MOUNT OSWALD-ELVET HILL PARKLAND LANDSCAPE AREA WHICH:**
 - a) DOES NOT EXCEED THE HEIGHT OF SURROUNDING TREES AND IS SYMPATHETIC TO ITS LANDSCAPE SETTING; AND**

- The Mount Oswald-Elvet Hill parkland landscape area which contributes greatly to the open approaches to the City. It is considered that this attractive parkland setting could absorb a limited amount of additional low density development provided it is sensitively designed and laid out. Any development proposals should be consistent with Policy EMP3 which allocates part of this area for high quality strategic employment purposes.
- Smaller open spaces which break up the urban form and are important to the small scale character of the City. These include areas of great historic, as well as visual importance such as the two major areas of planned open space on either side of the Cathedral at Palace Green and the College. It also includes areas like allotments and cemeteries (eg St. Margaret's Church Graveyard and the adjoining allotments south of Grape Lane) which provide important visual relief and contrast to the urban environment.
- The Aykley Heads Business Park allocated in Policy EMP4c forms part of the attractive Aykley Heads parkland estate which is one of the important wedges of open space overlooking the City. Although the Business Park site lies within the settlement boundary of Durham City, it abuts both the Green Belt and the AHLV. It is important, therefore, that any new development should respect the environmental integrity of this part of Durham. The criteria set out in Policy E5 seek to achieve that objective.

Open Spaces within Settlement Boundaries

POLICY E5A DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS WITHIN SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES THAT DETRACT FROM OPEN SPACES WHICH POSSESS IMPORTANT FUNCTIONAL, VISUAL OR ENVIRONMENTAL ATTRIBUTES, WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO THE SETTLEMENT'S CHARACTER OR TO THE SMALL SCALE CHARACTER OF AN AREA, WILL NOT BE PERMITTED.

3.33A Open spaces within the District's settlements, for example, amenity areas (in housing estates), cemeteries, or churchyards, often form an important part of their character. Development proposals, including their change of use, which would detract from this character will be resisted.

Durham (City Centre) Conservation Area

POLICY E6 THE SPECIAL CHARACTER, APPEARANCE AND SETTING OF THE DURHAM (CITY CENTRE) CONSERVATION AREA WILL BE PRESERVED OR ENHANCED BY:

- 1. ENCOURAGING ALL PROPOSALS FOR NEW BUILDING TO:**
 - a) EXHIBIT SIMPLE, ROBUST SHAPES, HAVE A CLEAR PREDOMINANCE OF WALL**

SURFACE OVER OPENINGS AND BE RESTRICTED TO A LIMITED RANGE OF EXTERNAL MATERIALS; AND

- b) HAVE SIMPLE TRADITIONAL ROOFS WHICH DO NOT CREATE LONG OR CONTINUOUS RIDGE OR EAVES LINES AND WHICH DO NOT INCLUDE REFLECTIVE SURFACES SUCH AS GLASS; AND**
 - c) REFLECT A QUALITY OF DESIGN APPROPRIATE TO THE HISTORIC CITY CENTRE; AND**
 - d) USE EXTERNAL BUILDING MATERIALS WHICH ARE THE SAME AS, OR ARE SYMPATHETIC TO THE TRADITIONAL MATERIALS OF THE HISTORIC CITY OR AN INDIVIDUAL STREET; AND**
 - e) FRAGMENT PROPOSALS FOR LARGE BUILDINGS INTO BLOCKS OF VISUALLY SMALLER ELEMENTS IN A WAY WHICH IS SYMPATHETIC TO THE HISTORIC CITY CENTRE.**
- 2. NOT GRANTING PLANNING PERMISSION FOR DEVELOPMENT OR DEMOLITION WHICH WOULD DAMAGE THE HISTORIC PROFILE OF BUILDINGS RUNNING FROM THE SOUTH BAILEY, THROUGH NORTH BAILEY, SADDLER STREET, THE MARKET PLACE AND CLAYPATH.**
- 3. APPLYING CONSERVATION AREA POLICY E22, AND SHOP FRONT POLICIES Q11 AND Q12.**

Justification

- 3.34** Durham (City Centre) Conservation Area is widely recognised as being of outstanding importance and encompasses the mediaeval core of the City including the Cathedral and Castle World Heritage Site. To reflect the special importance of Durham (City Centre) Conservation Area, Policy E6 expands on part 1 of Policy E22, a general conservation area policy that applies to all Conservation Areas throughout the District. Policy E6 is intended to ensure that all new development is sympathetic to the character of the Conservation Area although simply following these requirements is no guarantee of success and is no substitute for a skilled design by a sympathetic architect. The Policy is not intended to rule out modern architecture which can, if sensitively designed and appropriately situated, enhance the quality of the Conservation Area.

- 3.35** Apart from the Cathedral and Castle, the Durham (City Centre) Conservation Area is generally characterised by its intimate scale. The design and scale of new development needs to reflect these qualities. There are a number of views within, and to, the Conservation Area which are particularly important. These include views to the miscellany of pitched roofs beneath the Cathedral and Castle and views of the length of buildings running from South Bailey, through North Bailey, Saddler Street, Fleshergate and the Market Place to Claypath (a view which is panoramic from the Main Line Railway).
- 3.36** The character of shopfronts and advertisements in the Conservation Area is controlled by Policies Q11, Q12 and Q16.

DEVELOPMENT IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

Development Outside Settlement Boundaries

POLICY E7 **PLANNING PERMISSION FOR DEVELOPMENT IN THE COUNTRYSIDE, OUTSIDE THE SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES, DEFINED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE IT ACCORDS WITH POLICIES E8, H4, H5, H6, H15, EMP7, EMP16, EMP17, EMP17A, R10, R16, R17, R18, V7, C3, U8 OR U15 OF THE PLAN.**

Justification

- 3.37** The countryside is a finite resource and since the 1950s it has been an important aim of national policy to protect it for its own sake. Many elements of the countryside, such as landscape character, nature conservation, and high quality agricultural land are also highly valued and worthy of protection in their own right. For this reason development outside existing settlement boundaries, as defined on the proposals map, will not normally be allowed.
- 3.38** The most appropriate location for most housing, business, retail development and community facilities is within existing settlements and sufficient sites have been allocated within the settlement boundaries defined on the proposals map to meet social and economic needs over the Plan period. However, there are a number of exceptional circumstances where development outside settlement boundaries in the countryside may be considered acceptable.
- 3.39** Settlement boundaries are intended to act as a practical planning tool and do not define settlements in an historical or community sense. Boundaries have been drawn around the built up area of settlements to include those areas where it is considered that further development would either consolidate the settlement or serve an identified need in a way which is sympathetic to its character. This may be development that is allocated elsewhere in the Plan or is proposed on an infill basis and conforms with other policies. However, the need to maintain and enhance the character of residential areas and the quality of life for its residents is an important objective of the local plan. Therefore the inclusion of land within the settlement boundary does not automatically imply its suitability to accommodate

development. Any development proposals will be determined in accordance with the overall policies and strategy of the plan and national planning policy which outlines the preference given to the development of previously developed land and buildings, prior to the development of greenfield sites. Generally areas such as allotment gardens, playing fields and cemeteries on the edge of settlements have been excluded from settlement boundaries to make clear that development will not be appropriate in these peripheral locations

Change of Use

POLICY E8 THE CHANGE OF USE OF A BUILDING LOCATED IN THE COUNTRYSIDE WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED IF:

- 1. BUILDINGS ARE OF PERMANENT OR SUBSTANTIAL CONSTRUCTION AND MAJOR EXTENSION OR REBUILDING WORK IS NOT REQUIRED; AND**
- 2. ANY VISUAL, ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC INTEREST INTRINSIC TO THE BUILDING IS RETAINED; AND**
- 3. THE APPEARANCE OF UNSIGHTLY BUILDINGS IS IMPROVED; AND**
- 4. NO SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE EFFECT ON THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE COUNTRYSIDE, THE OPENNESS OF THE GREEN BELT, OR THE AMENITY OF NEIGHBOURING OCCUPIERS WOULD RESULT; AND**
- 5. TRAFFIC MOVEMENTS GENERATED BY THE USE CONFORM WITH POLICY T1; AND**
- 6. IN THE CASE OF PROPOSALS FOR RESIDENTIAL RE-USE, THE APPLICANTS HAVE DEMONSTRATED THAT THEY HAVE MADE EVERY REASONABLE ATTEMPT TO SECURE SUITABLE BUSINESS RE-USE, AND THE APPLICATION IS SUPPORTED BY A STATEMENT OF THE EFFORTS WHICH HAVE BEEN MADE; OR RESIDENTIAL CONVERSION IS A SUBORDINATE PART OF A SCHEME FOR BUSINESS RE-USE.**

IN ADDITION, PROPOSALS FOR THE CHANGE OF USE OF TRADITIONAL FARM BUILDINGS (BOTH IN THE COUNTRYSIDE AND WITHIN SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES) WILL HAVE TO CONFORM WITH THE REQUIREMENTS SET OUT IN APPENDIX 6.

Justification

- 3.40** There are many opportunities for re-using or adapting buildings in the countryside for new commercial, industrial, residential, sporting or recreational uses. This can extend the useful life of buildings and minimise the number of buildings in the countryside falling into disuse and dereliction. National planning policy (as set out in PPG7) states a preference for business re-use rather than residential conversion. When considering applications for change of use of buildings in the countryside to residential the Council will require the application to be supported by a statement of the efforts which have been made to secure a suitable business re-use of the building. This statement should demonstrate that the building has been marketed for the use proposed for a period of at least six months.
- 3.41** Where the building is an important feature in the landscape or is of visual architectural or historic importance any alteration related to its change of use, such as the creation of new window and door openings, may result in significant harm to its appearance. In addition, works associated with conversions such as the creation of new car parks can introduce jarring elements which detract from the appearance of the countryside or adversely affect the amenity of neighbouring occupiers. Residential uses in particular may be impossible to accommodate as they often require extensive alterations to be made to buildings along with the introduction of obtrusive features such as garages. Where permission is granted for conversion, permitted development rights normally attached to development will be withdrawn to protect the character of the building, and its landscape setting.
- 3.42** Existing unsightly buildings often detract from the countryside in which they are situated. In such cases additional works may be required in order to achieve improvement to the appearance of the building, its curtilage or buildings which form part of the setting of the proposal and are within the applicants control.
- 3.43** The Council will consult English Nature and other wildlife bodies in cases where it is considered likely that buildings accommodate species such as bats which are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as amended, and The Conservation (Natural Habitats, & c.) Regulations 1994. Conversions will only be approved if satisfactory safeguards for those species can be agreed.
- 3.44** This Policy does not apply to buildings which are derelict and which would require substantial rebuilding work to bring them back into use. Any proposed rebuilding of such properties will be treated as new development in the countryside and will be subject to Policies H5 and EMP16.

~~Agricultural Land~~

~~POLICY E9 PLANNING PERMISSION FOR DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD RESULT IN THE IRREVERSIBLE LOSS OF THE BEST AND MOST VERSATILE AGRICULTURAL LAND WILL NOT BE GRANTED UNLESS OPPORTUNITIES HAVE BEEN ASSESSED FOR ACCOMMODATING DEVELOPMENT ON:~~

~~1) PREVIOUSLY DEVELOPED LAND; AND~~

~~2) ON LAND WITHIN EXISTING SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES; AND~~

~~3) ON POORER QUALITY AGRICULTURAL LAND.~~

~~IT SHOULD ALSO BE DEMONSTRATED THAT THE NEED FOR DEVELOPMENT ON THE BEST AND MOST VERSATILE LAND OVERRIDES THE NEED TO PROTECT SUCH LAND.~~

Justification

~~3.45 The best and most versatile agricultural land is defined as Grade 1, 2 and 3a in the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (M.A.F.F.) Agricultural Land Classification System. Such land is regarded as a long term natural resource and considerable weight should be given to its protection. Most agricultural land in the District does not fall into the category of best and most versatile but MAFF survey work in relation to individual development proposals has identified a proportion of land as Grades 2 and 3a and therefore worthy of particular protection.~~

~~3.46 Government policy has changed in recent years putting increased emphasis on reducing production, encouraging diversification, and protecting the countryside for its own sake rather than its productive value. Reduced prosperity in the agricultural economy is giving rise to proposals for farm diversification and a continued trend for full time farms to become larger in size. Within this changing framework farmers will increasingly have a role in maintaining and enhancing the appearance and nature conservation interest of the countryside.~~

THE LANDSCAPE AND APPEARANCE OF THE DISTRICT

Areas of Landscape Value

POLICY E10 THE COUNCIL WILL PROTECT THE LANDSCAPE VALUE OF THE DISTRICT IN RESPECT OF DEVELOPMENT WHICH IS ACCEPTABLE UNDER POLICIES E1, E3, E5, E7 AND E8 AND U8 BY:

- 1. RESISTING DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD HAVE AN UNACCEPTABLE ADVERSE IMPACT UPON THE LANDSCAPE QUALITY OR APPEARANCE OF THE AREA OF HIGH LANDSCAPE VALUE DEFINED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP; AND**
- 2. REQUIRING THAT DEVELOPMENT RESPECTS THE CHARACTER OF ITS LANDSCAPE SETTING IN TERMS OF ITS SITING, DESIGN, SCALE, MATERIALS, LANDSCAPING, PROTECTION OF EXISTING LANDSCAPE FEATURES AND RELATIONSHIP WITH NEARBY BUILDINGS.**

WHERE ESSENTIAL INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT CANNOT MEET THESE SPECIFIC DESIGN REQUIREMENTS, THE DEVELOPER WILL NEED TO DEMONSTRATE, TO THE SATISFACTION OF THE COUNCIL, THAT THE PROPOSALS CAN BE DESIGNED IN SUCH A WAY AS TO ENSURE THAT IT WILL NOT HAVE AN UNACCEPTABLE ADVERSE IMPACT UPON THE LANDSCAPE SETTING.

Justification

- 3.47** The Area of High Landscape Value is an area of countryside where the overall quality of the landscape is particularly high and would be damaged by inappropriate development, even of a minor nature. The Area of High Landscape Value is shown on the Proposals Map and is broadly based on the valley of the River Wear, River Browney, and Sherburn Beck. It contains some of the most significant surviving areas of intact, mature and unspoilt rural landscapes in County Durham. As a result, the vast majority of this area is included in either the proposed Green Belt or Parks and Gardens of historic interest and is therefore also subject to Policies E1 and E26 of the Plan. Much of the Area of High Landscape Value is of paramount importance in respect of the setting and historic character of Durham City.
- 3.48** The Area of High Landscape Value shown on the Proposals Map is taken from the revised landscape assessment carried out by the Council's Landscape Consultants in mid 1999.
- 3.49** Outside the Area of High Landscape Value there are many distinctive and attractive areas of landscape. Many factors contribute to making an area distinctive including geology, topography, tree cover, vegetation, grassland and the scale of fields. It is important to ensure that development, which is considered to be acceptable in principle, respects the particular characteristics and distinctiveness of its landscape setting in terms of siting, design, materials and retention of important landscape features. Policy E10 does not seek to oppose all development, but only that which would have an unacceptable adverse impact upon the quality of that part of the landscape which is of high value.
- 3.49A** Where essential infra structure development cannot meet the specific design requirements set out in Criteria 1 and 2 of Policy E10, the developer will need to demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the City Council, that the proposal can be designed in such a way as to ensure that it will not have an unacceptable adverse impact upon its landscape setting. Examples of such developments could include sewage treatment works required under Policy U8.

~~**Environmental Improvements to Transport Corridors**~~

~~**POLICY E11 THE COUNCIL WILL PROTECT AND ENHANCE AREAS VISIBLE FROM THE ROAD NETWORK, RAILWAY LINES AND RECREATION ROUTES BY:**~~

- ~~1. SEEKING TO IMPROVE UNSIGHTLY LAND AND BUILDINGS, WITH EMPHASIS ON AREAS VISIBLE FROM MAIN TRANSPORT ROUTES; AND~~
- ~~2. SEEKING TO PROTECT LANDSCAPE AND BUILT FEATURES WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO THE CHARACTER OF AREAS; AND~~
- ~~3. NOT PERMITTING DEVELOPMENT WHICH UNACCEPTABLY ADVERSELY DETRACTS FROM SUCH ROUTES.~~

Justification

~~3.50~~ The impression gained when travelling into and through the area moulds people's perceptions of the District and this can have an important bearing on future economic and tourism investment. For this reason the Council will support measures to enhance the appearance of the District from main road and railway lines routes as opportunities arise. New development adjacent to all transport routes will be expected to make a positive contribution and to incorporate landscaping and other appropriate measures to enhance the environment.

~~3.51~~ Wherever possible, farmers should seek to site agricultural buildings sympathetically in relation to views from roads and footpaths, taking into account the extent of their holdings and nature of their farming activities. Where buildings can only be sited in prominent locations, appropriate landscaping and sympathetic materials will be required to minimise their impact.

~~3.52~~ Public footpaths, bridleways and recreational cycle paths need to offer an attractive environment to ensure that people continue to enjoy and appreciate them. The Council is, therefore, concerned to protect their appearance and encourage the improvement of areas visible from these routes for the benefit of residents and visitors.

Derelict Land

~~POLICY E12 THE COUNCIL WILL IMPROVE THE APPEARANCE OF THE DISTRICT BY:~~

- ~~1. SEEKING THE RECLAMATION OF DERELICT LAND; OR~~
- ~~2. SEEKING THE BENEFICIAL USE OF AREAS OF VACANT AND UNDERUSED LAND AND BUILDINGS.~~

Justification

~~3.53~~ The reclamation of derelict land enhances its attractiveness and helps to secure its efficient use. At 1st April 1997 there was some 93 hectares of derelict land, almost all of it within the rural area.

- ~~3.54~~ Most of the derelict land is made up of former quarries and mine workings situated in the east of the District. This area is also where most current quarrying and waste disposal activity is currently taking place. It is particularly important that, wherever possible, derelict land is reclaimed in this area in order to improve the wider environment for local communities which have already suffered the adverse effects of mineral extraction for many decades.
- ~~3.55~~ Poor landscape frequently exists on the fringe of settlements with attendant problems of trespass and vandalism. These problems need to be tackled in partnership with landowners in order to resolve conflicts and assist in the maintenance and improvement of the landscape.
- ~~3.56~~ The reclamation of derelict and degraded areas in the countryside should be used to provide new opportunities for recreation, tourism and nature conservation by, for example, creating wetlands, grassland, woodlands, footpaths, picnic areas and wildlife areas.
- ~~3.57~~ Derelict, vacant and underused land may have developed significant nature conservation interest and reclamation proposals will be assessed against Policy E16 to determine the significance and potential management of such areas.

Trees and Hedgerows

POLICY E14 IN CONSIDERING PROPOSALS AFFECTING TREES AND HEDGEROWS THE COUNCIL WILL:

- 1. NOT PERMIT DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD RESULT IN THE LOSS OF ANCIENT WOODLAND; AND**
- 2. DESIGNATE TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS AS NECESSARY; AND**
- 3. REQUIRE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS TO RETAIN AREAS OF WOODLAND, IMPORTANT GROUPS OF TREES, COPSES AND INDIVIDUAL TREES AND HEDGEROWS WHEREVER POSSIBLE AND TO REPLACE TREES AND HEDGEROWS OF VALUE WHICH ARE LOST; AND**
- 4. REQUIRE A FULL TREE SURVEY TO ACCOMPANY PLANNING APPLICATIONS WHEN DEVELOPMENT MAY AFFECT TREES INSIDE OR OUTSIDE THE APPLICATION SITE.**

Justification

- 3.60** Trees and hedgerows are a vital and valuable resource which contribute to the character and quality of both the countryside and the urban area. They also provide opportunities for recreation and wildlife and on a global scale they stabilise

the atmosphere by consuming carbon dioxide and producing oxygen. Old trees and hedgerows, in particular, can have a particularly high nature conservation value. Many hedgerows benefit from protection under the hedgerow regulations 1997 which can be used to prevent their removal.

- 3.61** Tree Preservation Orders are used to protect important trees of amenity or landscape value in the City from felling or damaging treatment. The Council will continue to designate them when necessary, and recognises the importance of trees, particularly in the urban environment. Trees within conservation areas already benefit from a degree of protection.
- 3.62** English Nature have identified a number of areas of 'Ancient Woodland' of over 1 hectare which are annotated on the Proposals Map and which are considered to have had continuous woodland cover since at least 1600. Such areas are likely to be rich in mature trees and have a diverse range of flora and fauna. They form habitats which cannot be recreated and attention will be given to ensuring that their special characteristics are maintained, both through the protection given by this policy which seeks to protect all areas of Ancient Woodland, irrespective of size and through appropriate management.
- 3.63** Trees have too often in the past been lost as a result of new development. Trees on or adjacent to development sites should be treated as a site constraint from the earliest stage of the design process and their retention and integration into the development should be an objective in drawing up proposals. To ensure that this is properly carried out the Council will require a tree survey to be provided with planning applications which grades each tree's physical condition. The Council will then take account of the species, age, rarity value and visual importance of the tree and determine whether it should be retained.
- 3.64** In areas where trees are likely to be affected by trenching in association with the installation of telecommunications equipment, the operator will be expected to comply with the Telecommunications Code as set out in Schedule 2 of the Telecommunication Act 1984. All utility operators should also refer to National Joint Utilities Publication No. 10 - Guidelines for the Planning, Installation and Maintenance of Utility Services in Proximity to Trees.

POLICY E15 THE COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE TREE AND HEDGEROW PLANTING. THE FOLLOWING AREAS WILL BE CONSIDERED PARTICULARLY APPROPRIATE FOR PLANTING:

- 1. URBAN FRINGE AREAS**
- 2. WITHIN URBAN AREAS**
- 3. MAJOR DEVELOPED SITES**
- 4. ALONG MAIN TRANSPORT ROUTES AND FOOTPATHS**
- 5. THE GREAT NORTH FOREST**

6. POORLY RECLAIMED SITES

Justification

- 3.65** Tree planting adds to the diversity of the landscape, provides opportunities for recreation and wildlife, and can be used as a method of agricultural diversification. Tree planting is particularly valuable means of improving the appearance of town and village centres and softening the edges of urban areas. Similarly, structural planting can have a major impact upon reducing the effect of major development within the environment as referred to in Policy Q6 and increasing the perceived attractiveness of an area for investment and regeneration. It is also extremely beneficial in improving sterile areas of landscape caused by the poor reclamation of past mineral sites. The Council will develop a woodland planting and management strategy and investigate where new tree planting would be most beneficial in landscape, wildlife and recreation terms. Implementation will be achieved by tree planting on Council owned land, requiring appropriate tree planting in conjunction with development proposals, seeking grant assistance, and offering support and advice to landowners.
- 3.66** The Great North Forest is a community forest project based around South Tyneside and North County Durham, covering an area of 62 square miles. A small area to the north east of the District is within the project area for the Great North Forest. It is intended that the forest will include areas for sport, recreation and leisure, as well as agriculture. Implementation will be achieved through grant assistance, expert advice and reclamation schemes.
- 3.67** The condition of many rural woodlands is deteriorating because they are not being actively managed. Traditional woodland management involving selective felling and promoting regeneration can be the most effective way of maintaining the ecology of deciduous plantations. The Council in partnership with other bodies like Durham County Council and the Forestry Commission will encourage landowners to manage their woodland properly and encourage economic activity in woodlands which support their sustainable management.

NATURE CONSERVATION

The Natural Environment

POLICY E16 THE COUNCIL WILL PROTECT AND ENHANCE THE NATURE CONSERVATION ASSETS OF THE DISTRICT BY:

- 1. REQUIRING DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS, WHERE APPROPRIATE, OUTSIDE SITES SPECIFICALLY PROTECTED FOR THEIR NATURE CONSERVATION IMPORTANCE TO:**
 - a) IDENTIFY ANY SIGNIFICANT NATURE CONSERVATION INTEREST THAT MAY EXIST ON OR ADJACENT TO THE SITE BY**

SUBMITTING SURVEYS OF WILDLIFE HABITATS, PROTECTED SPECIES AND FEATURES OF ECOLOGICAL, GEOLOGICAL AND GEOMORPHOLOGICAL INTEREST; AND

- b) AS FAR AS POSSIBLE AVOID ANY UNACCEPTABLE HARM TO NATURE CONSERVATION INTERESTS AS A RESULT OF THE DEVELOPMENT; AND**
 - c) PROVIDE MITIGATION MEASURES TO MINIMISE UNACCEPTABLE ADVERSE EFFECTS ON IDENTIFIED NATURE CONSERVATION INTERESTS THAT CANNOT BE AVOIDED.**
- 2. INCLUDING COMPENSATION MEASURES TO OFFSET ANY HARM TO IDENTIFIED NATURE CONSERVATION INTERESTS WHICH CANNOT BE COMPLETELY AVOIDED OR MITIGATED; AND**
 - 3. SEEKING TO ENHANCE THE NATURE CONSERVATION VALUE OF THE DISTRICT THROUGH THE CREATION AND MANAGEMENT OF NEW WILDLIFE HABITATS AND NATURE CONSERVATION FEATURES IN DEVELOPMENT SCHEMES AND IN THE MANAGEMENT OF EXISTING AREAS OF OPEN SPACE.**

Justification

- 3.68** A range of sites are specifically protected by other Policies in the Plan for their nature conservation interest. These include Sites of Special Scientific Interest (Policy E17), Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (Policy E18), Local Nature Reserves (Policy E20), Ancient Woodlands (Policy E14 (1)) and other biological and earth science interests. This natural heritage, which includes geological features, is not, however, confined to these designated sites but is found throughout the countryside and on development sites and open spaces within settlements. Indeed, urban sites often have an added importance to local people due to their close proximity to home and workplace. Linear landscape features like hedges and streams which facilitate the movement and migration of fauna and flora (protected by Policy E19) are also extremely important in providing links between wildlife sites and surrounding countryside.
- 3.69** Where nature conservation interest is likely to occur to some degree, including both within and beyond identified/designated sites, including buildings, where species occur, development proposals will be required to identify any significant nature conservation interest that may exist on or adjacent to the site and to either avoid or to minimise any adverse effects on nature conservation as a result of the development.

- 3.70** Development schemes outside sites which are specifically protected for their wildlife value can usually avoid significant harm to nature conservation interest through sensitive design and layout and timing/programming of works. Occasionally, the need for the development will justify the loss of the feature and, in order to maintain nature conservation interest in the area, it is desirable to mitigate, or compensate for this by, for example, appropriate habitat creation elsewhere in the site or locality. Habitat creation within the context of nature conservation includes geological and landform features. This is particularly important for wetland features as their presence has rapidly declined. Efforts should be made to incorporate wetland features within sustainable drainage schemes.
- 3.71** Many species of flora and fauna are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the Badgers Act 1991. Buildings, as well as wildlife sites can be important habitats for protected species, for example as bat roosts or bird nesting sites. The Council will seek the advice of English Nature about development proposals that may affect protected species or their habitats.
- 3.72** It is also important to create new sites of nature conservation interest. This will be pursued through regeneration, reclamation or other development schemes and through changes in the management of open spaces. Particular attention will be given to the creation of wildlife sites in urban areas in order to provide opportunities for education and to enable residents and voluntary groups to participate in the creation, enhancement, and management of sites.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest

POLICY E17 DEVELOPMENT THAT IS LIKELY TO ADVERSELY AFFECT A DESIGNATED OR NOTIFIED SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST OR NATIONAL NATURE RESERVE EITHER DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED IF IT CAN BE DEMONSTRATED THAT:

- 1. THE PROPOSAL IS OF OVER-RIDING NATIONAL IMPORTANCE; AND**
- 2. THE DEVELOPMENT CANNOT BE LOCATED ELSEWHERE; AND**
- 3. REMEDIAL MEASURES ARE TAKEN TO MINIMISE THE ADVERSE EFFECTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE SCHEME AND COMMENSURATE EFFORTS ARE MADE TO COMPENSATE FOR ANY UNAVOIDABLE DAMAGE BY APPROPRIATE HABITAT CREATION.**

Justification

- 3.73** There are currently 11 sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) in the City. These are shown on the Proposals Plan and are located at Brasside Pond, Butterby Oxbow, Cassop Vale, Crime Rigg Quarry, Pittington Hill, Quarrington Hill Grassland, Raisby Hill Grassland, Raisby Hill Quarry, Sherburn Hill, Town Kelloe Bank, and Trimdon Limestone Quarry. Any further sites which may be designated during the lifeline of the Plan will also be subject to this Policy. SSSIs are notified by English Nature as being of national importance for nature conservation and local planning authorities are required to consult English Nature about any proposal within an SSSI, or that may directly or indirectly affect the interest of an SSSI.
- 3.74** Cassop Vale SSSI has been declared a National Nature Reserve and is shown on the Proposals Plan. The essential characteristic of National Nature Reserves is that they are areas of national and sometimes international importance which are primarily used and managed for nature conservation.
- 3.75** The Council will require an Environmental Statement to be provided with all development proposals that are likely to affect an SSSI and will place considerable weight on the views of English Nature and other relevant bodies in assessing such proposals.

Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (County Wildlife Sites)

POLICY E18 **THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO SAFEGUARD SITES OF NATURE CONSERVATION IMPORTANCE INCLUDING REGIONALLY IMPORTANT GEOLOGICAL AND GEOMORPHOLOGICAL SITES (RIGS). DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD BE DETRIMENTAL TO THEIR NATURE CONSERVATION INTEREST WILL NOT BE PERMITTED UNLESS IT IS DEMONSTRATED THAT:**

- 1. THE BENEFITS FROM THE DEVELOPMENT OUTWEIGH THE NATURE CONSERVATION INTEREST OF THE SITE; AND**
- 2. THERE ARE NO ALTERNATIVE SUITABLE SITES FOR DEVELOPMENT ELSEWHERE IN THE COUNTY OR REGION AS APPROPRIATE; AND**
- 3. COMMENSURATE MEASURES ARE TAKEN TO MINIMISE THE ADVERSE EFFECTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE SCHEME AND REASONABLE EFFORT IS MADE BY APPROPRIATE HABITAT CREATION OR ENHANCEMENT IN THE VICINITY TO COMPENSATE FOR ANY UNAVOIDABLE DAMAGE.**

Justification

- 3.76** Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCIs) are areas which have been defined by Durham County Council as having wildlife or geological interest, of county wide importance. A number of geological sites defined as Sites of Nature Conservation Importance are also considered to be of regional significance. Currently 45 SNCIs have been identified by Durham County Council and these are shown on the Proposals Map. Other sites may be identified over the Plan period. As well as being important for their wildlife and geological interest many sites are a valuable resource for amenity, recreation, education and research. Advice in conserving and managing SNCIs is available from Durham County Council, Durham City Council and local wildlife trusts.
- 3.77** A number of sites of Nature Conservation Importance are situated in areas which have outstanding planning permissions. Where an outstanding planning permission is likely to damage a Site of Nature Conservation Importance the Council in partnership with Durham County Council will negotiate with the owner to attempt to either protect the SNCI or maintain nature conservation interest in the vicinity.

Wildlife Corridors

POLICY E19

THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO:

- 1. PROTECT THE VALUE AND INTEGRITY OF LANDSCAPE FEATURES WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO THE WEAR, BROWNEY AND DEERNESS VALLEY WILDLIFE CORRIDORS BY ENSURING THAT COMMENSURATE MEASURES ARE TAKEN TO MINIMISE THE ADVERSE EFFECTS ASSOCIATED WITH DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS AND REASONABLE EFFORT IS MADE, BY APPROPRIATE HABITAT CREATION OR ENHANCEMENT IN THE VICINITY, TO COMPENSATE FOR ANY UNAVOIDABLE DAMAGE.**
- 2. CREATE NEW WILDLIFE CORRIDORS BETWEEN URBAN OPEN SPACES, SITES OF NATURE CONSERVATION VALUE, AND THE COUNTRYSIDE IN NEW DEVELOPMENT SCHEMES AS OPPORTUNITIES ARISE.**

Justification

- 3.78** Many linear features such as rivers, streams, hedgerows, woodlands and the uncultivated edges of footpaths, roads and railways function as wildlife corridors providing a continuity of habitat which is essential to migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of many plant and animal species. Linear landscape features along which wildlife can move and live are paramount in maintaining biodiversity in

the District and in ensuring key habitats maintain their quality and range of species. Most features which act as wildlife corridors are in open countryside but wildlife corridors in urban areas are particularly important enabling wildlife to spread into the heart of urban areas and allowing residents to enjoy the natural environment near to where they live and work.

- 3.79** The Council will seek to protect the integrity of wildlife corridors taking into account the type of species which are to be found along their length. Development proposals which impinge on a wildlife corridor will be expected to include reasonable measures both to minimise the adverse effects associated with the scheme and to enhance or restore the nature conservation interest of the area. The Council will also seek the provision of new wildlife corridors in development schemes where it is considered they would have a valuable role to play. These can usually be provided in association with landscaping, footpaths, and areas of recreational open space.

Local Nature Reserves

POLICY E20 THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO DECLARE FURTHER LOCAL NATURE RESERVES WITHIN THE DISTRICT. THE DEVELOPMENT OF LIMITED VISITOR/EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES ASSOCIATED WITH LOCAL NATURE RESERVES WILL BE ALLOWED PROVIDED THAT SUCH PROPOSALS DO NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE NATURE CONSERVATION VALUE OF THE SITE OR PREJUDICE THE PURPOSES OF THE GREEN BELT.

Justification

- 3.80** Under the provisions of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, Local Authorities are empowered to designate Local Nature Reserves (LNRs). There are four Local Nature Reserves within the District at Low Newton Junction, Coxhoe Quarry Wood, Little Wood (Quarrington Hill) and Coxhoe Hall Wood. They are all owned by Durham County Council who were responsible for their declaration as LNRs. Local Nature Reserves can be declared purely for their great nature conservation interests or because of the opportunities they provide for informal countryside recreation or education. It is the Council's intention to explore opportunities for the provision of local nature reserves in appropriate locations.

THE PROTECTION OF THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

Historic Environment

POLICY E21 THE COUNCIL WILL PRESERVE AND ENHANCE THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT OF THE DISTRICT BY:

- 1. REQUIRING DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS TO MINIMISE ADVERSE IMPACTS ON SIGNIFICANT FEATURES OF HISTORIC INTEREST WITHIN OR ADJACENT TO THE SITE; AND**

2. ENCOURAGING THE RETENTION, REPAIR AND RE-USE OF BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES WHICH ARE NOT LISTED, BUT ARE OF VISUAL OR LOCAL INTEREST.

Justification

- 3.81** Particularly important buildings, structures, and areas of historic value such as listed buildings, conservation areas, historic parks and gardens and scheduled ancient monuments are specifically protected by other Policies in this Plan. However, the historic environment consists of more than those exceptional buildings and areas. It encompasses buildings, structures and open spaces that although sometimes individually unassuming, provide vital evidence of our historic past adding considerable interest and diversity to our surroundings. Examples include industrial, agricultural and vernacular buildings, ancient boundary walls and hedgerows, and open spaces like village greens. All such buildings and features must be taken into account in preparing development schemes and should normally be sensitively incorporated into the scheme unless the need for development is clearly shown to outweigh the conservation of the features concerned. In many cases it will be necessary to assess not only the buildings or areas themselves but also their setting. The Council will seek to encourage community groups to prepare interpretation material about the historic development of their communities and surroundings.
- 3.82** The Council will seek to retain buildings of visual or local interest which contribute to the character and setting of their locality. Although it is preferable to retain the original use of a building or structure, when this is not feasible ways of re-using the building instead of demolishing it will be encouraged.
- 3.83** The Council will consult English Nature in cases where it is considered likely that buildings accommodate species such as bats which are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Proposals will only be approved if satisfactory safeguards for those species can be agreed.

Conservation Areas

POLICY E22 THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO PRESERVE OR ENHANCE THE CHARACTER OR APPEARANCE OF THE CONSERVATION AREAS WITHIN THE CITY OF DURHAM BY:

- 1. NOT PERMITTING DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS WHICH WOULD DETRACT FROM THE CHARACTER OR APPEARANCE OF THE CONSERVATION AREA OR ITS SETTING. ALL DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS SHOULD BE SENSITIVE IN TERMS OF SITING, SCALE, DESIGN AND MATERIALS, REFLECTING, WHERE APPROPRIATE, EXISTING ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS;**

2. **NOT PERMITTING THE DEMOLITION OF BUILDINGS WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO THE AREA'S CHARACTER. PERMISSION FOR THE DEMOLITION OF ANY SIGNIFICANT BUILDING WILL NOT BE GRANTED UNTIL A DETAILED SCHEME FOR APPROPRIATE REDEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE HAS BEEN APPROVED;**
3. **PROTECTING TREES, HEDGEROWS, LANDSCAPE FEATURES, VIEWS AND UNDEVELOPED AREAS WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO THE CHARACTER OR APPEARANCE OF THE AREA AND ITS SETTING;**
4. **REQUIRING A SUFFICIENT LEVEL OF DETAIL TO ACCOMPANY APPLICATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT TO ENABLE AN ASSESSMENT TO BE MADE OF ITS IMPACT ON THE CONSERVATION AREA.**

IN ADDITION THE COUNCIL WILL ALSO IMPLEMENT SCHEMES FOR THE ENHANCEMENT OF CONSERVATION AREAS WHERE APPROPRIATE AND AS RESOURCES PERMIT.

Justification

- 3.84** A Conservation Area is an area which is designated as being of special architectural or historic interest and the Council has a statutory duty to preserve and enhance the appearance of those areas. There are currently 14, designated conservation areas in the City of Durham:

Durham (City Centre), Brancepeth, Sunderland Bridge, Brandon Village, Shadforth, Shincliffe, Hett, Bowburn, Sherburn, Hallgarth, Sherburn House, Burn Hall, Holywell and Old Cassop.

- 3.85** Durham (City Centre) Conservation Area is also subject to Policy E6, which expands upon part 1 of Policy E22. Supplementary Planning Guidance will be prepared clearly identifying the special architectural or historic interest which justifies their designation along with opportunities for enhancement.

- 3.86** New development in or affecting the setting of a conservation area must protect or enhance its character. It is therefore vital that any new development, or alterations and extensions are of a high quality and are entirely appropriate to their settings. To ensure that this is achieved it will usually be necessary for development proposals to be submitted in the form of a detailed planning application. An outline application does not provide sufficient detail to determine the impact of a development proposal on a conservation area. It is also vital to preserve buildings or structures (such as boundary walls) which are integral to the historic fabric of the conservation area. Permission will not, therefore, be granted for the demolition of any buildings which contribute to the area's character. Where total demolition of a

building is acceptable and where re-development of the site is desirable, permission for demolition will normally be granted subject to planning conditions requiring prior letting of a contract for an approved re-development to ensure that premature demolition does not take place.

- 3.87** Trees, hedgerows and open spaces are an integral part of most conservation areas. Indeed, the character of a conservation area can rely as much on features such as the spaces between buildings, changes in ground level, village greens, gardens and grounds, as on the buildings themselves. It is therefore important to retain such features in order to safeguard the character of the conservation area as a whole.
- 3.88** Local planning authorities, as part of their statutory duties, are required to prepare schemes for the enhancement of conservation areas. The Council will seek to implement a number of enhancement schemes in the Durham (City Centre) Conservation Area during the Plan period and in other conservation areas within the City as appropriate and where resources permit. Schemes could involve carrying out environmental improvement works, facilitating fabric renewal or improvement and initiating the appropriate development of derelict land. The Council has a statutory responsibility to monitor and review existing conservation area boundaries when considering schemes for their enhancement as part of the process of preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of the conservation areas.

Listed Buildings

POLICY E23 THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO SAFEGUARD LISTED BUILDINGS AND THEIR SETTINGS BY:

- 1. ONLY PERMITTING ALTERATIONS AND EXTENSIONS TO LISTED BUILDINGS WHICH ARE SYMPATHETIC IN DESIGN, SCALE, AND MATERIALS;**
- 2. NOT PERMITTING ALTERATIONS TO ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC FEATURES WHICH ADVERSELY AFFECT THE SPECIAL INTEREST OF A LISTED BUILDING, INCLUDING INTERNAL FEATURES AND THOSE WITHIN THE CURTILAGE OF THE BUILDING;**
- 3. NOT PERMITTING TOTAL OR SUBSTANTIAL DEMOLITION OF A LISTED BUILDING;**
- 4. NOT PERMITTING DEVELOPMENT WHICH DETRACTS FROM THE SETTING OF A LISTED BUILDING;**

Justification

- 3.89** A listed building is a building or structure which is considered to be of special architectural or historic interest. The Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport has a duty to include all such buildings on a statutory list which gives details of each building or structure. Once a building is listed consent is normally required for its demolition, in whole or in part, and for any internal or external works of alteration and extension which would affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest. There are over 800 listed buildings in the District of widely differing sizes and types (eg buildings such as Durham Cathedral and structures such as Kingsgate Bridge).
- 3.90** The rich inheritance of listed buildings in the District is of vital importance to its image, helping to attract visitors and tourists. Listed buildings must be seen as an irreplaceable resource, valuable in their own right and as such they need to be protected from demolition, damage, neglect and unsympathetic alterations. Changing the use of a listed building needs to be given careful consideration and would be considered unacceptable if it gave rise to the need for alterations which would damage or destroy the character or setting of the building. Whilst grants may be available for repairing certain listed buildings, the most satisfactory method of retaining these buildings in good repair is to make use of them.
- 3.91** The setting of a listed building is often an essential feature of its character. Development which detracts from the setting of a listed building will not be permitted and Tree Preservation Orders will be used to protect trees of importance to the setting of a listed building where this is considered necessary.

Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Remains

POLICY E24 **THE COUNCIL WILL PRESERVE SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENTS AND OTHER NATIONALLY SIGNIFICANT ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS AND THEIR SETTING IN SITU. DEVELOPMENT LIKELY TO DAMAGE THESE MONUMENTS WILL NOT BE PERMITTED. ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS OF REGIONAL AND LOCAL IMPORTANCE, WHICH MAY BE ADVERSELY AFFECTED BY DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS, WILL BE PROTECTED BY SEEKING PRESERVATION IN SITU, AND WHERE PRESERVATION IN SITU IS NOT JUSTIFIED BY:**

- 1. ENSURING THAT IN AREAS WHERE THERE IS EVIDENCE THAT SIGNIFICANT ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS EXIST, OR REASONS TO PRE-SUPPOSE SUCH REMAINS EXIST WHOSE EXTENT AND IMPORTANCE IS NOT KNOWN, PRE-APPLICATION EVALUATION OR ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT WILL BE REQUIRED; AND**

2. **REQUIRING, AS A CONDITION OF PLANNING PERMISSION, THAT PRIOR TO DEVELOPMENT AN APPROPRIATE PROGRAMME OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION, RECORDING AND PUBLICATION HAS BEEN MADE, IN CASES WHERE THE PRESERVATION IN SITU OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS IS NOT JUSTIFIED;**

IN THE EVENT OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS BEING DISCOVERED ONCE DEVELOPMENT HAS COMMENCED, THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO ENSURE THAT ADEQUATE OPPORTUNITY IS MADE AVAILABLE TO INVESTIGATE AND RECORD SUCH DISCOVERY.

Justification

3.92 Archaeological remains are the evidence of human activity and past development over thousands of years. They are an irreplaceable part of the City's heritage and care must be taken to protect as much as possible of this limited resource for the benefit of future generations. They include buildings and structures above ground level like bridges, wells, and manor houses as well as remains below ground level which are buried or have been excavated.

3.93 Scheduled Ancient Monuments are archaeological remains which are considered to be of national importance. Their protection, and the protection of other sites and monuments of national importance, as yet unscheduled, is of paramount importance. The consent of the Secretary of State for the Environment is required for any works and development affecting scheduled ancient monuments, many of which would not require planning permissions. There are currently 21 Scheduled Ancient Monuments in the City. These are shown on the Proposals Map and comprise:

Aldin Grange Bridge	Kepier House
East Hedleyhope Coke Oven	Prebends House
Sunderland Bridge, Near Croxdale	Old Grammer School, Palace Green
Moat and Bridge, Low Butterby Farm	Chapel of St Mary Magdalene
Croxdale Old Church	Finchale Priory
Framwelgate Bridge	Deserted Village, Garmondsway
Elvet Bridge	Priors Hall, Hallgarth
Neville's Cross	Ludworth Tower
Maiden Castle Earthworks	Sherburn House Bridge
Maidens Bower Chapter	Grange and Chapter, Bearpark Farm
Water Gate, South Bailey	Coxhoe Medieval Village

3.94 As a result of a nationwide survey carried out by English Heritage, additional numbers of archaeological sites may be designated as Scheduled Ancient Monuments.

- 3.95** Ideally all archaeological remains should be preserved in situ but the extent to which they can or should be preserved will depend upon a large number of factors, including the importance and condition of the remains and the benefits of the proposed development. Where the Council is satisfied that it is not justified to preserve remains in situ the applicant will be requested to make appropriate provision for the excavation and recording of remains and the publication of survey data. The methods used to carry out this work should be agreed between the Council, the developers and archaeological consultants under voluntary agreements such as the British Archaeologists and Developers Code of Practice before the application is determined. In the absence of such agreements the Council may consider it appropriate to impose conditions or enter into legal agreements to secure adequate excavations and recording.
- 3.96** In accordance with the Guidance set out in PPG16 (Archaeology and Planning), where evidence would suggest that important archaeological remains may exist the Council will require the prospective developer to arrange for an archaeological field evaluation to be carried out to establish their existence, character and extent before any decision on the planning application is taken. This is a survey requiring a fully qualified archaeologist and the information provided will secure the appropriate treatment of any archaeological remains which are discovered. Developers are advised to seek pre-application discussions with the Council to determine the nature of the survey work which will be required. Whilst there are many areas throughout the District where field evaluations may be required they are particularly likely to be necessary in the medieval core of Durham City.
- 3.97** The Durham County Sites and Monuments Record and the Council's Archaeological Data Base identifies archaeological sites of all types which are known or thought to exist in the District. Developers should consult those records before making planning applications so that they can take account of archaeological remains and avoid unnecessary delay in the determination of applications.
- 3.98** There may be occasions when the presence of archaeological remains only become apparent once development has commenced. In such cases, the Council will seek to ensure that adequate opportunity is made available to investigate and record such discoveries.

Neville's Cross Battlefield

POLICY E25 THE NEVILLE'S CROSS BATTLEFIELD SITE WILL BE PROTECTED AND ENHANCED BY:

- 1. NOT PERMITTING DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD ADVERSELY AFFECT THE INTERPRETATION OF THE BATTLE.**

- 2. SEEKING THE PROVISION OF APPROPRIATE INTERPRETATION MATERIAL ON THE BATTLE SITE.**

3. NOT PERMITTING DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD BE CONTRARY TO POLICIES E1, E6 AND E24.

Justification

- 3.99** English Heritage's Register of Historic Battlefields includes the Battlefield of Neville's Cross which was the scene in 1346 of a battle between David II of Scotland and the English forces of King Edward III. Much of the area of the battlefield has been developed over the centuries but a significant amount is open and protected from most types of development by the Green Belt. Part of the site is safeguarded under Policy C6 at Crossgate Moor for the development of Durham Johnston School but it is not considered that this will detract from the interpretation of the battle site.
- 3.100** The open areas, in particular, help to provide an understanding of the course of events during the battle. The Council will seek the voluntary co-operation of owners and occupiers and encourage appropriate land management and interpretation of the battlefield site through the provision of interpretation boards, sculptures, pamphlets, and the development of an interpretation trail.

Historic Parks and Gardens

POLICY E26 PLANNING PERMISSION FOR DEVELOPMENT AT THE FOLLOWING PARKS AND GARDENS OF HISTORIC OR LANDSCAPE VALUE WILL ONLY BE GRANTED PROVIDED THE PROPOSAL:

- 1. WOULD NOT OTHERWISE DETRACT FROM THE ENJOYMENT, LAYOUT, DESIGN, CHARACTER, APPEARANCE OR SETTING OF THE PARK OR GARDEN; AND;**
- 2. WOULD NOT INVOLVE THE LOSS OF FEATURES CONSIDERED TO FORM AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE SPECIAL CHARACTER OR APPEARANCE OF THE PARK OR GARDEN.**

BRANCEPETH/HOLYWELL	BURN HALL
OLD DURHAM GARDENS	USHAW
ELEMORE –	FLASS HALL
PITTINGTON HILL	SNIPERLEY
ESHWOOD	CROOK HALL
BEARPARK	RAMSIDE
CROXDALE	MOUNT OSWALD
COXHOE HALL	FINCHALE
BOTANIC GARDENS	KEPIER HOSPITAL
SHERBURN HOSPITAL	

Justification

- 3.101** The historic integrity and landscape value of Parks and Gardens are inseparable and it is important to protect them from inappropriate development or poor land management. Features which form part of Parks and Gardens like woodlands which frame the vistas of buildings, walled gardens, man-made ponds, groups and avenues of trees, terraces and stone walls add greatly to the diversity and attractiveness of the landscape. The District has 17 historic Parks and Gardens. Of these Brancepeth Park, Croxdale and Burn Hall have been identified by English Heritage in its register of Parks and Gardens as being of national importance, the remainder have been identified by the Council as being of local significance. The parks date from the 17th to the 19th century, apart from Bearpark which is mediaeval in origin.
- 3.102** All the parks and gardens are in the Area of High Landscape Value and are subject to Policy E10. Conservation Area Policy E22 and Green Belt Policy E1 also apply to parks and gardens at Bearpark and Croxdale.

4 HOUSING

INTRODUCTION

- 4.1** This Chapter of the Plan covers the inter-relationship between population and its housing requirements, indicating the scale of provision and where new housing development should be located. Issues such as mobility, affordable housing and sites for travellers are also covered.

GENERAL BACKGROUND

Population

- 4.2** The District's resident population in 1991 was approximately 80,700, representing a decline of about 3,000 over the previous decade. The current trend suggests a very slight further decline to 80,200 by 2006.
- 4.3** Approved regional policies aim to stabilise the population of County Durham over this period. The County Structure Plan (Adopted March 1999) proposes a population for this District of 81,000 residents by 2006; in effect, this represents a stable population over the Plan period.
- 4.4** Household sizes have fallen over the past decade, and the District's average household size in 1991 was 2.47 persons. Sizes of households are forecast to decline further to 2.28 by 2006, and this, despite only a minimal increase in population, is the principal reason why new houses will be required.
- 4.5** The population within the younger age groups is forecast to decline, but the proportion of retirement age is estimated to rise to over 20% of the total by 2006. This change may have implications for the type of housing needed in the future.
- 4.6** In 1998 there were about 8,900 students at Durham University and based in Durham. This figure is projected to grow throughout the Plan period, with part of this increase being accommodated in the new college at Howlands Farm. The expected consolidation of New College at the Framwellgate Moor Campus is likely to have implications for residential student numbers, which are likely to decline. The implications of the 1999 restructuring of East Durham and Houghall Community College are, as yet, unclear, although student numbers are expected to increase.
- 4.7** Students form a significant element of the City's population, though most do not live in private households and are not classed as permanent resident. Nevertheless, a considerable proportion rely on the District's general housing stock for accommodation, with particular concentrations in certain wards such as Nevilles Cross and Elvet.
- 4.8** Student numbers have grown significantly in recent years. Their levels can be influenced dramatically by changes in Government Policy and funding, and these will need to be monitored carefully during the lifetime of the Local Plan.

HOUSING STRATEGY

- 4.9** The Plan's strategy regarding the location of new housing is a continuation of that which has operated for many years. This involves a considerable measure of restraint within Durham City, and attempts to guide necessary new housing to the surrounding villages in the District where it can have a positive effect on regeneration and the sustainability of these settlements. New housing, in the context of this strategy, includes conversions, the re-use of upper floors (eg above shops), and multiple occupation, in addition to new build. Better use should therefore be made of the existing building stock. Whilst Durham City is both the District's major centre and the main focus of housing demand, its unique character and setting makes it physically and environmentally unable to absorb new housing at levels which market forces might indicate. It is largely for these reasons that the Green Belt has been proposed. Both the Local Plan and the Housing Strategy recognise the importance of a supply of good quality housing in the promotion of economic regeneration through the attraction of inward investment.
- 4.10** The preservation of both the City's outstanding traditional character, and its landscape setting, will continue to be of paramount importance. Housing development which extends either into the countryside surrounding the City, or into important open spaces or undeveloped areas within it, will be resisted. The landscape setting is discussed in detail within the Environment Chapter.
- 4.11** Wherever possible, however, the opportunity will be pursued to recycle derelict, neglected and underused sites in urban areas with the purpose of safeguarding greenfield sites and promoting regeneration. Encouragement will be given to upgrading the quality of housing areas and extending the range of accommodation to improve the vitality and quality of residential provision throughout the District.
- 4.12** The strategy also seeks to minimise both the impact of new housing on the countryside and the need to travel. New housing should therefore be concentrated mainly in those settlements which have reasonable levels of population, which possess a range of facilities and services, and which are accessible by public transport. In practice, growth is therefore directed towards the larger villages within the District, which are listed in Policy H3. Development should aim to consolidate the built framework of the settlement, rather than breach the surrounding countryside. There are, however, finite limits to the opportunities for settlement infill in the longer term when it will be necessary to reconcile the loss of greenfield sites with the relative importance of village growth and the value of landscape in its undeveloped form. This approach accords with national planning policies on transport, the countryside, the principle of sustainable development and the location of new housing.
- 4.13** These strategic considerations set the overall context within which any future reviews of housing requirements and allocations should be conducted.

HOUSING REQUIREMENTS AND SUPPLY

- 4.14** Using the appropriate household size estimates, together with an allowance for vacant dwellings, the number of dwellings required to house the District's

population in 2006 has been calculated, and is incorporated in the County Structure Plan. The gross requirement is for sites for 3,000 new dwellings to be found in Durham District between 1991 and 2006. The Table below shows how this gross figure is further refined to give a net requirement.

- 4.15** There are likely to be a number of sites which already have planning permission and which are likely to be developed within the Plan period. Details of all sites of 10 or more dwellings with planning permission at 1st April 2002 are given in Appendix 4. Further allowances must be made for small sites (ie less than 10 dwellings), demolitions and 'windfalls', (ie previously developed sites currently in another use which unexpectedly become available). It is common practice to make an allowance for choice and flexibility to provide for unforeseen difficulties in the availability of some sites. A figure of 100 is also included to allow for the expected increase in students living in general private housing within the City. In the absence of precise growth predictions on such accommodation from the University this is a nominal figure. The calculations of requirements and supply are summarised below:

Housing Requirements

Gross Requirement 1991-2006	3000
Allowance for students	100
10% allowance for flexibility and choice	300
Less completions (net) 1991-2000	-3092
Total Requirement 2000-2006	308

Housing Supply

Sites with planning permission, and likely to be developed 2002-2006 (10+ sites)	515
Small Sites 2002-2006 (@ 40 per annum)	160
"Windfalls" 2002-2006 (@ 45 per annum)	180
Less demolitions 2002-2006 (@ 15 per annum)	-60
Total	795

- 4.16** Present calculations therefore indicate that no new sites are required for dwellings between 2002 and 2006. A new site is allocated in Policy H1 however, for reasons which are explained under that Policy.
- 4.17** Ongoing changes to the National housing policy (which seeks to direct development to 'brownfield' sites) may have implications for the District. It is vitally important however that any future District housing allocations which may be required are made in accordance with the basic principles of the District housing strategy, with particular recognition of the importance of Durham City's character and setting.

LOCAL PLAN OBJECTIVES

4.18 The Council's objectives for housing to be pursued through the Policies and Proposals contained in this Chapter of the Plan are:

- To provide a variety of sites for housing to meet the various needs of different sections of the population;
- To encourage the use of derelict or underused land and buildings within settlements to assist in their regeneration;
- To promote high standards of design, energy efficiency, estate layout and landscaping in all new housing developments;
- To protect and, where necessary, enhance the amenities and the environment of existing residential areas.

4.19 Statements showing the latest housing statistics, and land which is available for housing, are published annually. The Council intends to comply with the prevailing Government land availability requirement, which at present indicates that at least a five year supply should be available. The Council participates in the County Durham Joint Housing Land Study with Durham County Council and The House Builders Federation. The most recent study, covering 1998-2003 (Draft, April 1999) shows that the District has in excess of a 16 year supply of housing land.

4.20 For the purposes of the ensuing Policies, "housing development" includes not only the erection of new dwellings, but also extensions to existing dwellings, a change of use of all or part of an existing building for residential use, and the occupation of a residential caravan. The design and layout of residential estates and extensions to residential properties are identified in Policies Q1, Q2, Q8 and Q9 of Chapter 12 of the Plan relating to Quality of Development.

POLICIES

NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

New Housing Allocations

POLICY H1 HOUSING DEVELOPMENT WILL BE PERMITTED ON THE FOLLOWING SITE, AS SHOWN ON THE PROPOSALS MAP:

**Estimated
Capacity**

**a) FINCHALE VIEW, WEST RAINTON 37
(1.3ha)**

Justification

- 4.21** The total number of sites with planning permission (and likely to be developed) and allocated at H1 exceeds the District requirement by about 520 units. A majority of the over-provision stems from existing commitments (as set out in Appendix 4). Site H1(a), Finchale View, is a small brownfield site. As such, although adding to the over-provision position, it is included in the Plan as a sustainable site.
- 4.22** In accord with the aims of sustainable development 100% of land allocated for residential development in Policy H1 is previously developed land.
- 4.23** The densities of the sites will vary but in many cases they will be high thus making an efficient use of the land and thus further contributing the aims of sustainable development.

New Housing in Durham City

POLICY H2 **NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT COMPRISING: WINDFALL DEVELOPMENT OF PREVIOUSLY DEVELOPED LAND: AND CONVERSIONS WILL BE PERMITTED WITHIN THE SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY OF DURHAM CITY. PROVIDED EITHER THAT THE SITE IS INCLUDED IN POLICY H1, OR THAT**

- 1. THE PROPOSAL DOES NOT CONTRAVENE POLICIES E3, E5 AND E6, AND THE SITE IS NOT ALLOCATED OR SAFEGUARDED FOR AN ALTERNATIVE USE; AND**
- 2. THE DEVELOPMENT ACCORDS WITH POLICIES Q8, R2, T10, AND U8A**

Justification

- 4.24** The protection of both the traditional character and the setting of Durham City is a strategic aim and an overriding consideration which is a central feature of the Plan.
- 4.25** The County Durham Structure Plan (Policy 10, justified at Paragraph 8.34) specifically prohibits the extension of new housing into the countryside surrounding Durham City by requiring new housing development to take the form of redevelopment, infilling or consolidation of the existing built-up area. This continues a long standing policy, and reinforces previous landscape protection policies which are now incorporated in the Green Belt for Durham City.
- 4.26** Within the built-up area of the City, new housing development is acceptable, in principle, provided that the City's traditional character is preserved. The essential elements of this character are described in Chapter 3 and the measures and criteria which will be applied to protect the older parts of the City, particularly the World Heritage site and its surroundings, are set out in Policy E3. When assessing proposals for new housing in Durham City these considerations will be paramount. Most of the significant open spaces and undeveloped areas are essential elements

of the City's character and are not suitable for housing. In accordance with the requirement to prioritise development of previously developed sites (Planning Policy Guidance No 3, Housing) and in order to protect significant open spaces, new residential development will occur through the redevelopment of previously developed sites occurring as windfall or the conversion of existing buildings. Developments occurring under this policy and the additions that they will make to the housing supply situation have been made allowance for in Paragraph 4.15 (Windfall and Small Sites). As such, developments occurring through the Policy are not expected to affect the Housing supply position as set out in Paragraph 4.21

- 4.27** In the most recently developed areas of Durham City, primarily the twentieth century expansions to the north and north east, considerations of its traditional character are less crucial. Nevertheless, there are many good quality residential environments within them which must themselves be protected. In addition, they are generally quite densely developed, and most of the remaining undeveloped areas within them serve important visual, environmental or recreational functions. The restriction on the outward expansion of Durham City increases the pressure to develop such areas but protection from erosion may be as important as the resistance to the development of greenfield sites on the periphery.
- 4.28** Where residential development is acceptable in principle, it must accord with the relevant design and other Policies contained in Chapters 6, 8 and 12.

New Housing Development in the Villages

POLICY H3 **NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT, IN ADDITION TO THAT ALLOCATED IN POLICY H1, COMPRISING WINDFALL DEVELOPMENT OF PREVIOUSLY DEVELOPED LAND AND CONVERSIONS WILL BE PERMITTED WITHIN THE SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES OF THE VILLAGES LISTED BELOW PROVIDED IT IS:**

- 1. APPROPRIATE IN SCALE, DESIGN, LOCATION AND NUMBER OF UNITS (IN THE CASE OF THE SMALLER VILLAGES, (b) BELOW, THIS NUMBER WILL BE LIMITED) TO THE CHARACTER OF THE SETTLEMENT AND DOES NOT RESULT IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF AREAS WHICH POSSESS IMPORTANT FUNCTIONAL, VISUAL OR ENVIRONMENTAL ATTRIBUTES WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO THE SETTLEMENT'S CHARACTER; AND**
- 2. IN ACCORD WITH POLICIES Q8, R2, T10 AND U8A.**
 - a) LARGER VILLAGES**

**BEARPARK
BOWBURN
BRANDON
COXHOE**

**ESH WINNING
HIGH PITTINGTON
HIGH SHINCLIFFE
KELLOE
LANGLEY MOOR
MEADOWFIELD
NEW BRANCEPETH
SHERBURN
SHERBURN HILL
USHAW MOOR
WEST RAINTON
WITTON GILBERT**

b) SMALLER VILLAGES

**BRANDON VILLAGE
BROOMPARK
CASSOP
CROXDALE
HETT
LOW NEWTON
LOW PITTINGTON
LUDWORTH
PARKHILL
QUARRINGTON HILL
SHADFORTH
SHINCLIFFE
SUNDERLAND BRIDGE
WATERHOUSES**

EXCEPTIONALLY THE LIMITED DEVELOPMENT OF SMALL GREENFIELD SITES (LESS THAN 10 UNITS AND WHERE THE TOTAL DEVELOPABLE AREA IS LESS THAN 0.33 HECTARES IN EXTENT) WILL BE PERMITTED IN THE COALFIELD VILLAGES MOST IN NEED OF REGENERATION PROVIDED THAT:

- 1. THERE ARE CLEAR, QUANTIFIABLE REGENERATION BENEFITS THAT WILL BE ACHIEVED THROUGH THE DEVELOPMENT OF SMALL GREENFIELD SITES; AND**
- 2. THESE REGENERATION BENEFITS COULD NOT BE ACHIEVED THROUGH THE DEVELOPMENT OF PREVIOUSLY DEVELOPED LAND OR CONVERSIONS OF EXISTING BUILDINGS.**

THE COALFIELD VILLAGES MOST IN NEED OF REGENERATION TO WHICH THIS POLICY APPLIES ARE:

**BEARPARK
BOWBURN
BRANDON
CASSOP
COXHOE
ESH WINNING
HIGH PITTINGTON
KELLOE
LUDWORTH
NEW BRANCEPETH
QUARRINGTON HILL
SHERBURN
SHERBURN HILL
USHAW MOOR
WEST RAINTON
WITTON GILBERT**

Justification

- 4.29** Housing development is acceptable, in principle, within all these villages, but the amount which is appropriate or desirable varies according to their size, which is why the Policy has categorised them on this basis. Such an approach accords with Government advice and Structure Plan Policy. The acknowledgement that housing is acceptable is simply a statement of principle and does not mean that, in practice, suitable sites either exist or need to be found.
- 4.30** Settlement boundaries are shown on the Proposals Map and defined in the Glossary. As a general rule, housing may be acceptable within them provided it conforms with other Policies designed to protect the character and appearance of the settlement and residential amenity, and to safeguard land required for other uses.
- 4.31** New housing development must not contravene any other Policies relating, for instance, to the environment or to open space, and it must satisfy the criteria listed in Policies Q8, R2, T10, and U8A and the general principles governing new development. In accordance with the requirement to prioritise development of previously developed sites (Planning Policy Guidance Note 3, Housing) and in order to protect significant open spaces, new residential development will occur through the redevelopment of previously developed sites. These may occur as windfall or the conversion of existing buildings. Developments occurring under this Policy, and the additions that they will make to the housing supply situation, have been made allowance for in Paragraph 4.15 (Windfall and Small Sites). As such the Policy is not expected to affect the Housing supply position set out in Paragraph 4.21.
- 4.31A** Despite the longstanding and ongoing efforts, in many cases successful, to improve the social and physical environmental of settlements in the district, a number still suffer from a poor quality environments and high levels of social and economic deprivation. The County Durham Structure Plan highlights how housing development in the villages around the City has, and can continue to, assist in the regeneration of many of the villages (whilst assisting in the protection of the

character and setting of the City). Policy H3, in accord with guidance in Planning Policy Guidance Note 3, Housing, seeks to restrict the development of greenfield sites. In order that the process of regeneration can be spread to the coalfield villages most in need of regeneration, there may be occasions where new residential development can form an important component of this process. When such proposals are formulated the priority will be to locate on previously developed sites or in the conversion of existing buildings. Where such sites are not available within a targeted village, small greenfield sites (of less than 10 units and with a developable area of not more than 0.33ha in extent) will be considered providing such schemes do not result in village cramming. This means that a proposal for the development of 0.33ha of greenfield land that formed part of a single continuous area of greenfield land greater than 0.33ha in extent would be contrary to Policy H3. Such exceptions to the general move towards the development of previously developed land will have to demonstrate very specific and quantifiable regeneration benefits and that the same regeneration benefits could not be achieved through the development of previously developed sites or the conversions of existing buildings.

Larger Villages

- 4.32** The larger villages are generally better provided with schools, shops, churches and other social and recreational facilities. They tend to be better related to the major road network and more accessible by public transport.
- 4.33** The development of new housing on appropriate sites within these villages conforms with the Plan's strategy of diverting new housing development in the District away from Durham City, whilst adhering, as far as possible, bearing in mind the paramount importance of the need to protect the setting of the Historic City, to the principles of sustainable development. Accordingly, development should seek to minimise, within practical limits, the impact on the countryside and the overall need to travel.
- 4.34** To be acceptable under this Policy, a new site will need to be within, or adjacent to, the existing residential framework of the village, well related to it in scale, character and location, and must not be allocated in this Plan for any other use. Growth which contributes to regeneration, the increased viability of settlements and/or the fulfilment of social housing needs, will be taken into consideration. Open or undeveloped areas within these villages, which possess important functional, visual or environmental attributes and which contribute to the settlement's character, will not be acceptable for housing.

Smaller Villages

- 4.35** The smaller villages listed here are inappropriate locations for substantial new housing development, due primarily to their size, and because they generally lack a good range of facilities. Many include conservation areas, and some are physically remote from larger settlements and the services which these can offer. Limited new housing will, however, increase choice and help to sustain the facilities and the communities which exist in these villages, without either adding significantly to the need to travel, or altering their scale. As set out in Policy H3, new housing developments in the Smaller Villages are likely to be limited in terms

of the number of units on individual sites. The maximum number of units on individual sites and in individual villages will not be limited by a specific threshold, but by the scale of the proposal in relation to the overall scale and character of the village.

- 4.36** Limited housing will normally entail "infilling" small gaps in village streets, or conversion of suitable buildings. Not all gaps or vacant land are necessarily acceptable for new housing since open, undeveloped sites often form an integral part of a village's character and provide amenity space. The maintenance and preservation of this character will be the most important consideration in assessing any particular proposal.

Villages with No Settlement Boundary, Ribbon Development and Sporadic Groups of Houses

POLICY H4 THE EXTENSION OR REDEVELOPMENT OF VILLAGES WITH NO SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY, OF RIBBONS OF DEVELOPMENT, OR OF SPORADIC GROUPS OF HOUSES WILL NOT BE PERMITTED.

INFILL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AT THESE LOCATIONS WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED IF THE DEVELOPMENT:

- 1. COMPRISES NO MORE THAN A SINGLE DWELLING INFILLING A SMALL GAP BETWEEN EXISTING BUILDINGS; AND**
- 2. DOES NOT INVOLVE THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN OPEN SPACE THAT IS IMPORTANT TO THE STREET SCENE; AND**
- 3. IS APPROPRIATE IN SCALE, FORM AND MATERIALS TO THE CHARACTER OF ITS SURROUNDINGS.**

Justification

- 4.37** A number of villages and hamlets are inappropriate locations for new housing development, even on the limited scale acceptable in the Smaller Villages defined in Policy H3(b). They have, therefore, no settlement boundaries. The settlements so defined are Brancepeth, Church Kelloe, Littletown, Old Cassop, Old Quarrington, Town Kelloe, Aldin Grange and Alum Waters.
- 4.38** Further development, other than of individual dwellings that meet the criteria set out in Policy H4, would damage the character of the settlements, which in the case of Old Cassop, Church Kelloe and Town Kelloe comprise relatively loosely linked farmsteads and houses within their historic form. Littletown, Aldin Grange and Old Quarrington also include areas of more compact housing as part of their physical framework. These parts of the villages have little infill potential whilst the generally dispersed nature of the rest of these settlements is generally inappropriate for infill

for the same reasons as set out above for Old Cassop, Church Kelloe, Town Kelloe and Alum Waters.

- 4.39** Brancepeth has an exceptionally attractive physical form, worthy of the utmost protection from inappropriate development. Incremental infilling and modest scale housing schemes have created a compact core centred on the crossroads, where opportunities for infilling housing are very limited. Beyond this core the village is more loosely knit, with a number of historically and architecturally important buildings set in a wooded landscape, justifying the strict control applied.
- 4.40** Isolated small groups of buildings are not classed as villages which, however small, usually have some facilities and a recognisable framework. In the Plan, towns and most villages are contained within settlement boundaries whereas these groups are not. They are unsatisfactory locations for new housing other than that which meet the criteria in Policy H4, and it would contravene established policies designed to protect the countryside. The extension or redevelopment of isolated terraces or of ribbons of development are inappropriate for similar reasons.

NEW HOUSING IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

POLICY H5 **IN THE COUNTRYSIDE NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT OR THE REBUILDING OF DERELICT OR ABANDONED HOUSES WILL BE PERMITTED ONLY WHERE ALL OF THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA ARE MET:**

- 1. IT IS REQUIRED FOR OCCUPATION BY PERSONS EMPLOYED SOLELY OR MAINLY IN AGRICULTURE OR FORESTRY.**
- 2. THE FUNCTIONAL NEED FOR THE PERSONS TO LIVE IN THIS LOCATION IN ORDER TO CARRY OUT THEIR DUTIES IS DEMONSTRATED TO THE SATISFACTION OF THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY BY EXPERT DETAILED ASSESSMENT.**
- 3. THE FINANCIAL VIABILITY OF THE ENTERPRISE HAS BEEN PROVED IN A DETAILED ASSESSMENT BY AN EXPERT. ON NEW OR DEVELOPING ENTERPRISES A TEMPORARY PERMISSION FOR TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION ONLY WILL BE GRANTED UNTIL SUCH A JUSTIFICATION IS CLEARLY DEMONSTRATED.**
- 4. IT IS OF A SIZE COMMENSURATE WITH THE ESTABLISHED FUNCTIONAL REQUIREMENT OF THE ENTERPRISE.**

5. **ADEQUATE PROVISION CANNOT BE MADE IN EXISTING BUILDINGS OR WITHIN SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES.**
6. **IT RESPECTS THE CHARACTER OF ITS LANDSCAPE SETTING IN TERMS OF ITS SITING, DESIGN, SCALE, MATERIALS, LANDSCAPING, PROTECTION OF EXISTING LANDSCAPE FEATURES AND RELATIONSHIP WITH NEARBY BUILDINGS.**

ANY DWELLING THUS PERMITTED WILL BE SUBJECT TO A CONDITION OR AN AGREEMENT WILL BE SOUGHT TO RESTRICT ITS OCCUPANCY.

Justification

- 4.41** National policy has for many years aimed to prevent unnecessary or sporadic development in the countryside. This is to protect the countryside for its own sake, to make the best use of existing services and infrastructure, and to minimise the need to travel. However, exceptions may be made for those employed in forestry or agriculture, who need to live in close proximity to their place of work to carry out their duties, or to allow sites for travellers as set out at Plan Policy H15.
- 4.42** Applicants will need to demonstrate that a new dwelling is an essential requirement, and must provide evidence of an existing functional need, at their own expense. They will also have to prove the financial viability of the enterprise. In both the case of the functional need and for the test of the viability, the expert detailed assessment should be based on independent and unbiased advice. It could, for example, be carried out by an agricultural consultant. In the case of well-established enterprises, established for at least three years, they should be financially sound and have a prospect of remaining so. Where the need and viability are established, the occupation of the dwelling will be restricted, generally by a condition, to limit its occupation to a person solely or mainly working in the locality in agriculture or forestry, or a widow or widower of such a person, and to any resident dependants. This condition will only be lifted when it is demonstrated through a realistic assessment that the need for the dwelling no longer exists, not only in relation to the particular holding, but the area as a whole.
- 4.43** Any dwelling approved under this Policy must be located so as to minimise its impact on its surroundings. This will generally mean siting it close to any existing buildings, and ensuring that the design and the materials used are modest and unobtrusive and are appropriate to a rural location and to the scale of the enterprise.
- 4.44** A preferable solution will usually be to convert an existing building to provide the dwelling and, if this is possible, permission for a new house is unlikely to be granted. Advice on conversion of buildings in rural areas is given in Policies E8 and EMP16, and in Appendix 6.

- 4.45** If an enterprise is being developed but is insufficiently established to justify a new dwelling, a temporary permission for temporary accommodation may be granted for a short period which would normally be three years. A justification should clearly demonstrate, through a functional and financial test, the viability of the enterprise and should provide evidence of the size of dwelling which it can sustain. If at the end of this period such a justification cannot be proven, the temporary accommodation will be required to be removed.
- 4.46** The Policy applies equally to the rebuilding of derelict or abandoned houses in the countryside.
- 4.46A** Paragraph 3.21 of PPG7 sets out other circumstances where isolated houses in the countryside may be permitted exceptionally, including proposals adding to the Country House tradition. Proposals for such development will be considered in the light of the factors outlined in paragraph 3.21 of PPG7.

Conversion of Rural Buildings to Residential Use

- 4.47** With the restriction on building new dwellings in the open countryside, proposals for the conversion of existing buildings outside settlement boundaries to residential use will only be approved in accordance with Policy E8.
- 4.48** Specific guidance for the conversion of traditional farm buildings is set out in Appendix 6.

Replacement Dwellings Outside Settlement Boundaries

POLICY H6 **THE REPLACEMENT OF AN EXISTING DWELLING WHICH IS OF NO VISUAL, ARCHITECTURAL, OR HISTORIC INTEREST AND LIES OUTSIDE DEFINED SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES, WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED:**

- 1. IT IS WITHIN THE SAME RESIDENTIAL CURTILAGE AS THE EXISTING DWELLING; AND**
- 2. IT IS SENSITIVELY SITED AND DESIGNED IN RELATION TO THE SURROUNDING LANDSCAPE AND ANY EXISTING BUILDINGS; AND**
- 3. IT DOES NOT EXCEED THE GENERAL SIZE AND SCALE OF THE EXISTING DWELLING; AND**
- 4. IT HAS RECEIVED PLANNING PERMISSION BEFORE DEMOLITION OF THE EXISTING DWELLING TAKES PLACE; AND**
- 5. THE DEVELOPMENT ACCORDS WITH POLICY E16.**

Justification

- 4.49 This Policy applies to all dwellings in the countryside which are currently in sound structural condition or which have very recently been destroyed by an unforeseen accident such as fire. It does not apply to derelict dwellings or dwellings which make a positive contribution to the character of the countryside by virtue of their visual, architectural or historic interest.
- 4.50 Normally, new development is considered to be inappropriate outside settlement boundaries because it would detract from the openness and attractiveness of the countryside. However, where a dwelling already exists, its replacement should have no additional impact on the countryside providing it is of the same general size and scale as that existing. Any replacement dwelling should be of an appropriate design and the opportunity should be taken where possible, to ensure that the new dwelling has less impact on the landscape than that existing.
- 4.51 Buildings can be important habitats for protected species, for example as bat roosts or bird nesting sites. The Council will seek the advice of English Nature about development proposals that may affect protected species or their habitat.

~~CITY CENTRE HOUSING~~

~~POLICY H7 THE COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AND CONVERSIONS TO RESIDENTIAL USE ON SITES WITHIN OR CONVENIENTLY CLOSE TO THE CITY CENTRE PROVIDED:~~

- ~~1. THERE IS NO CONFLICT WITH ANY OTHER POLICY OR PROPOSAL OF THIS PLAN, PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATING TO THE CONSERVATION AREA OR WORLD HERITAGE SITE, AND~~
- ~~2. IT IS IN SCALE AND CHARACTER WITH ITS SURROUNDINGS.~~

~~Justification~~

- 4.52 ~~The development of such sites for housing has many benefits: providing for special needs groups, and by using urban land, it complements regeneration, helping to support City Centre shops and services without creating the need to travel by car. In many instances, such housing is for small households and these sites, therefore, can make a valuable contribution to meeting this growing need. Nevertheless, any new development must ensure that there is no erosion either of essential City Centre facilities, or of the open spaces which form such an important part of the City's character.~~
- 4.53 ~~Within the City Centre it is acknowledged that it may not always be physically possible to provide car parking to the required standard. In such cases the required standard may be relaxed in the interest of both the desire to introduce~~

~~appropriate housing to the City Centre and to reduce the impact of traffic and reliance on the private car.~~

RESIDENTIAL USE OF UPPER FLOORS

POLICY H8 THE USE OF UPPER FLOORS OF SHOPS AND COMMERCIAL PREMISES FOR RESIDENTIAL PURPOSES WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT:

- 1. IT DOES NOT GIVE RISE TO CONFLICT WITH EXISTING USES IN THE AREA; AND**
- 2. IT DOES NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE CHARACTER OR VISUAL APPEARANCE OF THE SURROUNDING AREA; AND**
- 3. IT DOES NOT INVOLVE SIGNIFICANT EXTENSIONS, ALTERATIONS OR REBUILDING WHICH WOULD UNACCEPTABLY ALTER THE CHARACTER OR SCALE OF THE ORIGINAL BUILDING.**

Justification

- 4.54** Increased residential use of underused or redundant upper floorspace is an aim of government policy because it both provides more housing and can contribute to the vitality of town centres. The Council in its Housing Investment Programme supports such 'Living over the Shop' initiatives. Whilst it may be particularly appropriate to the City Centre and as such complements Policy CC1 in Chapter 11 of the Plan, the Policy applies throughout the District.
- 4.55** In considering such proposals it will be necessary to take account of surrounding land uses. The existence of uses such as hot food take-aways, public houses, and amusement centres could give rise to nuisance complaints from future residents of such schemes.
- 4.56** Proposals may require alterations to the existing building, to create access, openings for windows, and extensions or the removal of partitions to create habitable layouts. Such alterations should not change the scale or character of the building. This is particularly important in the case of listed buildings or within conservation areas.
- 4.57** Car parking requirements may be relaxed in certain cases as set out in the Transport Chapter (Paragraph 6.61) and for the reasons set out in Paragraph 4.53.

MULTIPLE OCCUPATION/STUDENT HOUSEHOLDS

POLICY H9 THE SUB-DIVISION OR CONVERSION OF HOUSES FOR FLATS, BEDSITS OR FOR MULTIPLE OCCUPATION, OR PROPOSALS TO EXTEND OR ALTER PROPERTIES

ALREADY IN SUCH USE WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT:

- 1. ADEQUATE PARKING (IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY T10), PRIVACY AND AMENITY AREAS ARE PROVIDED OR ARE ALREADY IN EXISTENCE; AND**
- 2. IT WILL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE AMENITIES OF NEARBY RESIDENTS; AND**
- 3. IT IS IN SCALE AND CHARACTER WITH ITS SURROUNDINGS AND WITH ANY NEIGHBOURING RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY; AND**
- 4. IT WILL NOT RESULT IN CONCENTRATIONS OF SUB-DIVIDED DWELLINGS TO THE DETRIMENT OF THE RANGE AND VARIETY OF THE LOCAL HOUSING STOCK; AND**
- 5. IT WILL NOT INVOLVE SIGNIFICANT EXTENSIONS HAVING REGARD TO POLICY Q9, ALTERATIONS OR REBUILDING WHICH WOULD UNACCEPTABLY ALTER THE CHARACTER OR SCALE OF THE ORIGINAL BUILDING.**

Justification

- 4.58** The sub-division of dwellings for self contained flats or bedsits generally requires permission. These are distinct from situations where residents live as a single household, sharing facilities, although they do not constitute a conventional family. In Durham this usually consists of students sharing houses, a practice which is difficult to control or resist.]
- 4.59** Flats and houses in multiple occupation often contribute to the supply of dwellings for smaller households but they may also have undesirable characteristics. These include adverse effects on the amenities of other occupiers and nearby residents such as noise disturbance or infringement of privacy. They frequently give rise to car parking problems in areas where off-street parking provision is scarce. Consideration is being given by Government to the introduction of a licensing system for Houses in Multiple Occupation, an approach formulated to address concern over conditions in this sector. It would place a statutory duty on local housing authorities to introduce licensing as a principal means of regulating standards. Such a scheme may have planning benefits. This issue will also be addressed through the proposals for parking control in Durham City as described in the Transport Chapter. It is also important to ensure that conversions to multiple occupation are appropriate in scale and character for the particular building and its surroundings, and that they do not erode the supply of a particular type of housing to an unacceptable extent.

- 4.60** In several wards there are significant concentrations of student households occupying older properties. As a rule these houses are bought or rented on the open market and are not subject to planning control, but problems regarding parking and noise do sometimes arise and the supply of housing for those usually resident in the City is eroded. It is difficult to fix an overall limit on the amount of multiple occupation that should be allowed in any street as this depends on individual circumstances and indeed in cases when planning permission is not required it is virtually impossible. Where applications are required for conversion to multi-occupation in such areas however, the Council will consider existing problems and concentrations when evaluating them.
- 4.61** Conversions to multiple occupation can include proposals to extend properties. Alternatively proposals may involve extensions to existing properties in such use. These can have a detrimental impact on the character of individual properties and neighbourhoods, for example, in areas of smaller two storey terraced housing. Such extensions can also allow a higher number of residents in a property, thereby exacerbating potential problems as set out in paragraph 4.59 above. In considering applications for extensions as part of an application for multiple occupation or to properties already in such use, the existing level of multiple occupation and student housing (as determined from Council records) will be taken into consideration when evaluating them. The Council will monitor applications for extensions in areas of high concentrations of multiple occupation and student housing. Should the higher levels of occupancy cause amenity and nuisance problems for the neighbourhood, the Council may withdraw permitted development rights or resist further extensions.

BACKLAND AND TANDEM DEVELOPMENT

POLICY H10 DEVELOPMENT OF BACKLAND AND TANDEM SITES WILL NOT BE PERMITTED UNLESS THERE IS:

- 1. A SAFE AND SATISFACTORY ACCESS AND ADEQUATE PARKING CAN BE PROVIDED IN ACCORD WITH POLICY T10; AND**
- 2. THE AMENITIES OF BOTH THE NEW AND EXISTING DWELLINGS ARE NOT ADVERSELY AFFECTED; AND**
- 3. IT IS IN KEEPING WITH THE CHARACTER, DENSITY, AND SCALE OF SURROUNDING OR ADJACENT DEVELOPMENT.**

Justification

- 4.62** Backland sites are those to the rear of existing houses, such as back gardens, or garden/garage plots across a back street behind existing housing. In most cases such sites are inappropriate for new houses due to poor access, inadequate standards of space or privacy, or because development would entail the loss of open or amenity areas. The residential character of certain areas consists of dwellings with large rear gardens and this must be protected from inappropriate

development. Where backland development would be detrimental to this character, it will not be permitted.

- 4.63 Tandem development consists of one house to the rear of another, sharing the same access. Such development will almost always be unsatisfactory because of disturbance and lack of privacy to the house at the front, as well as problems of access to the house at the rear. It can also be damaging to the character of an area.

~~MOBILITY/ACCESS WITHIN NEW HOUSING AND HOUSING REGENERATION SCHEMES~~

~~POLICY H11 WITHIN NEW HOUSING AND HOUSING RENOVATION SCHEMES THE COUNCIL WILL NEGOTIATE WITH DEVELOPERS TO PROVIDE A PROPORTION OF DWELLINGS WHICH ARE SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED OR EASILY ADAPTABLE FOR THOSE WITH IMPAIRED MOBILITY WHERE SUCH A NEED EXISTS. PARTICULAR REGARD WILL BE HAD TO LOCAL NEEDS, SITE CHARACTERISTICS AND PROXIMITY TO LOCAL SERVICES AND AMENITIES. NEW DWELLINGS SHOULD BE BUILT SO AS TO ASSIST ACCESS BY THE DISABLED AND WHEELCHAIR USERS.~~

~~Justification~~

- 4.64 ~~All new dwellings, including conversions, and proposals to renovate the existing housing stock (in situations when Planning Permission is required for the renovation works), should be designed so as to facilitate access for disabled visitors wherever possible in accordance with Policy Q2.~~
- 4.65 ~~More housing will be needed in future for the disabled and for the elderly, and it is often preferable for this to be provided within general housing areas rather than in specific enclaves. A proportion should be designed either for wheelchair users, or for subsequent adaptation at reasonable cost and without structural alterations. This proportion will be negotiated with developers having particular regard to local needs, site characteristics and proximity to local services and amenities. These requirements will also be applied to proposals to renovate the existing housing stock (in situations when Planning Permission is required for the renovation works).~~
- 4.66 ~~The Council will encourage all new bungalows to be capable of subsequent adaptation for wheelchair users without major structural alteration.~~
- 4.67 ~~The Council will continue to encourage the provision of more housing for aged and disabled people through its land releases and building programme.~~

AFFORDABLE HOUSING: ENSURING A RANGE OF HOUSE TYPES

POLICY H12 ON SITES OF 25 OR MORE DWELLINGS OR 1 HECTARE OR MORE IN SIZE, AND WHERE A LOCAL NEED EXISTS, THE COUNCIL WILL NEGOTIATE WITH DEVELOPERS FOR A FAIR AND REASONABLE PROPORTION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING, AND FOR AN APPROPRIATE VARIETY OF HOUSE TYPES AND SIZES.

Justification

- 4.68** House prices vary widely within the District. Fourteen of the 24 wards have 50% or more of their housing stock within the lowest Council Tax band (Band A). Others, particularly certain City Wards, have some of the most expensive housing in the County, reflecting the high level of demand traditionally associated with the City. Over the District as a whole, those able to purchase a house are considered to have a reasonable choice in terms of price. The Council intends to encourage the building of affordable houses, for sale or for rent, where they are scarce, but the general pattern of house prices is unlikely to change dramatically in the foreseeable future.
- 4.69** The Council is increasing the supply of affordable dwellings, through the disposal of its own land holdings, in partnership schemes with the private sector and housing associations, and through its own limited building programme. Where housing for sale is part of such initiatives, it is low cost and as widely affordable as possible, particularly for first time buyers. New housing for rent is intended to be similarly affordable, and to meet specific housing needs. The most important requirements for the Council are for smaller dwellings for the aged and for single people, since demand across the District is high whilst the population within both groups is expected to rise within the next decade.
- 4.70** The need for affordable housing and for housing for particular groups will be assessed and kept under review, and will be reflected in the Council's annual H.I.P. submissions. What is "affordable" in the context of this Policy is housing built for rent or for shared ownership (through a registered social landlord). Alternatively it includes properties built for sale and of a price that is affordable to those in need, (based on an assessment of housing prices in the locality and the relationship to income levels there).
- 4.71** Developers submitting schemes for sites of 25 or more dwellings or areas in excess of 1.0ha will be expected enter discussions with the Council to provide a fair and reasonable proportion of affordable dwellings. This proportion is not fixed because it will depend upon the need prevailing in that area at that particular time, as well as on site specific factors and constraints. When affordable housing on a site is justified, but where it would be more appropriate for it to be incorporated on an other site, the Council will be prepared to accept a financial or other contribution in lieu of such development on the original site. In implementing such an approach any off-site contribution will only be required to relate to provision within the same settlement.

- 4.72** The Council will still try to achieve affordable housing, and to provide for the needs of particular groups, on sites of less than 25 dwellings. Many sites in Durham City are likely to be smaller than this threshold, yet it is there that affordability problems are most likely to arise. In recent years, small developments near the City Centre have contributed significantly to the supply of dwellings for small households. Housing Associations and private developers will be encouraged to continue to make such contributions.
- 4.73** As a general rule, new affordable housing for rent will be provided either by the Council or by a registered housing association. This should ensure, therefore, that the new dwellings will remain affordable and continue to be used by the particular groups for which they were originally built.

THE TYPE AND SIZE OF HOUSING

POLICY H12A **THE COUNCIL WILL MONITOR THE TYPE AND SIZE OF NEW DWELLING COMPLETIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE TOTAL HOUSING STOCK. IF THIS EXERCISE INDICATES THAT A NEED FOR A PARTICULAR TYPE OR SIZE OF DWELLING IS NOT BEING MET, THE COUNCIL WILL NEGOTIATE WITH DEVELOPERS, PUTTING FORWARD PROPOSALS FOR NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT, TO ACHIEVE AN APPROPRIATE BALANCE OF DWELLING TYPE, SIZE AND DENSITY ON THEIR SCHEME.**

Justification

- 4.74** Central guidance in PPG3 requires that Local Planning Authorities should encourage mixed and balanced communities. In order to assist in achieving this aim, this policy is intended to monitor housing completions in order to establish if an appropriate balance of size and type is being achieved. What comprises an appropriate balance within the District will be established through evidence of particular problems (e.g. from the Council's own housing records) or through research carried out to address any perceived imbalance resulting from the monitoring exercise.
- 4.74A** As a general rule appropriate density will compromise that which makes the most efficient use of land and provides for more intensive housing developments. There may be occasions when schemes comprising lower density will be appropriate, for example, in order to reflect and protect the character of existing residential areas, particularly within Durham City, or to meet the specific local market need for high quality housing within the district.

AFFORDABLE RURAL HOUSING

- 4.75** The provision of small scale affordable housing schemes in rural areas can be permitted through the planning system by the release of land not normally released for housing on "exceptions" sites, where the occupation of dwellings is strictly limited to serving local needs. Durham City District is predominantly an urban district and where affordability problems do occur this tends to be within the City

itself. In the more rural settlements houses are generally available and prices are generally affordable, whilst waiting lists for rented accommodation (Durham City Council) are fairly low.

- 4.76** The Council will monitor the availability of affordable housing in the more rural parts of the District. Should evidence suggest an affordability problem the incorporation of an "exceptions" policy will be considered in the first review of the Local Plan.

THE CHARACTER OF RESIDENTIAL AREAS

POLICY H13 **PLANNING PERMISSION WILL NOT BE GRANTED FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT OR CHANGES OF USE WHICH HAVE A SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE EFFECT ON THE CHARACTER OR APPEARANCE OF RESIDENTIAL AREAS, OR THE AMENITIES OF RESIDENTS WITHIN THEM.**

Justification

- 4.77** Residential areas are defined as those parts of settlements where housing predominates. Residents can reasonably expect to enjoy a safe, secure and attractive environment, and protection from new uses which will detract from this. Thus development which generates, for example, pollution, noise, smell, dust, traffic or parking on a scale not normally associated with residential areas will be resisted, in accordance with Policies T1 and Q8.
- 4.78** Where established non-residential uses exist adjacent to housing areas, appropriate measures will be taken where possible to overcome the annoyance or disturbance which they cause.
- 4.79** Subject to these considerations, new non-residential uses may be appropriate and beneficial in housing areas, particularly when they increase the number and variety of facilities or services available to residents, without impairing their amenities. Examples might include small shops, community leisure or recreational facilities, surgeries and small businesses.

IMPROVING AND CREATING MORE ATTRACTIVE RESIDENTIAL AREAS

POLICY H14 **THE COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE DEVELOPMENTS AND INITIATIVES WHICH SECURE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS WITHIN EXISTING HOUSING AREAS BY:**

- 1. REQUIRING DEVELOPMENT TO RESPECT AND WHERE APPROPRIATE ENHANCE LOCAL CHARACTER; AND**
- 2. HAVING A REGARD TO POLICIES R3, Q1 AND Q2; AND**

3. ENCOURAGING AND WHERE APPROPRIATE SUPPORTING IMPROVEMENTS TO THE OVERALL PHYSICAL CONDITION OF THE HOUSING STOCK.

Justification

- 4.80** By improving existing residential areas through environmental improvements and by ensuring good quality in new developments, such areas will become more attractive as places where people choose to live. Pressure for new housing elsewhere can thereby be reduced as such areas regain or improve their vitality.
- 4.81** Most of the housing stock is in a good physical and structural condition. Nevertheless a programme of renovation, maintenance and improvement to the Council's housing stock is still required. The details and priorities of this programme are set out in the annual Housing Investment Programme strategy and submission.
- 4.82** The Council undertakes a number of housing initiatives associated with schemes such as the Estate Action Programme and the Single Regeneration Budget. Significant improvements will be carried out on Sherburn Road Estate in Durham City, involving stock transfer, new build and improvement, and environmental regeneration. The quality of the housing stock and the housing environment can give rise to localised problems in both the City Centre and the villages. Efforts will be undertaken to promote regeneration and raise the confidence and image of those communities affected by the economic and social consequences of colliery closures (e.g. Deerness Valley at Ushaw Moor and New Brancepeth). Other areas will receive similar attention, where financial resources are available over the Plan period.
- 4.83** Improvements to residential environments are not confined to the public sector. Wherever opportunities arise, for instance in conjunction with other developments or proposals, such measures will be encouraged.

SITES FOR TRAVELLERS

POLICY H15

NEW SITES OR PROPOSALS FOR EXTENSIONS TO EXISTING SITES FOR ACCOMMODATION FOR GYPSIES AND TRAVELLERS WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE:

- 1. THE SITE IS NOT WITHIN THE DURHAM CITY GREEN BELT, THE AREA OF HIGH LANDSCAPE VALUE, OR OTHER PROTECTED AREA; AND**
- 2. THE SITE IS ADEQUATELY SERVICED AND HAS A SATISFACTORY ACCESS; AND**
- 3. IT IS REASONABLY CLOSE TO SHOPS, SCHOOLS AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT; AND**

4. **IT WILL NOT HAVE AN ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE COUNTRYSIDE, THE LOCAL LANDSCAPE, THE AMENITIES OF NEARBY RESIDENTS, OR ON NEARBY BUSINESSES (INCLUDING AGRICULTURAL LAND); AND**
5. **WHERE APPROPRIATE THEY INCORPORATE LANDSCAPING IN ACCORD WITH POLICY Q5.**

Justification

- 4.84** The existing site of 17 pitches at Adventure Lane, West Rainton provides for the present needs of travellers, who also use a number of pitches on private sites elsewhere in the District. Overall the existing provision within the District is considered to be adequate.
- 4.85** Government policy indicates that the adequacy of provision is not an issue, and that applications for new sites must be assessed on their merits. New sites must be properly serviced, with satisfactory access, and be reasonably close to facilities and public transport. There should be adequate space within the site for domestic purposes and safe areas for children's play, and for working, storage and parking.
- 4.86** The Green Belt and the Area of Landscape Value are inappropriate locations for gypsy sites, as are Conservation Areas or any area designated in the Plan for its ecological, scientific or archaeological interest.
- 4.87** New sites must not intrude, visually or otherwise, into the countryside or the local landscape, nor must they adversely affect local residents or businesses, including farming enterprises. Such issues will be of critical importance when assessing proposals for new sites.

RESIDENTIAL INSTITUTIONS AND STUDENT HALLS OF RESIDENCE

POLICY H16 NEW, OR PROPOSALS FOR EXTENSIONS TO EXISTING HOSTELS, RESIDENTIAL INSTITUTIONS AND CARE HOMES WILL BE PERMITTED WITHIN SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES PROVIDED THAT:

1. **THEY ARE WELL RELATED TO SHOPS, COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL FACILITIES, AND TO PUBLIC TRANSPORT; AND**
2. **BOTH THE LOCATION AND THE FORM OF THE DEVELOPMENT ITSELF PROVIDE SATISFACTORY STANDARDS OF AMENITY AND OPEN SPACE FOR THE RESIDENTS; AND**
3. **THEY DO NOT DETRACT FROM THE CHARACTER OR THE APPEARANCE OF THE SURROUNDINGS**

OR FROM THE AMENITIES OF EXISTING RESIDENTS; AND

- 4. IN THE CASE OF STUDENT HALLS OF RESIDENCE THEY ACCORD WITH POLICY C3 OR THE PROPOSAL WOULD NOT LEAD TO A CONCENTRATION OF STUDENT ACCOMMODATION SUCH THAT IT WOULD ADVERSELY DETRACT FROM THE AMENITIES OF EXISTING RESIDENTS.**

Justification

- 4.88** This Policy covers a wide variety of residential institutions and includes, for instance, student halls of residence, homes for children or the elderly, for physically or mentally handicapped or homeless persons, and communal housing accommodation designed to provide for a particular group. It does not include properties in multiple occupation which are dealt with at Policy H9. It covers new build, extensions and the change of use of existing buildings.
- 4.89** Access to shops and community facilities is important if residents of certain institutions are to be satisfactorily integrated into the community in accordance with the government's "Care in the Community" policy. Particular groups, such as children, may need to be located near to particular facilities, e.g. schools. Satisfactory access to public transport for staff and visitors is essential. In practice, these criteria are likely to restrict suitable sites to Durham City and the larger villages (listed in Policy H3). Smaller villages are not anticipated to be appropriate locations for most residential institutions.
- 4.90** Residential institutions must relate well in scale and appearance to adjacent development; careful design and generous amenity space will often be required to prevent large institutional buildings from dominating their surroundings. They require satisfactory access and adequate parking in order that they do not impinge upon the neighbouring areas. Similarly, proposed extensions should not result in the over-development of sites. Adequate parking and amenity space should be retained.
- 4.91** Areas of amenity space are similarly essential for the well-being of residents, to provide private sitting out and walking areas as well as pleasant surroundings. Sites suffering from high levels of noise or pollution, from traffic or other sources, are not suitable for these uses.
- 4.92** When considering proposals for new extensions, or the change of use of an existing building to a student hall of residence, locations where a high concentration of student accommodation already exists (other than on a recognised campus where Policy C3 will apply) will not be permitted if it is considered that it could have a detrimental effect on the amenity of permanent residents living nearby as a result of such a concentration of student accommodation.

RENEWAL OF PLANNING PERMISSION FOR HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

POLICY H17 THE APPROVAL OF APPLICATIONS FOR THE RENEWAL OF PLANNING PERMISSION FOR HOUSING DEVELOPMENT WILL BE DEPENDENT ON THE OUTCOME OF A REVIEW OF A SITE'S SUITABILITY WITH REGARD TO OTHER POLICIES OF THIS PLAN AND TO CURRENT POLICY GUIDANCE, AND IN PARTICULAR WITH REGARD TO:

- 1. PRIORITY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF APPROPRIATE PREVIOUSLY DEVELOPED SITES; AND**
- 2. THE NEED TO MAKE THE MOST EFFICIENT USE OF THE SITE; AND**
- 3. THE LOCATION AND ACCESSIBILITY OF THE SITE; AND**
- 4. THE SUPPLY OF HOUSING LAND IN THE DISTRICT.**

Justification

- 4.93** In the context of this Policy "appropriate" previously developed sites means those within settlement boundaries that are not reserved for other uses and whose development would not conflict with other Policies of the Plan.
- 4.94** In reviewing a scheme, the need for the efficient use of the site in terms of density, parking provision and design will be assessed. This may require the redesign of a proposal, but could result in a more sustainable form of development. As a general rule the most efficient use of a site will be achieved by providing more intensive housing developments. There may be occasions when schemes comprising lower density will be appropriate, for example, in order to reflect and protect the character of existing residential areas, particularly within Durham City, or to meet the specific local market need for high quality housing within the District.
- 4.95** All housing sites should be in locations that are accessible to jobs and services by means of travel other than the private car, or where there is potential to improve such accessibility.
- 4.96** Housing supply within the District is monitored annually. The Plan currently makes an over-provision. In assessing renewals the supply situation will be considered and should be over-provision position continue, through windfall developments, for example, renewals may be resisted.

5 EMPLOYMENT

INTRODUCTION

- 5.1** This Chapter examines the employment structure of the District and formulates a series of Policies aimed at sustaining its economic prosperity.
- 5.2** For the purpose of the Plan, the employment uses referred to in this Chapter are those defined in The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987, and other industrial processes as defined in The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995. (See Appendix 2)

GENERAL BACKGROUND

The Local Economy

- 5.3** With its location within the "Central Corridor" of the County astride the East Coast Main Railway Line and A1(M) motorway midway between the conurbations of Tyneside and Teesside and the quality of its built and natural environment, the City of Durham has been able to attract inward economic investment to the extent that it now serves as an employment centre for an area extending well beyond its administrative boundary with a substantial net inflow of workers from the surrounding Districts. In 1993 there were 36,678 people employed within the District (Census of Employment 1993).
- 5.4** Service employment accounts for 80% of the total within the District compared with only 11% in manufacturing thus indicating its strength as an administrative and business centre of Sub-Regional importance. This is reflected by the fact that the City has a significantly greater percentage of its workforce from the County average employed in professional, managerial and non-manual groups. Its role as an administrative centre is endorsed by the presence of the Department of National Savings, Land Registry, Inland Revenue, Northumbrian Water Limited, Northumbria Tourist Board, the Northern and Yorkshire HQ of the NHS as well as the headquarters of Durham County Council, Durham Constabulary, Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service and Durham County Ambulance Service.
- 5.5** The development of the Mountjoy Research Centre over the past decade has provided the opportunity for the establishment of high-technological forms of employment within the City. The Science Park on land adjacent to this Centre will eventually create over 1000 new jobs and will consolidate Durham at the forefront of employment in this specialised field.
- 5.6** The University of Durham has a vital role in the local economy of the City. It directly employs 2,400 staff and sustains another 2,000 jobs within the local economy. It has an annual turnover of £80m and much of this expenditure is retained within the District. In addition the University's vocational trade through the conference and holiday lettings of its Colleges, referred to in the Tourism Chapter of the Local Plan, provides a significant input to the local economy.

- 5.7** Other employment within the District is concentrated in the City Centre and its immediate environs, the Aykley Heads area, the further educational establishments of New College Durham and Houghall Agricultural College, the industrial estates at Belmont, Dragonville, Littleburn, Meadowfield and Bowburn and the various commercial developments around Abbey Road, the Arnison Centre and the Mercia Retail Park. Durham City Centre fulfils an important role as a sub-regional shopping centre which, with its leisure and recreational facilities, provides a significant level of employment opportunities.
- 5.8** Unemployment within the District was 4.8% in April 1999. This has fluctuated during the past decade in line with national trends, although it has consistently remained below the regional average. There are still, however, variations in the level of unemployment throughout the District, particularly in the rural west and certain wards within Durham City. It is important, therefore, that further employment opportunities are created during the Plan period.
- 5.9** Several Wards in the City of Durham are eligible for Regional Selective Assistance following a review of Assisted Areas published by the Government in July 1999. Parts of the rural east and west of the District are designated as Rural Priority Areas thereby being eligible for assistance through the Rural Development Agency's rural programmes co-ordinated by One North East.

Availability of Land

- 5.10** A fundamental requirement for the continued economic prosperity of Durham is an adequate supply of good quality land for development in locations which suit varying demands of both manufacturing and service industries.
- 5.11** Most of the land currently available for industrial development is located at Meadowfield (38ha), Bowburn North (17ha) and Bowburn South (7ha). Other industrial land is available at Coxhoe (4ha) and Bearpark (3ha). Approximately 80% of this industrial land comprises 'brownfield sites' (i.e. land which utilises former industrial or colliery sites).
- 5.12** With regard to service employment (Class B1) a total of 13.5ha of land is currently available for the development of business parks at Belmont (6ha), Aykley Heads (5.5ha) and Abbeywoods (2ha). Land is also available for the development of the Science Park at Mountjoy (7ha).
- 5.13** Mount Oswald has been identified in various strategic documents as a prestigious site suitable for the establishment of a high quality office/research and development centre of regional importance.

Economic Development Strategy

- 5.14** The City Council's Economic Development Strategy provides the framework for its involvement in developing and supporting the local economy. The overall aim of the Strategy is to help create, through partnership, a strong diverse local economy in which new and existing businesses can succeed and invest, thereby safeguarding existing jobs and creating quality permanent employment for a

workforce whose skills are tailored to the requirements of both local companies and prospective inward investors.

5.15 The Council believes that successful economic development in the City can only be achieved through partnership and the development of new co-operative initiatives. The strategic objective of the City Council in participating in these partnerships are:

- sustaining competitive advantage
- supporting new and existing businesses
- attracting inward investment
- securing additional resources
- sharing benefit and reducing social exclusion
- securing adequate infra-structure
- encouraging environmental responsibility
- enhancing skills, education and training
- maximising the economic development of tourism to the City

5.16 The Economic Development Strategy, therefore, encompasses industrial promotion and marketing, financial and business support as well as land use and infra-structure developments. The Local Plan is concerned with the latter elements of the Strategy.

LOCAL PLAN OBJECTIVES

5.17 The Council's objectives for employment, to be pursued through the Policies and Proposals contained in this Chapter of the Plan, are:

- To provide for a wide range of quality employment opportunities in order to sustain a strong and diversified local economy; stimulate growth; and attract inward investment and reduce unemployment.
- To continue and promote in partnership with Durham County Council, the University of Durham and other appropriate bodies, the development of Durham as a sub-regional centre for research and development, high technology and supporting services.
- To provide and safeguard sites specifically intended to meet strategic or special employment needs.
- To ensure that adequate fully serviced industrial land is available at all times.

- To maintain the role of the City Centre as a major source of employment.
- To improve the environment within industrial estates by encouraging high quality design, the use of appropriate materials and increased landscaping.
- To strengthen and diversify the rural economy.

5.18 In seeking to achieve these objectives, the Council recognises the importance of working in partnership with the private sector and other public sector agencies such as Durham County Council, the European Commission, English Partnerships, County Durham Training and Enterprise Council and One North East throughout the Plan period. The Council believes that successful economic development in the City can only be achieved through the continuation of such partnerships.

LAND SUPPLY FOR EMPLOYMENT

5.19 One of the principal ways in which the Local Plan can contribute towards the economic prosperity of Durham is through the identification of land for business and industrial development. The choice of sites in terms of location, size and environmental quality will assist the expansion of existing companies, facilitate new inward investment and encourage new businesses. The Local Plan, therefore, identifies the following range of locations for different business and industrial uses:

- Durham Science Park; or
- Mount Oswald; or
- The City Centre and its immediate environs; or
- Business Parks; or
- Prestige Industrial Sites; or
- General Industrial Sites; or
- Local Industrial Sites.

POLICIES

DURHAM SCIENCE PARK

POLICY EMP2 THE DEVELOPMENT OF DURHAM SCIENCE PARK WILL CONTINUE ON THE SITE SHOWN ON THE PROPOSALS MAP ADJACENT TO THE MOUNTJOY RESEARCH CENTRE AT HOLLINSIDE LANE.

THE SCIENCE PARK WILL BE OCCUPIED ONLY FOR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT, LABORATORIES AND

HIGH TECH USES AS SET OUT IN CLASS B1 OF THE USE CLASSES ORDER.

Justification

- 5.20** Science Parks undertake a high level of advanced research and development as defined by Class B1 (b) of the Use Classes Order 1987. The Durham Science Park is being developed and managed in accordance with United Kingdom Science Park Association guidelines in order to maintain overall control over occupancy and the specialist type of activity required. Science Parks usually consist of a low density development providing the latest advanced technology located in close proximity to a university campus, thereby allowing for the creation of close links between academic institutions and industry. Such sites are of strategic importance and consequently they have a limited distribution throughout the United Kingdom.
- 5.21** The Durham Science Park shown on the Proposals Map, and identified by Policy EMP2, is located on 7 hectares of land next to the existing Mount Joy Research Centre and offers a unique opportunity for the establishment of such a facility. It is owned by the University of Durham and is situated within a high quality landscape setting with good access to all the facilities of both the University and the City.
- 5.22** Following planning permission in May 1993 construction of the Science Park on this site began as a joint venture between the University of Durham and the private sector. It has been designed to a high standard specification in order that it can be assimilated into this environmentally sensitive area. Phase I and Phase II have been completed. When the development of the Science Park is finally complete it will provide over 21,000 m² of high quality space with employment for over 1,000 people.

MOUNT OSWALD

POLICY EMP3 THE DEVELOPMENT OF A PRESTIGIOUS OFFICE/RESEARCH CENTRE PROJECT OF STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE WILL BE PERMITTED AT MOUNT OSWALD PROVIDED THAT THE PARKLAND AND LANDSCAPE QUALITY OF THE SITE IS NOT COMPROMISED.

ONLY EMPLOYMENT USES RELATING TO CLASS B1 OF THE USE CLASSES ORDER WILL BE PERMITTED ON THIS SITE.

Justification

- 5.23** Mount Oswald is located on the southern approach to the Durham approximately 2km from the City Centre. The site, which is currently used as a golf course, covers a total of 32.25ha and is contained within clearly defined boundaries in an area of attractive parkland containing substantial amounts of mature woodland. The quality of the site is recognised by both the Council and the County Council as being one of the few within the region offering the opportunity for the creation of a

prestigious office or research development of the highest architectural standard set within an existing mature parkland landscape. As such, Mount Oswald represents a major strategic economic development asset to the County and is identified as such in Paragraph 9.12 of the County Structure Plan (1999). Its importance as such a prestigious employment asset has been exemplified by the fact that Mount Oswald has been identified as one of only two sites in the region suitable for the development of a 'knowledge campus'.

- 5.24** The environmental quality of the site is such that only a limited proportion of the allocated area is available for development purposes (approximately 10%) in accordance with the development brief previously approved by the Council. The site will be protected from speculative piecemeal development or inappropriate development and will remain in its existing use until such time as a major inward investment of the special quality envisaged is forthcoming. The Development Brief may be subject to review in accordance with extant or emerging National and Regional Policy Guidance, but in any event any development proposal at Mount Oswald will need to comply with Policy E5 of the Plan which seeks to protect the parkland landscape on this approach to the City.
- 5.25** Road/junction improvements in the vicinity of this site may be required in accordance with Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions' Policy as set out in Appendix 7 of this Plan.

BUSINESS PARKS

POLICY EMP4 THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS ARE DESIGNATED AS BUSINESS PARKS:

- 1. ABBEYWOODS**
- 2. BELMONT**
- 3. AYKLEY HEADS**

GENERALLY THE BUSINESS PARKS WILL BE OCCUPIED FOR PURPOSES AS SET OUT IN CLASS B1 OF THE USE CLASSES ORDER.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF SITES TWO AND THREE OF THE AYKLEY HEADS BUSINESS PARK WOULD BE SUBJECT TO THE REPLACEMENT OF SPORTS PITCHES IN AN APPROPRIATE LOCATION WITHIN THE LOCALITY.

Justification

- 5.26** Business Parks are small high quality sites suitable for business and office use in attractive surroundings with good access to local labour markets and the regional communications network. Such developments incorporate the latest office technology and are designed to a high architectural specification. Durham City is recognised in the Durham County Structure Plan (1999) as being a suitable

location for the development of Business Parks and three sites have been identified for designation in the Local Plan.

- 5.27** The Abbeywoods Business Park, adjacent to the Arnison/Mercia Centre at Pity Me, covers a total of 3.4ha and includes land in both public and private ownership. 1.4ha of the business park is developed and occupied. Phase I is complete and fully occupied. The remaining land is available for further expansion and represents an important opportunity for the development of high quality B1 employment use.
- 5.28** The Belmont Business Park occupies 6ha of land on the southern fringe of the existing Belmont Industrial Estate on the eastern side of Durham City. It is currently being developed in a joint venture between Durham County Council (in its capacity as landowner) and the private sector.
- 5.29** The Aykley Heads Business Park covers an area of 6.8ha and is located approximately 1 kilometre north of the City Centre. It complements the existing major office developments in this part of Durham City (County Hall, Land Registry, Headquarters for the Police, Fire and Ambulance Services). Land was allocated at Aykley Heads in the original Local Plan for office development and part of it is occupied by the Headquarters of the North East Chamber of Trade, Northumbria Tourist Board and Sport England. Durham TEC has recently received planning permission to construct a new headquarters on this site.
- 5.30** Durham County Council and Durham City Council are collaborating with other interested parties to provide a development framework for the Aykley Heads area. Opportunities for development will be reconciled with the capacity of the estate to absorb other employment opportunities in accordance with Policy EMP4(c). Part of this involves Durham County Council, as landowner, undertaking a comprehensive environmental assessment of the effect additional new office development will have upon the Aykley Heads area. This will address the issue of traffic generation, visual impact, loss of open space and protection of nature conservation interests. It will include an assessment of the mitigation measures appropriate to the development in a mature parkland landscape. The Environmental Assessment will form the basis upon which individual planning applications will be brought forward for the development of the land allocated in the Local Plan in Policy EMP4c. In considering these applications, the City Council, as Local Planning Authority, will also need to be satisfied that any new office proposal complies with Policy E3 of the Plan which seeks to protect the character and setting of the World Heritage Site and Policy R3 which seeks to protect the development of open space used for recreational purposes. Any new development will need to comply with the criteria set out in Policy E5 in order to protect the intrinsic character and environmental quality of the mature parkland landscape within which the Aykley Heads Business Park is set. In order to accord to facilitate the development of sites 2 and 3 of the Aykley Heads Business Park, and to comply with the requirements of Policy R3, replacement sports pitches (two playing fields and an all weather pitch) will be provided in an appropriate location within the locality. The replacement facilities shall be brought into use prior to the development of the existing sports pitches.

- 5.31** The Business Parks identified in Policy EMP4 are intended for development in accordance with Class B1 of the Use Classes Order. The Council will, however, not oppose other limited uses being located within the Business Parks provided they cater primarily for the people and businesses working within them.
- 5.32** Road/junction improvements in the vicinity of the sites identified in Policy EMP4 may be required in accordance with Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions' Policy as set out in Appendix 7 of this Plan.

PRESTIGE INDUSTRIAL SITES

- POLICY EMP5**
- 1. THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS ARE DESIGNATED AS PRESTIGE INDUSTRIAL SITES:**
 - a) BELMONT**
 - b) BOWBURN NORTH**
 - 2. THE FOLLOWING USES WILL BE PERMITTED ON PRESTIGE INDUSTRIAL SITES:**
 - a) BUSINESS USE (CLASS B1)**
 - b) GENERAL INDUSTRY (CLASS B2) PROVIDED THERE IS NO SIGNIFICANT DETRIMENTAL EFFECT ON THE ENVIRONMENT OR ON THE AMENITIES OF THE OCCUPIERS OF ADJOINING OR NEARBY PROPERTIES AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEIGHBOURING AREAS;**
 - 3. NEW DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS WILL BE REQUIRED TO ACHIEVE A HIGH STANDARD OF DESIGN AND LANDSCAPING IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICIES Q5, Q6 AND Q7.**
- POLICY EMP6** **AN ADDITIONAL 2.5 HECTARES OF LAND WILL BE PROVIDED FOR PRESTIGE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AT BELMONT.**

Justification

- 5.33** Prestige Industrial Sites are, by their very definition, high quality, strategically located, major industrial sites, capable of competing against sites at both national and regional level. A high quality environment with good communication links to motorways, close to centres of population with accessibility to modern telecommunication networks, are essential pre-requisites.
- 5.34** In view of the scarcity of land for Prestige Industrial Development within the District it is important that the limited supply available is reserved only for Class B1 and

Class B2 uses. Proposals which require large sites but provide few jobs such as warehousing (Class B8) will be resisted without special justification. Those types of industry which will have a detrimental effect on the amenity of adjoining occupants or require outside storage facilities will also not be permitted on prestige industrial estates. Retailing (Class A1) is not considered appropriate unless it is incidental to the main manufacturing process as set out in Policy S7.

- 5.35** The existing prestige industrial estate at Belmont is fully developed. The site allocated in the Local Plan provides an additional 2.5ha of land immediately adjacent to the relocated Durham City Football Club. As such it forms an extension to the existing industrial estate and is considered acceptable since the amenity of the area can be safeguarded by substantial structural planting along Belmont Way, in accordance with Policy Q6. The site will provide additional prestige industrial land for potential inward investors thereby affording the flexibility of choice set out in Policy EMP1.
- 5.36** Within the existing Bowburn North Industrial Estate there is currently 17ha of land available for development. This includes the remainder of the existing, hitherto undeveloped, industrial estate (5ha) and the site formerly occupied by Cape Unichem (12 ha). It is well contained by the A177 and the Leamside railway line and is capable of offering a high quality location close to the A1(M). Efforts to secure the early implementation of the site's development may require a degree of flexibility regarding the mixture of employment uses provided that they are not prejudicial to the principles set out in Policy EMP5.
- 5.37** New development on these sites at Belmont and Bowburn North will be expected to be of a high quality thereby reflecting the environmental standards appropriate for prestige industrial estates in accordance with Policy Q7.
- 5.38** Road/junction improvements in the vicinity of this site may be required in accordance with Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions' Policy as set out in Appendix 7 of this Plan.

POLICY EMP7 **52 HECTARES OF LAND SOUTH OF BOWBURN SOUTH INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, AS SHOWN ON THE PROPOSALS MAP, WILL BE ALLOCATED FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A PRESTIGE INDUSTRIAL AND BUSINESS SITE (CLASS B1, B2 AND B8). PART OF THE SITE IMMEDIATELY ABUTTING THE LEAMSIDE LINE WILL BE RESERVED FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FIRST PHASE OF A REGIONAL INTER MODAL RAIL FREIGHT INTERCHANGE FACILITY.**

136 HECTARES OF LAND BETWEEN THE ALLOCATED SITE, THE EAST COAST MAIN LINE AND TURSDALE ROAD (A688), AS SHOWN ON THE PROPOSALS MAP, WILL BE RESERVED FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE RAIL FREIGHT FACILITY BEYOND THE CURRENT PLAN PERIOD.

WITHIN THE RESERVED AREA PLANNING PERMISSION WILL ONLY BE GRANTED FOR EMPLOYMENT USES WHICH REQUIRE A DIRECT RAIL LINK OR PROXIMITY TO THE RAIL TERMINAL.

NO OTHER USE WILL BE PERMITTED ON THIS SITE OTHER THAN THOSE WHICH ARE ANCILLARY AND APPROPRIATE TO THE OCCUPIERS OF THE SITE.

THE COUNCIL WILL REQUIRE A DETAILED APPRAISAL OF THE ALLOCATED SITE TO BE UNDERTAKEN PRIOR TO ANY DEVELOPMENT COMMENCING IN ORDER TO IDENTIFY PRECISE DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS AND ADDRESS THE ISSUES OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT, ACCESS (INCLUDING ASSOCIATED ROAD IMPROVEMENTS), TRAFFIC GENERATION AND NECESSARY INFRASTRUCTURE WORKS.

Justification

- 5.39** The sites currently available for prestige industrial development at Belmont and Bowburn North are not considered adequate to supply demand during the plan period, even with the additional 2.5 hectares allocated at Belmont in accordance with Policy EMP6. That being so, it would be expedient for the Council to initiate action during then current plan period to alleviate this problem. At the Planning Inquiry into the County Durham Structure Plan Review held in September 1996, the City Council identified the area close to the A1(M) between Bowburn and Tursdale as being the most suitable to accommodate the long term demands for prestige employment.
- 5.40** The site, which is identified in Policy EMP7 and shown on the Proposals Map, covers 188 hectares. Of this, 52 hectares is allocated in the Plan for development of a prestige industrial and business site during the Plan period, with that part immediately abutting the Leamside Line reserved for the first phase of the rail freight facility. The precise area of the site to be developed for prestige industrial and business use will be determined following a detailed site appraisal (as set out in para 5.43 below). It will not, however, exceed 50% (26ha) of the allocated site. The remaining 136 hectares will be reserved for further development of the rail freight facility beyond the current Plan period. It has excellent access to the regional road network and is within 4 miles of Durham City Centre. It is not within the Green Belt or of a high landscape quality and its development would not impinge upon the character and setting of Durham City.
- 5.41** Its proximity to the Leamside Line and the East Coast Main Line has also enabled the site to be identified by Railtrack as the only suitable location within the north east which meets all the operational requirements for development as a regional road/rail freight interchange facility. Such a proposal, which is planned to be implemented during the Plan period, would encompass the principles of sustainability embodied in The Draft Regional Planning Guidance for the North East, The County Durham Structure Plan, The Deposit Draft City of Durham Local Plan and The Local Transport Plan for County Durham by reducing the impact of

vehicular traffic on the environment. It would also accord with Structure Plan Policy 39 and Local Plan Policy T9 which specifically seek to transfer the transport of bulky goods from road to rail. The Council will seek to encourage employment generating uses which would benefit from this strategic transport location to become established on the allocated site.

- 5.42** Implementation of this major employment generating proposal could involve the provision of a new road linking the site with the adjoining Bowburn South and North Industrial Estates and the A177 to the north of Bowburn. Such a new road would accord with Policy T2 of the Local Plan and would facilitate the opportunity for a major traffic management scheme to be carried out in the village, in accordance with Policy T8.
- 5.43** The City Council will require a detailed appraisal of the site allocated in Policy EMP7 to be undertaken prior to any development commencing in order to identify precise development constraints and address the issues of environmental impact, access and traffic generation.

GENERAL INDUSTRIAL ESTATES

- POLICY EMP8**
- 1. THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS ARE DESIGNATED AS GENERAL INDUSTRIAL SITES:**
 - a) DRAGONVILLE**
 - b) LANGLEY MOOR/LITTLEBURN**
 - c) MEADOWFIELD**
 - d) BOWBURN SOUTH**
 - e) ABBEY ROAD, PITY ME**
 - 2. THE FOLLOWING USES WILL BE PERMITTED ON GENERAL INDUSTRIAL SITES:**
 - a) BUSINESS USE (CLASS B1)**
 - b) GENERAL INDUSTRY (CLASS B2)**
 - c) WAREHOUSING (CLASS B8)**
 - 3. NEW DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS SHOULD CONFORM WITH POLICY Q7.**

THE CITY COUNCIL WILL, IN CONJUNCTION WITH OTHER PUBLIC AND PRIVATE AGENCIES, SEEK TO IMPROVE THE OVERALL QUALITY OF GENERAL INDUSTRIAL ESTATES WITHIN THE DISTRICT IN TERMS OF ENVIRONMENTAL ENHANCEMENT, ACCESS AND

TRANSPORT LINKAGES (INCLUDING PUBLIC TRANSPORT).

Justification

- 5.44** The General Industrial Sites are strategically located throughout the District with good access to the local road network, markets and labour force. As such these can make a contribution towards reducing dependence upon private transport in line with PPG13. They cater for both existing firms wishing to expand and new ones wishing to locate in Durham by allowing for a wide range of acceptable uses including business, general industry and warehousing. A total of 53 hectares of land is available for development within the existing general industrial estates at Meadowfield (46ha) in the west of the District, and Bowburn South (7ha) in the south of the District.
- 5.45** The Council acknowledges that there is a need to improve the image and marketability of some of the older general industrial sites within the District in order to ensure that firms are attracted to Durham as a location for their businesses. Proposals, therefore, which are brought forward during the Plan period to redevelop or modernise outdated premises, undertake environmental improvements within the industrial estates or improve access, servicing and traffic circulation will be supported.
- 5.46** As these general industrial sites provide the bulk of the District's industrial land resource, it would undermine the local authority's economic strategy if all of it was made available for non industrial purposes other than where retailing is ancillary to the main manufacturing process as set out in Policy S13. The only exception may be with respect to part of the frontage of the Bowburn South Industrial Estate which may be suitable for the development of a Local Centre for the village of Bowburn referred to in Policy S6 of the Plan and paragraph 7.37. The need for a local centre in Bowburn arises from the fact that the village lacks such a facility as has experienced a significant growth in its population over the last ten years.
- 5.47** Road/junction improvements in the vicinity of the sites identified in Policy EMP8 may be required in accordance with Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions' Policy as set out in Appendix 7 of this Plan.

LOCAL INDUSTRIAL SITES

- POLICY EMP9** 1. **THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS ARE DESIGNATED AS LOCAL INDUSTRIAL SITES:**
- a) **BEARPARK**
 - b) **COXHOE**
 - c) **QUARRINGTON HILL**
 - d) **SHERBURN VILLAGE**
 - e) **SHERBURN HILL**

2. **THE FOLLOWING USES WILL BE PERMITTED ON LOCAL INDUSTRIAL SITES:**
 - a) **LIGHT AND GENERAL INDUSTRY (CLASSES B1 AND B2) PROVIDED THAT THERE IS NO SIGNIFICANT DETRIMENTAL EFFECT ON THE ENVIRONMENT OR ON THE AMENITY OF THE OCCUPIERS OF ADJOINING OR NEARBY PROPERTY AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEIGHBOURING AREAS**
 - b) **WAREHOUSING (CLASS B8)**
3. **NEW DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS SHOULD CONFORM WITH POLICY Q7.**

Justification

- 5.48** Local Industrial Sites provide an important source of accommodation for small businesses and start-up firms serving local markets as well as providing local employment opportunities. Since they are particularly close to labour markets, they can also help reduce journeys to work and thus help to sustain rural communities.
- 5.49** Due to their location within villages they tend, with the exception of the site at Bearpark, to be situated either adjoining or within residential areas. It is important, therefore, that activities carried out on these sites do not create environmental problems. Potential uses which are incompatible with residential areas will not be permitted to become established on these sites unless they can comply with the criteria set out in Policy EMP10.

BAD NEIGHBOUR ACTIVITIES

POLICY EMP10 PROPOSALS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT, USE OR EXTENSION OF SITES FOR 'BAD NEIGHBOUR' INDUSTRIAL USES WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WITHIN DEFINED SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES OR ON DESIGNATED INDUSTRIAL ESTATES PROVIDED THAT:

1. **IT WOULD NOT HAVE AN ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE OCCUPIERS OF NEARBY AND ADJOINING PREMISES IN TERMS OF NOISE, DUST, SMELL, SMOKE OR VISUAL INTRUSION; AND**
2. **IT WOULD NOT BE SERIOUSLY DETRIMENTAL TO THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE AREA AND IT CAN BE ADEQUATELY SCREENED; AND**

3. **THE SITE CAN BE SERVED BY ROADS CAPABLE OF ACCOMMODATING ANY INCREASE IN TRAFFIC GENERATED BY THE DEVELOPMENT; AND**
4. **THE SITE IS OF SUFFICIENT SIZE TO ACCOMMODATE THE USE WITH ADEQUATE PROVISION FOR SERVICING AND CAR PARKING.**

Justification

- 5.50** Within the District there are a number of businesses which can be described as 'bad neighbour activities'. These are uses within the Use Class B2 or no use class at all (sui generis) which, by their very nature, may have adverse environmental implications due to excessive outside storage, noise, smell and dust. They include activities such as coal depots, motor vehicle repair and salvage operations, paint spraying, haulage depots and the production of unsightly or noxious waste materials. In many cases these are inappropriately located in or adjacent to residential areas throughout the District.
- 5.51** New development of this nature should only take place where there is no significant nuisance to adjacent premises and occupiers in terms of noise, dust, smell, smoke or visual intrusion where the proposals would not seriously affect the character and appearance of the area and where the development would not cause conditions prejudicial to road safety.

EMPLOYMENT WITHIN SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES BUT OUTSIDE DESIGNATED SITES

POLICY EMP11 PLANNING PERMISSION FOR NEW BUSINESS OR INDUSTRIAL USE OR EXTENSIONS TO EXISTING INDUSTRIAL AND BUSINESS PREMISES LOCATED WITHIN SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES BUT OUTSIDE THE SITES DESIGNATED IN POLICIES EMP2, EMP3, EMP4, EMP5, EMP6, EMP8 AND EMP9 WILL ONLY BE GRANTED WHEN IT CAN BE DEMONSTRATED THAT THE PROPOSAL WOULD NOT:

1. **HAVE SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE AMENITY OF NEIGHBOURING OCCUPIERS IN TERMS OF NOISE, DUST, AND GENERAL DISTURBANCE; AND**
2. **ADVERSELY AFFECT THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE AREA IN WHICH IT IS TO BE LOCATED; AND**
3. **RESULT IN AN INCREASE IN TRAFFIC GENERATION TO THE DETRIMENT OF LOCAL AMENITY AND HIGHWAY SAFETY.**

Justification

- 5.52** As a general principle new industrial or business development should be located on designated sites. Some businesses, however, may be able to meet acceptable environmental standards, without either having a detrimental impact on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers of property or on the character and appearance of the area in which they are located. Such businesses can provide important employment opportunities within their locality and make use of buildings that may otherwise become redundant and/or derelict. This is of particular relevance to local centres which can often provide an opportunity for various small scale business activities to take place. It is important that the Plan has the flexibility to allow this type of localised employment to flourish.
- 5.53** In instances where it is intended to grant planning permission for industrial or business development outside a designated site, the Council will need to bear in mind that the subsequent intensification of use may result in the development becoming unacceptable. The Council will, therefore, when it considers it appropriate, attach conditions to the original planning approval, or require the developer to enter into a planning agreement in order to safeguard local amenity.
- 5.54** The Council wishes to encourage the growth and expansion of existing companies, some of which are located outside existing designated employment sites (e.g. Ness Furniture at Croxdale). In considering proposals for the extension of these businesses it will be necessary for the applicant to demonstrate that the benefits for industry and employment are reconciled with any environmental concerns. Care should be taken to avoid a significant loss in the local amenity which residents and occupiers of adjacent properties could reasonably expect to enjoy. Matters of particular relevance include noise, nuisance, traffic generation and visual impact.

OFFICE DEVELOPMENT

- 5.55** Whilst new office development will be allowed at Mount Oswald (Policy EMP3) and the various Business Parks identified in Policy EMP4, there are other locations within the District where such development is acceptable. Policies EMP12-14 have therefore, been formulated to reflect this. Sites specifically allocated for new office development within the City Centre are identified to in Chapter 11 of the Plan.

General Locational Criteria

POLICY EMP12 NEW OFFICE DEVELOPMENT OR CHANGE OF USE OF AN EXISTING BUILDING TO OFFICES WILL BE PERMITTED WITHIN, OR ADJACENT TO, THE CITY CENTRE AND WITHIN DISTRICT AND LOCAL CENTRES.

Justification

- 5.56** Office development (Class A2 and Class B1(a) of the Use Class Order) is a major contributor to the overall economy of Durham, providing employment opportunities

and an important range of services to the general public. Further development within the City Centre will not only help to enhance the vitality and viability of the area but will also assist in consolidating Durham as the administrative centre of the County. Similarly, office development will be allowed in the district and local centres identified in Policies S4, S5 and S7A, provided such a proposal does not conflict with any other Policy of the Plan particularly those covering access and parking.

- 5.57** Although provision should be made to meet the demand for new purpose built office space within the City Centre, opportunities exist for the sympathetic conversion of existing buildings, or the re-use of redundant upper floors for office purposes. Sites for new office development in the City Centre are identified in Policy CC3 of the Plan.

Office Development Sites (Outside the City Centre)

POLICY EMP13 NEW OFFICE DEVELOPMENT WILL BE PERMITTED ON THE FOLLOWING SITES:

- a) **REDHILLS**
- b) **LAND ADJACENT TO DURHAM STATION CAR PARK**

Justification

- 5.58** Policy EMP13 identifies two specific sites on the periphery of the City Centre which are suitable for office development.
- 5.59** The site at Redhills involves the conversion of a listed building formerly occupied as the headquarters of County Durham National Union of Mineworkers. It is a Grade II Listed Building set within a high quality landscape environment. Development of the site will be constrained by the poor vehicular access, the need to preserve the architectural character of the building and its contribution to the Durham (City Centre) Conservation Area.
- 5.60** The site allocated in Policy EMP13b involves the redevelopment of land not required to meet the foreseeable needs for station car parking. The land remaining after this for possible office development may be relatively small.

Office Development Elsewhere

POLICY EMP14 PLANNING PERMISSION FOR NEW OFFICE DEVELOPMENT (INCLUDING CONVERSIONS AND EXTENSIONS) WITHIN SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES, BUT OUTSIDE THE AREAS IDENTIFIED IN POLICIES EMP12 AND EMP13, WILL ONLY BE GRANTED PROVIDED THAT:

1. **THERE IS NO SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE AMENITY OF NEIGHBOURING OCCUPIERS OF PROPERTY; OR**
2. **THE SITE IS ACCESSIBLE BY A CHOICE OF MEANS OF TRANSPORT, HAVING PARTICULAR REGARD TO THE NEEDS OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT, PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS; AND**
3. **THE SITE CAN BE SERVED BY ROADS CAPABLE OF ACCOMMODATING ANY INCREASE IN TRAFFIC GENERATED BY THE PROPOSAL.**

Justification

5.61 Whilst it is anticipated that most office development will take place within the areas identified in Policies EMP3, EMP4, EMP12 and EMP13, there may be premises within the built-up part of the District outside these areas which would be suitable for office use. Generally such a development would involve either conversion, extension, or new construction on a modest scale within the general curtilage of the existing property.

5.62 Listed buildings or other buildings of historic or architectural interest, houses set in extensive grounds, or former industrial buildings, whose existing or previous use may no longer be viable are examples of the type of property which are worthy of retention under the criteria set out in Policy E23. Whilst they may be suitable for use as offices, particularly where improvements to the buildings and surroundings can be incorporated. Any such proposal must comply with other Policies in the Plan.

Taxi Booking Offices

POLICY EMP15 TAXI BOOKING OFFICES WILL BE PERMITTED ONLY WITHIN THE CITY CENTRE, DISTRICT AND LOCAL CENTRES AND OTHER APPROPRIATE LOCATIONS PROVIDED THAT:

1. **THEY DO NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE AMENITY OF THE OCCUPANTS OF NEARBY OR ADJOINING PROPERTY;**
2. **THEY DO NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT HIGHWAY SAFETY.**

TAXI BOOKING OFFICES WILL NOT BE PERMITTED IN RESIDENTIAL AREAS.

Justification

- 5.63** Taxi offices need to be conveniently located for customers and require good road access. However, noise from vehicles, drivers, customers and radio equipment can be disturbing to residents, particularly at night. In addition, drivers often wait or rest at taxi offices and, therefore, their vehicles should be parked off the highway in the interests of road safety and amenity.

EMPLOYMENT IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

General

POLICY EMP16 PLANNING PERMISSION FOR EMPLOYMENT GENERATING USES WITHIN THE COUNTRYSIDE WILL ONLY BE GRANTED PROVIDED THAT:

- 1. IT INVOLVES THE ESSENTIAL PROCESSING AND THE TREATMENT OF MINERAL: OR**
- 2. IT INVOLVES THE ESSENTIAL PROCESSING AND TREATMENT OF AGRICULTURAL OR FORESTRY PRODUCTS; OR**
- 3. IT INVOLVES THE REUSE OR ADAPTION OF AN EXISTING BUILDING IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY E8; OR**
- 4. IT INVOLVES THE DIVERSIFICATION OF AN AGRICULTURAL ENTERPRISE IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY EMP17; OR**
- 5. IT INVOLVES THE EXTENSION OF AN ESTABLISHED INDUSTRIAL OR BUSINESS USE.**

WHEN CONSIDERING AN APPLICATION FOR NEW EMPLOYMENT GENERATING USE WITHIN THE COUNTRYSIDE, THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO ENSURE THAT THE PROPOSAL:

- WILL HAVE NO UNACCEPTABLE ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE COUNTRYSIDE;**
- WILL HAVE NO UNACCEPTABLE ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE AMENITY OF NEARBY RESIDENTS OR OTHER LAND USES;**
- CAN BE SERVED BY ROADS CAPABLE OF ACCOMMODATING ANY INCREASE IN TRAFFIC GENERATED BY THE DEVELOPMENT;**

- **WILL NOT BE PREJUDICIAL TO THE PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF NATURE CONSERVATION INTERESTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICIES E16, E17, E18, E19 AND E20;**
- **WILL HAVE NO ADVERSE IMPACT UPON THE WATER ENVIRONMENT DUE TO THE GENERATION OF POOR QUALITY WASTE WATERS.**

Justification

- 5.63** Whilst PPG7 identifies the need to accommodate employment generating uses within the countryside in order to sustain the rural economy, such proposals need to be strictly controlled because they may impinge upon areas of high quality agricultural land or the tranquillity of rural areas or land valued because of its landscape or nature conservation interest.
- 5.64** There are, however, certain circumstances when new employment generating development might be appropriate in the countryside as, for example, when there is requirement to be close to a source of raw materials such as mineral processing, or the production of agricultural or forestry products *or* where it involves the reuse of an existing building, the diversification of an agricultural enterprise or the extension of an established industrial or business use. Such a proposal would need to conform with other Policies of the Plan and, in particular, those aimed at the conservation of the City's environmental resources. With regard to proposals relating to mineral extraction, planning conditions would need to be imposed limiting the period of industrial activity to the availability of the raw material which justifies the countryside location; limiting the activity to that approved; and controlling any intensification of the activity that might otherwise have an unacceptable impact on the local environment.
- 5.65** Any feature which contributes to the character of an existing building should be preserved and substantial extensions and alterations would not normally be considered appropriate. Any proposal which involves the external storage of materials, plant or vehicles will not normally be considered acceptable in a rural location.
- 5.66** There are a number of employment sites within the District located outside the existing built up areas which have developed over time (ie Tursdale Engineering, Anderson and Young at former Witton Gilbert Station, Finchale Training Centre, East Durham and Houghall Community College). Whilst it would be unreasonable to prevent them from expanding further, any extension will need to be considered in relation to its impact on the local environment, landscape and, where applicable, adjacent properties. Discussions have taken place with Finchale Training Centre and East Durham and Houghall Community College to assess future development needs and make provision for further development of these institutions without prejudicing the openness of the Durham City Green Belt (see Policy E2).

Farm Diversification

POLICY EMP17 WHERE PLANNING PERMISSION IS REQUIRED, FOR FARM DIVERSIFICATION, IT WILL BE GRANTED PROVIDED THAT:

- 1. THE PROPOSAL WOULD NOT HAVE AN UNACCEPTABLE ADVERSE EFFECT UPON THE AMENITY, CHARACTER OR APPEARANCE OF THE COUNTRYSIDE; AND**
- 2. THE PROPOSAL WOULD BE OF A SCALE APPROPRIATE TO ITS SURROUNDINGS; AND**
- 3. THE PROPOSAL WOULD HAVE NO UNACCEPTABLE ADVERSE EFFECT ON THE AMENITY OF THE OCCUPIERS OF NEARBY OR ADJOINING PROPERTY; AND**
- 4. PROPOSALS FOR THE RE-USE OR ADAPTION OF AN EXISTING BUILDING WOULD COMPLY WITH THE CRITERIA SET OUT IN POLICY E8; AND**
- 5. THE SITE CAN BE SERVED BY ROADS CAPABLE OF ACCOMMODATING ANY INCREASE IN TRAFFIC GENERATED BY THE PROPOSAL; AND**
- 6. THE PROPOSAL WOULD NOT INVOLVE THE LOSE OF THE BEST AND MOST VERSATILE AGRICULTURAL LAND: AND**
- 7. THE PROPOSAL WOULD NOT HAVE AN UNACCEPTABLE ADVERSE EFFECT UPON THE OPENNESS OF THE DURHAM CITY GREEN BELT.**

Justification

- 5.67** The shift in emphasis away from farming and the protection of farmland for its own sake has resulted in farmers being encouraged to diversify in order to supplement their income. The promotion of diversification of the rural economy can provide wide and varied employment opportunities. Agricultural buildings and other premises either, forming part of a farmstead or in the open countryside, offer potential for conversion into new use to provide accommodation for such activities as craft workshops or recreational/leisure/ tourist related development. This could include equestrian facilities, educational farming centres or visitor centres as well as bed and breakfast accommodation.
- 5.68** It is very important to ensure that the character of the countryside, the appearance of the area and the amenities of neighbouring occupiers of land and property are not prejudiced by diversification proposals. Any proposal specifically relating to the change of use of a building in the countryside or the provision of visitor

accommodation would need to comply with Policy E8 and V7. Any farm diversification proposal located within the Durham City Green Belt will only be acceptable provided it can be demonstrated that it does not compromise the openness of the Green Belt.

Agriculture and Forestry Development

POLICY EMP17A PLANNING PERMISSION WILL BE GRANTED FOR AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY DEVELOPMENT PROVIDED THAT:

- 1. THE PROPOSAL IS JUSTIFIED IN TERMS OF ITS SIZE AND LOCATION; AND**
- 2. APPROPRIATE MEASURES ARE INCORPORATED TO MITIGATE THE EFFECT OF THE DEVELOPMENT UPON THE LANDSCAPE AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES.**

Justification

- 5.69** Agriculture and forestry are important sectors of the rural economy. The Council will adopt a positive approach towards associated development proposals which are designed, or necessary to, achieve compliance with environmental, health and safety and welfare legislation, or to permit the continued efficient operation of such businesses.
- 5.70** New buildings in the countryside can have an impact on the landscape, particularly if there are prominent in terms of size, location or materials. Whilst there is often little flexibility in the functional appearance and locational requirements of modern agricultural buildings and structures, these should normally be sited as close as practicable to existing groups of buildings. However, if for operational reasons, new buildings or other development must be located in isolation, special attention will need to be given to their siting, design and external appearance with a view to mitigating their impact upon the landscape. Particular attention will be given to the height, location and visual impact of buildings proposed within the landscape setting of the World Heritage Site in order to comply with Policy E3 of the Plan. Elsewhere within the District, farmers should seek to site agricultural buildings sympathetically, taking into account the amenity of local residents and views from roads and public rights of way.
- 5.71** When planning permission is not required for agricultural development, the Council may require submission of details in relation to siting, design and external appearance, under the 'prior notification' procedures in accordance with Annex E of PPG7.

HOME BASED BUSINESS

POLICY EMP18 THE USE OF A DWELLING FOR BUSINESS USE WILL ONLY BE ACCEPTABLE PROVIDED THAT THERE WILL BE NO DETRIMENTAL IMPACT OF SIGNIFICANCE ON

THE AMENITY OF OCCUPIERS OF NEIGHBOURING RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES OR ON HIGHWAY SAFETY.

Justification

- 5.72** The encouragement of new and existing small businesses will assist in the continued diversification of the local economy and the creation of new job opportunities. Businesses are often started by people operating from their own homes. Such businesses can have a significant effect on reducing the need for journey to work by private transport.
- 5.73** Home working does not normally require planning permission when the use of a dwellinghouse for business purposes does not change the overall character of the property's use as a single dwelling. Once the business uses ceases to be ancillary to its use as a single dwelling, a material change of use has taken place for which planning permission is required.
- 5.74** Many businesses can be carried out in residential areas without affecting the amenity of neighbouring properties. Others can, however, cause significant problems in terms of noise, hours of operation and traffic generation and it is important to ensure that such activities do not have an adverse impact on the amenity of the area. These could include motor vehicle repairs, taxi operators (see Policy EMP15) or businesses connected with music/video.

NOTIFIABLE INSTALLATIONS

POLICY EMP19 PROPOSALS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION, EXPANSION OR INTENSIFICATION OF ANY INDUSTRY INVOLVING A NOTIFIABLE INSTALLATION WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHEN:

- 1. IT EITHER FORMS PART OF AN EXISTING DEVELOPMENT OR IT IS TO BE LOCATED WITHIN AN EXISTING GENERAL INDUSTRIAL SITE.**
- 2. THERE WOULD BE NO SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN POTENTIAL RISK TO SURROUNDING LAND USES AND NEARBY RESIDENTS.**
- 3. ANY SAFE-GUARDING ZONE OR EXTENDED SAFE-GUARDING ZONE FOR CONSULTATION PURPOSES WITH THE HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE DOES NOT INHIBIT THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES ON OTHER ADJACENT OR NEARBY SITES.**

POLICY EMP20 DEVELOPMENT IN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO NOTIFIABLE INSTALLATIONS WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED IF THERE IS NO SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN THE RISK TO THE LOCAL POPULATION.

Justification

- 5.75** Although The Health and Safety Executive has advised that there are currently no installations handling or storing notifiable hazardous substances within the District, such an installation may seek to become established during the Plan period. In those circumstances, any application would need to comply with the requirements of the Health and Safety Executive, and the Council would need to be satisfied that the proposal would not give rise to an unacceptable increase in risk to the local population in accordance with The Planning (Hazardous Substances) Act 1990.

6 TRANSPORT

INTRODUCTION

- 6.1** This Chapter is concerned with the interrelationship of land use and transport within the District. As such it covers all modes of travel. Whilst Durham County Council is the Highway Authority with responsibility for most transportation and highway proposals, trunk roads and motorways are the responsibility of the Highways Agency. The City Council recognises the importance of working with the County Council towards developing an integrated approach towards transportation and planning in order that great improvements can be made to safety and amenity whilst allowing the efficient movement of people and goods. An efficient transport system is vital for economic wellbeing and the quality of life.
- 6.2** The Transport Policies of the Plan are influenced by a number of recent studies into various aspects of traffic and transport within Durham City. Initiatives by Central Government seeking to integrate land use and transport have also been taken into account as has the content of the provisional Local Transport Plan for County Durham.

GENERAL BACKGROUND

Traffic

- 6.3** Durham lies at the hub of the road network within the County. The A1(M) passes through the City providing a north/south link with the national road network. Other roads provide direct connections between the City and Sunderland (A690); Hartlepool (A181); Teesside (A177); Consett (A691); Crook (A690); Darlington (A167) and Chester-le-Street (A167).
- 6.4** A traffic survey carried out in 1996 indicated that 15% of all traffic movement within Durham City was classified as through traffic, 27% was internally generated traffic and 58% was from traffic movement either into or out of the urban area. These movement patterns lead to severe problems of congestion, by standards experienced in County Durham, along the A690, A691 and A177 where they converge in the City Centre at the Elvet and Millburngate river crossings. Traffic flows at these points are amongst the highest in the County. The A690 'Through Road' adjacent to the City Centre carries volumes of traffic comparable to the A1(M) and left unchanged, the general growth in traffic volumes from 1996 is forecast to increase by some 9% to the year 2001 and 18% to 2006.
- 6.5** The A167 through Durham is also becoming increasingly congested and gives rise to severe problems at peak periods, particularly between Sniperley and Lowes Barn. The announcement by the Department of Transport in 1994 that the A167 Durham City Western By-Pass had been withdrawn from the National Trunk Road Programme has resulted in a deterioration of conditions on this strategic road for both residents and users. The Witton Gilbert By-Pass was opened in October 1996 and planning permission has been granted for the A688 Wheatley Hill-Bowburn link road. This scheme will be included in the provisional Local Transport

Plan and will be subject to a review of all major highway schemes prior to the submission of the full Local Transport Plan in July 2000.

- 6.6** In 1991 65% of all households within the District had access to one or more vehicles. However 35% of households had no car and for a significant number this represents a manifestation of social exclusion.

Public Transport

- 6.7** The District with its radial road pattern and central location within the County, is well served by public transport. Durham Railway Station is situated on the East Coast Main Line and Great North Eastern Railway, Virgin Cross Country and Northern Spirit provide passenger services to many parts of the country. There is an extensive bus network providing both local services and direct links with the major centres within the Region. The District is also served by the national network of bus services, providing a daily connection to over 25 towns and cities throughout Britain. The City of Durham is also recognised as an important destination for tourists, many of whom arrive by coach on day visits.

Parking

- 6.8** Both the Durham City Travel Study undertaken by Colin Buchanan and Partners commissioned by Durham County Council (April 1997) and the Decriminalised Parking Enforcement Study undertaken by RTA Associates commissioned by the City Council (November 1997) identified the main issues relating to parking as being:

- current lack of demand management, resulting in limited scope for reduced traffic growth
- intense competition for free on-street parking spaces between residents, commuters and students
- free on-street parking encouraging non-residents to bring private cars into the City Centre rather than considering alternative modes of transport
- limited highway space being used for parked vehicles rather than being available for pedestrians, cycling or bus facilities
- lack of adequate, convenient long-stay parking for visitors
- a large amount of private non-residential (PNR) off-street parking in central and off-centre locations
- inadequate enforcement of existing traffic regulation orders resulting in congestion in sensitive areas such as the Market Place and Claypath.

- 6.9** The Car Parking Survey carried out in 1998 identified approximately 1,700 on-street parking spaces and 1,800 off-street parking spaces available within the City Centre and its immediate environs which were available to the public. In addition there were also approximately 1,700 private non-residential parking spaces in this

area, the majority being under the control of either the University, various Government Departments, rail companies or Durham County Council.

- 6.10** The problems of integrating additional car parking facilities into the historic environment, the difficulties of securing suitable accesses which would not exacerbate congestion on approach roads, the need to safeguard the amenity of residential areas adjoining the City Centre and the high costs involved in constructing new multi-storey car parks, reduces the scope for additional car parking provision in the City Centre. The introduction of parking restraint during Plan period will, therefore, be fundamental in implementing demand management with regard to parking.
- 6.11** The Council's present policy is to set the charges in its own car parks within the core of the City Centre which give preference to shoppers and visitors (i.e. short stay parking) as opposed to commuters (i.e. long stay parking). In this way, the Millburngate and Prince Bishops multi-storey car parks, together with the Walkergate car park are designated primarily for short stay parking whilst Framwelgate Peth and The Sands car parks are designated primarily for long stay parking.
- 6.12** Pressure for parking has meant that people living in the residential areas close to the City Centre suffer from indiscriminate on-street parking, especially by commuters, causing inconvenience and loss of amenity for residents in these areas.
- 6.13** Lorry parking is generally not perceived as a problem in the District. The Council supports the view that the driver or firm operating the lorry should be responsible for providing an off-site operating base.

Walking and Cycling

- 6.14** The City of Durham presents excellent opportunities for walking both within the urban and rural areas. The City Centre is compact and attractive and very high volumes have been recorded in the pedestrianised areas. There are, however, significant problems for pedestrians within the City, particularly as a result of high traffic flows along the main arterial routes.
- 6.15** Cycling use in the City appears relatively low (particularly for a University town) but there is some evidence of suppressed demand and a potential growth in cycle use amongst University students. Future growth in cycling is constrained by road layout, traffic volumes, topography and lack of cycle access to the core area of the City. The National Cycle Network Route through the City Centre will be complete during 1999.

Access for Disabled Persons

- 6.16** Pedestrians with disabilities experience greater problems with difficult conditions and lack of formal road crossings than other pedestrians. Non-vehicular access to the Cathedral area is very difficult because of a combination of topography, narrow footways and traffic/pedestrian conflict. Whilst disabled people have retained vehicular access to parts of the City Centre restricted to most general traffic, they

experience parking shortages and can also be the cause of some congestion at critical locations. The considerable pressure on on-street parking also causes difficulties for both residents and visitors with disabilities. The recent installation of pedestrian tables in Saddler Street and the Market Place and the introduction of a shop mobility scheme have improved conditions for pedestrians with disabilities in the City Centre.

Impact of the University

- 6.17** A significant number of student-owned vehicles contribute to the on-street parking problem in Durham during term time. The University policy is to try to discourage students from bringing their cars to the City, but can only be done as a voluntary code of practise with consequently limited effect. They issue permits, including visitor permits, for access to University areas and a type of permit is required by undergraduates who bring their cars to the City. This latter permit specifically requests that permit holders refrain from parking in the area bounded by Church Street, Whinney Hill and Stockton Road but unfortunately the University has limited means to enforce it.

Travel to School

- 6.18** Travel to school by private vehicles accounts for a significant amount of congestion in term time and the Plan recognises that alternative modes of travel need to be provided for in order to alleviate this problem.

Travel to Work

- 6.19** One of the major sources of traffic congestion is caused by people travelling to work. The County Durham Local Transport Plan seeks to address this issue by encouraging the preparation of Greentravel Plans for major employers and significant trip generating uses within the County. Although often seen as primarily an environmental initiative, travel plans have much wider benefits for organisations. Reduced travel and car parking yield economic benefits through reduced costs and better utilisation of land, and improvements to access by alternatives to the car can be used to tackle problems of social exclusion. The Local Transport Plan has identified Durham County Council's Headquarters at Aykley Heads as a priority location for the creation of a Greentravel Plan.

TRANSPORT STRATEGY

- 6.20** Reconciling the often conflicting relationship between transport and environmental protection is a vital issue in an historic City such as Durham. In line with the recommendations contained in the Government White Paper on 'A New Deal for Transport - Better for Everyone' published in July 1998, the City Council and County Council will prepare an integrated transport strategy for Durham City and its immediate environs, the primary objective of which is to seek the provision of an effective transport system which meets future economic and social needs in an environmentally friendly and sustainable manner. There will be a phased introduction of this strategy as part of the implementation of the Local Transport Plan for County Durham. A key element of the Plan and Strategy is a Package for Durham City which seeks to address transport issues specific to the City.

6.21 Durham's travel and transport problems reflect the national situation but are exacerbated by its historic character, its location on a strategic river crossing and its role as a regional centre for economic, educational and cultural purposes. The rapid growth in the ownership and use of cars has expanded the travel catchment of the City, while the growth of the University and expansion of tourism have contributed to local travel demand. This has been compounded by the lack of investment in attractive alternatives to car usage, in particular a reliable and reasonably priced public transport system. In developing a transport strategy for the District the following two specific issues need to be taken into account:

- the attractiveness of the City given its role in helping to achieve the regeneration of the wider area which means that there is a need to cater for continued commuting needs to and from the City from surrounding settlements
- the historic and cultural significance of Durham City is recognised internationally: in order to conserve this historic environment it is essential that future issues of accessibility and the environmental impact of transport are dealt with through an integrated land use and transportation strategy

6.22 The major transport issues which the strategy must address are:

- **Walking** is attractive in many parts of central Durham, but many pedestrian links to various locations could be substantially improved.
- **Cycling** facilities and cycling's image in the eyes of local travellers are poor - the City is also hilly and roads and footpaths are often narrow and busy.
- **People with Disabilities** encounter problems in accessing various central areas, and general pressure for on-street parking reduces these opportunities for them, while provision on public transport is minimal.
- **Parking** is a problem in central Durham, with residents, commuters and students competing for scarce (free) on-street spaces while some off-street (paid) car parks have spare capacity. Intense parking demand results in dangerous and obstructive parking, affecting residents, the mobility impaired and bus services. The current situation also does little to discourage private car journeys to the City Centre.
- **Safety** is a concern for all road users, with radial routes and some specific locations for pedestrians being particularly problem areas, while road accident trends appear to be moving contrary to government targets.
- **Bus services** have had a relatively poor image, and their market is largely 'captive' travellers without access to cars - however in general bus patronage appears to be stable rather than rapidly decreasing.
- **Congestion** is primarily in the peak hours, but is intense at particular locations and affects bus service speed and reliability.

- **Traffic volumes** are high, particularly on the Through Road and main radial routes - 58% of the vehicle trips are travelling to/from the Durham City area, and 15% are 'through' (1996 Traffic Survey).
- 6.23** The strategy consists of a 'package' of different measures aimed at the best use of scarce resources, maximum efficiency, encouraging responsible car use and the provision of alternative modes of travel. Both the City Council and County Council recognise that the successful implementation of the strategy requires 'partnership' with the involvement of local public transport providers, employers, local interest groups and property developers.
- 6.24** The key elements of the proposed strategy are:
- Providing for disabled people, cyclists and pedestrians
 - Using parking control to manage the demand for car travel
 - Provision of alternatives to the car
 - Fostering attitudinal change to car use
 - Reducing the impact of vehicular traffic on the environment
- 6.25** Many of these elements are inter-related, and policies aimed at implementing one, help to achieve others.

LOCAL PLAN OBJECTIVES

- 6.26** The Council's objectives for transport to be pursued through the Policies and Proposals contained in this Chapter of the Plan, are:
- To reduce the dependency on the private motor car.
 - To make the most effective use of existing transport network as a means of travel and in the location of new development.
 - To minimise the impact of any new road proposals on the environment.
 - To develop an integrated transport system.
 - To reduce the volume and impact of traffic and parking within the City Centre.
 - To support the maintenance and improvement of public transport throughout the District.
 - To improve conditions for pedestrians and cyclists within the District.
 - To minimise the impact of heavy goods vehicles on the environment and local communities.

- To minimise the adverse impact of traffic and parking on residential areas.
- To promote road safety.

6.27 In seeking to achieve these aims, the Council recognises the importance of working in conjunction with the County Council and other agencies with a responsibility for transport related functions.

POLICIES

GENERAL

POLICY T1 THE COUNCIL WILL NOT GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR DEVELOPMENT THAT WOULD GENERATE TRAFFIC WHICH WOULD BE DETRIMENTAL TO HIGHWAY SAFETY AND/OR HAVE A SIGNIFICANT AFFECT ON THE AMENITY OF OCCUPIERS OF NEIGHBOURING PROPERTY.

Justification

6.28 Traffic generated by a development is one of the most important considerations in determining a planning application. The Council will not allow any proposal which would generate traffic having a significant adverse effect on the amenity of occupiers of neighbouring property and/or would be harmful to highway safety.

ROAD PROPOSALS

POLICY T2 THE COUNCIL WILL ONLY SUPPORT NEW ROAD PROPOSALS AND ROAD IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES WHICH DO NOT MATERIALLY CONFLICT WITH OTHER POLICIES OF THE PLAN AND:

1. RELIEVE PRESSURE FROM "THROUGH TRAFFIC" ON THE CITY CENTRE; AND/OR
2. FACILITATE INWARD INVESTMENT AND ECONOMIC PROSPERITY; AND/OR
3. REMOVE THROUGH TRAFFIC FROM RESIDENTIAL AND OTHER ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS; AND/OR
4. IMPROVE ROAD SAFETY STANDARDS; AND/OR
5. HAVE MINIMUM ADVERSE EFFECT ON THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT; AND/OR
6. ASSIST PUBLIC TRANSPORT AND CYCLING PROVISION.

Justification

- 6.29** Priority has to be to make the most efficient use of existing roads by maintaining and managing their capacity. Increasing road capacity through new construction schemes should only be proposed after options such as traffic management or public transport solutions have been fully examined. This advice is endorsed in the Government's White Paper on the Future of Transport (1998) which states that all plausible options need to be considered before a new road is built. Targeted improvements to existing roads, as part of a whole package which may include transport measures, will be encouraged.
- 6.30** Notwithstanding this, however, new road proposals and road improvement schemes may be necessary during the Plan period in order to either upgrade the highway network within the City or facilitate economic investment or improve road safety. The need for new road proposals should be balanced with the other Objectives and Policies of the Plan.

**POLICY T3 LAND WILL BE SAFEGUARDED FOR THE FOLLOWING
NEW ROAD SCHEMES:**

- a) **A691 DURHAM NORTHERN BY-PASS, STAGE 2**
- b) **B6300 BROWNEY LANE IMPROVEMENT**
- c) **A182 HETTON BY-PASS**

**WITHIN THE CORRIDOR OF INTEREST FOR EACH
SCHEME SHOWN ON THE PROPOSALS MAP
DEVELOPMENT WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED IF IT DOES
NOT PREJUDICE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
SCHEME.**

Justification

- a) **A690 Durham Northern By-Pass Stage 2**
- 6.31** This road proposal, which is specifically included in Policy 31 of the Durham County Structure Plan (1999) will complete the link from Pity Me (Arnison/Mercia Centre) to the A1(M) at Carrville. The road is important in both strategic terms to assist economic regeneration in North-West Durham and in local terms to alleviate the environmental problems resulting from East/West traffic through the City Centre. As such it will provide an additional river crossing to the congested Millburngate Bridge thereby enabling possible improvements for other modes of travel to take place during the Plan period as part of an integrated transport strategy for Durham City.
- 6.32** The scheme was one of six appraised using the New Approach to Appraisal (NATA) as part of the preparation of the Local Transport Plan for County Durham (2001-2006). Due to the perceived large negative environmental impact it would have upon the valley of the River Wear, it was afforded a low score and hence it

has not been identified as one of the two major highway schemes in the final Plan. Despite this, however, the City Council continues to support the need in principle for the completion of the Northern By-Pass on the evidence currently available. It further acknowledges that a full Traffic Assessment will be required at the detailed planning stage to justify the need for the road in view of its environmental impact

b) B6300 Browney Lane Improvement

- 6.33** This minor road scheme would improve links between the A690 and A167. It would also substantially improve access to the Meadowfield Industrial Estate from the west, remove through traffic from Browney and improve traffic conditions along the A690 between Meadowfield and Nevilles Cross. The Browney Lane Improvement is not specifically identified in the Local Transport Plan for County Durham. It is anticipated that it will be progressed through local route management initiatives.

c) A182 Hetton By-Pass

- 6.34** Policy HA28.2 of the City of Sunderland Unitary Development Plan identifies the line of the Hetton By-Pass. This will provide a single carriageway by-pass of both Hetton-le-Hole and Easington Lane between the present A182 junction at Snippersgate and the A690/B1284 junction at Rainton Bridge. At its southern end, it will link with Durham County Council's proposed East Durham Link Road to the A19. A short section of the Hetton By-Pass, south west of Easington Lane, falls within the City of Durham and has been identified on the Proposals Map of the City of Durham Local Plan in order to ensure consistency between the two Authorities.

POLICY T4 **IN ASSESSING THE ROUTE AND DESIGN OF NEW ROAD PROPOSALS AND ROAD IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES THE COUNCIL WILL ONLY SUPPORT THOSE SCHEMES WHICH:**

- 1. AVOID THE PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL SEVERANCE OF COMMUNITIES; AND**
- 2. AVOID HARMFUL IMPACT UPON RESIDENTIAL AMENITY; AND**
- 3. AVOID HARMFUL IMPACT UPON THE NATURAL AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT; AND**
- 4. MAKE SAFE AND PROPER PROVISION FOR THE MOVEMENT OF PEDESTRIANS, CYCLISTS AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT; AND**
- 5. ACHIEVE CO-ORDINATION IN THE APPEARANCE OF SIGNAGE, LIGHTING COLUMNS AND OTHER HIGHWAY FURNITURE AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE DESIGN OF THE ROAD; AND**

6. AVOID SCHEMES WHICH WILL HAVE A DETRIMENTAL EFFECT ON THE WATER ENVIRONMENT IN TERMS OF FLOODING AND POLLUTION.

Justification

- 6.35** Any new road proposal or road improvement scheme which is justified in accordance with the criteria set out in Policy T2 should be routed and/or designed in such a way that they are assimilated into their surroundings with the minimum of disturbance. In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 1999, the County Council in its capacity as Highway Authority, will be expected to undertake and publish environmental assessments of all major road schemes in order to ensure that their full impact can be evaluated before they proceed.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

POLICY T5 THE COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE IMPROVEMENTS TO ASSIST PUBLIC TRANSPORT SERVICES WITHIN THE DISTRICT BY A COMBINATION OF MEASURES WHICH MAY INCLUDE:

- 1. THE USE OF TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SCHEMES IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY T8;**
- 2. INVESTIGATING THE PROVISION OF A PARK AND RIDE SYSTEM IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY T7;**
- 3. THE PROVISION OF SUITABLE FACILITIES FOR USERS OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT;**
- 4. IMPROVEMENTS FOR PASSENGERS AT DURHAM RAILWAY STATION AND DURHAM BUS STATION;**
- 5. SUPPORTING THE RE-OPENING OF THE LEAMSIDE RAILWAY LINE FOR PASSENGER SERVICES;**
- 6. ENSURING THAT NEW DEVELOPMENTS CAN BE CONVENIENTLY AND EFFICIENTLY SERVICED BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY Q2.**
- 7. INVESTIGATING THE PROVISION OF A MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORT INTERCHANGE AT CARRVILLE IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY T6.**

Justification

- 6.36** Reliance upon transport by private vehicles is unsustainable. The Council will, therefore, encourage greater use of public transport because it has significant environmental benefits by providing an alternative to use of the private car.
- 6.37** The Council will, therefore, support traffic management schemes aimed at affording priority to public transport services. The possibility of introducing park and ride facilities will be investigated during the Plan period as part of a package of proposals aimed at dissuading car commuters, long stay parking and encouraging a switch to alternative modes of travel.
- 6.38** The provision of adequate facilities for users of public transport will be encouraged. Bus shelters should be well designed and maintained and provide information on services. Bus stops should be sited in accessible locations with well lit and direct footpath links.
- 6.39** Whilst the Bus Station is well used and centrally located, its facilities are both unattractive and inadequate, particularly those relating to passenger waiting and information, and will do little to increase future bus patronage if not improved. Recent improvements have been made to the facilities for passengers at Durham Railway Station and further work is to be undertaken in order to provide a new entrance, ticket offices and waiting/refreshment facilities. Pedestrian access to and from the Railway Station is constrained by its distance (approximately 400-500 metres), its location on a hill above the City Centre. A regular bus service is provided between the Bus Station and the Railway Station, although its usage would be enhanced by greater publicity and signage at both locations.
- 6.40** The Leamside Line between Ferryhill and Heworth was taken out of regular use in July 1991. A study commissioned by a consortium of local authorities, including the Council, indicated that there is significant potential for re-opening the line for passenger services, particularly between Durham and Tyneside via Washington. The Council supports the findings of this Study and would encourage the provision of this service during the Plan period. Policy 33 of the County Structure Plan (1999) also supports the reinstatement of the Leamside line for passenger services. Railtrack has indicated that it intends to open the line for freight services in 2003.
- 6.41** A new passenger station would certainly be required in the Belmont/Carrville area in accordance with Policy T6. In the longer term, new stations could perhaps serve the West Rainton/Leamside area, the Sherburn area and the Bowburn/Shincliffe area. No specific sites have been identified in the Plan for these proposals since detailed feasibility and impact studies will need to be carried out before a final decision is reached on this matter. It is unlikely that such a decision will be forthcoming until after the current Plan period.

TRANSPORT INTERCHANGE

**POLICY T6 THE CITY COUNCIL, IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE
 COUNTY COUNCIL AND OTHER APPROPRIATE BODIES,**

WILL SEEK THE PROVISION OF A MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORT INTERCHANGE ON 4 HECTARES OF LAND AT CARRVILLE AS SHOWN ON THE PROPOSALS MAP.

NO OTHER USE WILL BE PERMITTED ON THIS SITE.

Justification

- 6.42** Policy 34 of the County Structure Plan (1999) identifies the need for a transport inter-change east of Durham City in conjunction with proposals for the reuse of the Leamside line. The construction of such a Parkway at Carrville would greatly enhance the potential of the Leamside line for commuting to and from Tyneside and would also serve as a park and ride location for the City in accordance with the development of an integrated transport system referred to in Policies T5 and T7. As such it would allow inter-modal changes between rail, coach, car and cycle to take place.
- 6.43** The site at Carrville, occupying 4ha of land, is contained by the A1(M), the A690 and the embankment of the former Frankland Junction railway line. Due to the environmental sensitivity of this location outside the settlement boundary of Durham City, surrounded by the proposed Green Belt and included within the Area of High Landscape Value, it is not considered suitable for any other use.

PARK AND RIDE

POLICY T7 THE COUNCIL, IN CONJUNCTION WITH DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL, WILL INVESTIGATE THE PROVISION OF A PARK AND RIDE SYSTEM WHICH SEEKS TO:

- 1. RELOCATE COMMUTER PARKING FROM THE CITY CENTRE AND EMPLOYMENT AREAS TO PARK AND RIDE SITES;**
- 2. PROVIDE AN ATTRACTIVE ALTERNATIVE TO CITY CENTRE PARKING FOR BOTH LONG AND SHORT-STAY NON-COMMUTER TRIPS;**
- 3. REDUCE TRAFFIC FLOWS TO AND/OR THROUGH THE CITY CENTRE;**
- 4. ENHANCE THE IMAGE OF BUS-BASED TRAVEL AND PROVIDE EXPRESS SERVICE FOR USE BY PARK AND RIDE USERS.**

THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS, AS SHOWN ON THE PROPOSALS MAP, HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED FOR DEVELOPMENT AS POSSIBLE PARK AND RIDE SITES DURING THE PLAN PERIOD. THESE SITES WILL BE SUBJECT TO A DETAILED LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT TO ENSURE THAT THEIR DEVELOPMENT WOULD BE

SATISFACTORILY ASSIMILATED INTO THE LANDSCAPE.

- a) **CARRVILLE (IN ASSOCIATION WITH POLICY T6); AND**
- b) **SNIPERLEY AREA (ADJOINING SNIPERLEY GROVE); AND**
- c) **SOUTH ROAD (HOWLANDS FARM OR MOUNT OSWALD).**

PRIORITY WILL BE GIVEN TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PARK AND RIDE SITE AT CARRVILLE.

Justification

6.44 The Durham City Travel Study identified Park and Ride as one means of reducing traffic congestion and pressure for parking in the City Centre during the Plan period. It is, however, only one element of an overall integrated transport strategy that includes complementary measures such as traffic management proposals, parking restraint policy, residents parking schemes, bus priority measures and promotion of walking and cycling.

6.45 Park and Ride can only be introduced successfully if there is a significant switch from private car to buses. Research into park and ride schemes indicates that attractiveness as measured by cost, convenience, time, comfort and safety are the key factors influencing the motorist's decision to use the facility. It is important, therefore, that for any park and ride scheme to be successful:

- the cost of park and ride should be substantially less than long stay public parking in the City Centre;
- the bus operators must offer a rapid, frequent and reliable service in comfortable vehicles with low floor easy access and space for prams, wheelchairs and shopping trolleys;
- the park and ride site should offer high quality facilities (e.g. shelter, toilets, information and telephone), and include good security, lighting and visibility;
- the park and ride sites must offer commodious facilities for passengers with mobility difficulties (ie flush kerbs, wide reserved parking spaces and easy access onto buses);
- the park and ride site must be well sign-posted from the main approach roads.

6.46 The development of a Park and Ride system for Durham City is embodied in both the Durham County Structure Plan (Policy 51) and the Local Transport Plan for County Durham 2001 –2006. The areas currently being considered for possible development as Park and Ride sites during the plan period are Carrville, Sniperley

and South Road (two alternative sites). If approval was ultimately given for the development of the sites at Sniperley Park and Howlands Farm, it will, in the light of the revised PPG13 which makes provision for Park and Ride sites to be appropriate development in the Green belt, be no longer necessary to amend the boundaries of the proposed Green Belt at these locations. In the longer term it may be necessary to provide additional Park and Ride sites to serve the other main transport corridors into the City Centre, particularly the A177 to the south east and the A690 to the west. Although the Durham City Travel Study suggested Shincliffe and Stonebridge as possible locations for such facilities, no specific sites have yet been identified as they will need to be the subject of detailed investigation at the appropriate time.

Carrville

- 6.47** The site at Carrville is allocated in Policy T6 of the plan as an Inter Modal Transport Interchange, linked to the reopening of the Leamside Line. It is well located for development as a park and ride facility, being readily accessible to both the A690 and the A1(M). The Council considers that the Park and Ride site at Carrville should be the first such facility in Durham City to be developed.

Sniperley

- 6.48** The site at Sniperley is located on the northern side of the A691 adjacent to Sniperley Grove and is one which was originally identified in the Durham City Travel Study. The site is reasonably well contained and low lying and affords direct linkages with both the A691 and the A167. Although it currently lies within the Durham City Green Belt it could, with appropriate structural landscaping, be developed in a manner which would not prejudice its peripheral urban location on the edge of open countryside.

South Road (Option 1 – Howlands Farm)

- 6.50** This site is situated between South Road and the University development at Howlands Farm. Its location within the Durham City Green Belt and its semi-rural character means that any development of Park and Ride here will require careful consideration to the layout and landscaping of the site. Any mitigation required is likely to be extensive. It has the advantage of being close to the University and the proposed employment site at Mount Oswald identified in Policy EMP3 of the Plan.

South Road (Option 2 – Mount Oswald)

- 6.51** This site lies on the opposite side of South Road to Howlands within the Mount Oswald Estate identified in Policy EMP3 of the Plan. The site is contained by a stone wall to the highway and contains extensive areas of mature tree cover. The quality of the site is recognised by the Council and the County Council and careful consideration will have to be given to the layout and landscaping of any scheme to maintain the visual attractions of the site. Any mitigation required in developing this site for park and ride is likely to be extensive. Nevertheless its development as a park and ride site could enhance the attractiveness of the Mount Oswald estate for strategic employment use in accordance with Policy EMP3.

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

POLICY T8 THE COUNCIL WILL SUPPORT TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT MEASURES WHICH SEEK TO IMPROVE HIGHWAY SAFETY, AMENITY AND EASE CONGESTION. PRIORITY WILL BE GIVEN TO MEASURES WHICH SPECIFICALLY:

- 1. REDUCE CONGESTION AND DELAYS, PARTICULARLY FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORT, AND IMPROVE SAFETY ALONG ROUTES INTO THE CITY CENTRE;**
- 2. EXTEND TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES WITHIN THE CITY CENTRE;**
- 3. IMPROVE SAFETY AND EASE TRAFFIC CONGESTION IN THE LOCAL CENTRES OF FRAMWELLGATE MOOR, GILESGATE, LANGLEY MOOR AND USHAW MOOR;**
- 4. INTRODUCE TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES INTO RESIDENTIAL AREAS;**
- 5. PROMOTE THE SAFETY AND CONVENIENCE OF PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS.**

Justification

- 6.52** Traffic management measures can bring benefits to all road users in terms of limiting the impact of traffic, managing the demand for access by car, improving public transport, improving facilities for cycling and walking, improving the environment of an area and assisting in the prevention of accidents.
- 6.53** Measures to improve traffic flows on the main road network and approach roads to the City Centre include peak period clearway orders, bus priority lanes, co-ordinated traffic signals and restrictions on accesses to and from side roads. Roads which would benefit from such proposals include the A690, A691, A177, and A181. The A167 between Pity Me and Farewell Hall would also benefit from traffic management schemes aimed at improving traffic flows and reducing accidents.
- 6.54** The County Durham Local Transport Plan 2001-2006 includes two bus priority measures within the District for implementation during the Local Plan period. These relate to the A690 between Durham City Centre and Carrville (part of a package of measures associated with the implementation of the Durham City Park and Ride Scheme), and the A690 between Carrville and the County boundary at Rainton.
- 6.55** Measures to improve safety and ease traffic congestion in the City Centre are aimed at restricting penetration of vehicles, reducing vehicle speed and improving safety for pedestrians. Those parts of the City Centre which would benefit from

such traffic management schemes include the Market Place/Peninsula, North Road, and Claypath/Providence Row. Some of the Local Centres within the District could also benefit from traffic management schemes particularly those at Framwellgate Moor, Ushaw Moor and Langley Moor.

- 6.56** Measures to improve safety and ease traffic congestion in residential areas are aimed at reducing vehicle speed through traffic calming and other appropriate measures, discouraging through traffic and remove on-street commuter parking. Where it is considered appropriate, the City Council, in conjunction with Durham County Council, will seek to introduce "Residents Only" parking schemes in accordance with Policy T15.
- 6.57** The construction of the Witton Gilbert By-Pass has afforded the opportunity for an environmental improvement scheme to be prepared which will improve the amenity of local residents. Further improvement schemes with similar objectives will be sought in the Langley Moor/Meadowfield Corridor (A690) and the Coxhoe/Bowburn Corridor (A177/B6291) during the Plan period.

MOVEMENT OF FREIGHT

POLICY T9 **THE COUNCIL IN CONSULTATION WITH DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL AND OTHER APPROPRIATE BODIES WILL SEEK TO MINIMISE THE ADVERSE AFFECT OF THE MOVEMENT OF FREIGHT UPON COMMUNITIES BY:**

- 1. SEEKING THE CO-OPERATION OF VEHICLE OPERATORS TO USE DEFINED LORRY ROUTES WITHIN THE DISTRICT;**
- 2. ENCOURAGING THE INTRODUCTION OF WEIGHT RESTRICTIONS ON ROUTES NOT CONSIDERED SUITABLE FOR HEAVY GOODS VEHICLES;**
- 3. ENCOURAGING THE CARRYING OF FREIGHT AND BULKY GOODS BY RAIL; AND**
- 4. SUPPORTING THE RE-OPENING OF THE LEAMSIDE LINE FOR THE MOVEMENT OF FREIGHT BY RAIL; AND**
- 5. SUPPORTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF A RAIL FREIGHT TERMINAL AT TURSDALE IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY EMP7.**

Justification

- 6.58** Freight movement has become increasingly concentrated onto roads with the introduction of larger and heavier loads. This has led to a severe environmental damage to the communities through which these heavy lorries pass both in terms of noise, fumes and vibration and increased wear and damage to road surfaces and bridges. The Plan seeks to minimise the adverse affects of heavy lorries on

the community by ensuring that they are restricted to suitable strategic routes and by encouraging the introduction of weight restrictions limiting access of heavy goods vehicles in areas of particular sensitivity.

- 6.59** This Council will in conjunction with the County Council support initiatives which are designed to transfer the transport of bulky goods from road to rail. Such initiatives should, wherever possible, make use of existing rail infrastructure (i.e. the East Coast Main Line and the Leamside Line and the proposed rail freight terminal at Tursdale as set out in Policy EMP7). The Council will seek to ensure that options for such transfer of freight and goods are not compromised by development proposals. Policy EMP7 of the Plan specifically seeks to support the establishment of a rail freight terminal at Tursdale.

PARKING

General Provision

POLICY T10 VEHICLE PARKING OFF THE PUBLIC HIGHWAY IN NEW DEVELOPMENT OR REDEVELOPMENT SHOULD BE LIMITED IN AMOUNT, SO AS TO PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT CHOICES AND REDUCE THE LAND-TAKE OF DEVELOPMENT. ON AVERAGE, IN RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS, OFF-ROAD PROVISION SHOULD NOT EXCEED 1.5 SPACES PER DWELLING.

Justification

- 6.60** The Council will require new development or redevelopment to comply with the parking standards approved by the County Council in its capacity as Highway Authority. Currently these parking standards are being revised. When a new set of standards is adopted by the County Council these will be adopted by the City Council as Supplementary Planning Guidance. In the interim period due regard will be taken by the Authority of the recommended maximum standards set out in Annexe B of PPG13 and in PPG3 para 62 (limiting the provision of off-road parking spaces in residential developments to a maximum average of 1.5 spaces per dwelling).
- 6.61** PPG13 states that there should be no minimum levels of parking provision except for parking for disabled people. In particular the Council will look favourably on schemes with reduced levels of parking when implementing the Parking Strategy for the City Centre in Policy T11, or where there is underused public parking available nearby, or where the provision of parking would conflict with the environmental quality of the area in which the development is located. Lower levels of off-road car parking will be encouraged in relation to residential development when applied to a proposal which is likely to be occupied by residents with low levels of car ownership (eg special needs groups) or in the achievement of other land use aims such as the re-use of vacant floorspace above shops in accordance with Policy H8. (Planning obligations will be used to achieve improvements to public transport, walking and cycling where such measures would be likely to influence travel patterns to the site involved either on their own or as part of a package of measures.

Parking in the City Centre

POLICY T11 THE CITY COUNCIL WILL SUPPORT THE COUNTY COUNCIL IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A PARKING STRATEGY FOR THE CITY CENTRE WHICH SEEKS TO:

- 1. INTRODUCE A CONTROLLED PARKING ZONE IN THE AREA SURROUNDING THE CITY CENTRE;**
- 2. USE DEVELOPMENT CONTROL MEASURES TO LIMIT ANY INCREASE IN PRIVATE NON-RESIDENTIAL OFF-STREET PARKING AND TO RESTRICT THE USE OF, AND ENCOURAGE REDUCTIONS IN, THE NUMBER OF EXISTING PRIVATE NON-RESIDENTIAL SPACES; AND**
- 3. LINK PARKING RESTRAINT TO THE INTRODUCTION OF PARK AND RIDE IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY T7.**

Justification

6.62 Both the Durham City Travel Study and the Decriminalised Parking Enforcement Study recommended the creation of resident permit areas and paid for parking in the City Centre with local authority enforcement. A Controlled Parking Zone, as shown in figure 1, is deemed appropriate with justification for its creation arising from the fact that:

- The demand for on-street parking in the City Centre core is high, with full utilisation of the limited on-street parking space which is available. Consequently there is a need to regulate demand by the introduction of paid for parking.
- Total public off-street car parking in the City Centre core is limited and well used even in off-peak periods. Accordingly enforcement of paid on-street parking can only result in a limited transfer into off-street car parks.
- There is a high proportion of long term parking on streets around the City Centre, as a consequence of commuters utilising free parking spaces. This suggests that there is an opportunity to create additional limited waiting areas in the City Centre by introducing appropriate charging policies, thus giving priority to short-term parking so as to maintain the economic viability of the City Centre.
- There is a recognised need for allocated residents' parking spaces in certain areas and to give priorities over other potential users of kerbside space.

6.63 Undertaking the measures outlined in Policy T11 will allow the amount and type of parking in the City Centre to be managed and, as a consequence, influence the

future traffic growth within Durham. This use of parking as a demand restraint tool is a key to the success of the overall Transport Strategy. However, it is important to recognise the need to maintain adequate levels of parking for essential use and to sustain the economic vitality and viability of the City Centre as a commercial, shopping and tourist centre. The aims of the Parking Strategy outlined in Policy T11 should therefore be to:

- Increase the availability of short-stay spaces for visitors, shoppers and the disabled at the expense of commuter parking.
- Enable residents to park more easily.
- Improve traffic flow and conditions for buses, including bus priority measures.
- Introduce improved facilities to encourage cycling and walking.
- Divert long-stay parking and some short-stay from the City Centre to more remote locations such as possibly park and ride and park and walk sites.
- Increase modal change to reduce reliance on the private car.
- Co-ordinate off and on-street parking provision.
- To improve the pedestrian environment.

6.64 Within an overall parking strategy it is important to provide some alternatives for people travelling by car and parking long-stay in public car parks within the City Centre. Whilst some can be encouraged to transfer to other modes of travel, many will continue to use private cars. If no creditable alternative is provided, parking on-street on the fringes of the controlled parking zone could take place. Accordingly, the County Council is currently investigating, in conjunction with the City Council, a two stage implementation of the controlled parking zone. In the first stage controls will be introduced and all bays would be charged although some areas would be allocated for long-stay (ie no maximum duration limit would be identified). In the second stage, as alternatives to bringing the car into the City Centre are provided, maximum duration limits would be applied. There would be no length of stay duration for valid resident permit holders.

POLICY T12 **IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE OVERALL PARKING STRATEGY FOR THE CITY CENTRE THE COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE THE MANAGEMENT OF OFF-STREET PUBLIC CAR PARKS AS FOLLOWS:**

- 1. SHORT-STAY PARKING:**
 - a) MILLBURNGATE MULTI-STOREY**
 - b) RIVERSIDE MULTI-STOREY**
 - c) PRINCE BISHOP MULTI-STOREY**

d) WALKERGATE

2. LONG-STAY PARKING:

a) THE SANDS

POLICY T13 THE PROVISION OF ADDITIONAL NEW PUBLIC CAR PARKS WITHIN DURHAM CITY CENTRE WILL ONLY BE APPROVED WHERE THERE THE NEED FOR ADDITIONAL LONG OR SHORT STAY PUBLIC PARKING HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED AS PART OF A CO-ORDINATED STRATEGY FOR PARKING IN THE CITY CENTRE. IN DETERMINING ANY NEED THE FOLLOWING SHOULD, IN PARTICULAR, BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT:

1. THE EFFECTIVENESS ON THE VITALITY AND VIABILITY OF THE CITY CENTRE; AND
2. THE NEED TO ENCOURAGE ALTERNATIVES TO THE PRIVATE CAR; AND
3. THE NEED TO DISCOURAGE LONG STAY COMMUTER PARKING IN THE CITY CENTRE.

Justification

6.65 The more centrally located off-street public car parks within the City Centre (Millburngate, Prince Bishops and Riverside Multi-storey Car Parks and the Walkergate and Sidegate Car Parks) provide approximately 875 spaces and are already managed with a differential pricing mechanism which favours the short stay needs of shoppers and visitors. Commuters are encouraged by a different pricing mechanism to use the more peripheral car parks at Walkergate, The Sands and Sidegate which will have a capacity of approximately 740 spaces yet still remain within easy walking distances of places of work. Walkergate and The Sands car parks are used both for short-term and long-term parking. Framwelgate Peth Car Park which was used for both short-term parking and long-term parking has now been redeveloped for housing. The redevelopment of Walkergate in accordance with Policy CC2b will include the provision of a 500-space multi-storey car park to replace the existing 300 space temporary surface car park. Details of the changes in public off-street parking between 1999 and 2006 are shown in Table 1. The management policy relating to the operation of these car parks may be the subject of review and change once the Park and Ride system for Durham, as proposed in the County Durham Local Transport Plan, is implemented.

6.65A Recent changes in circumstances have cast doubt upon the likelihood of a new public car park being developed at Framwelgate Waterside as part of the new hotel development proposed in Policy V5 of the Revised Deposit Draft Local Plan. This is because the developer is only willing to provide parking associated with the hotel and not the previously envisaged additional public parking. Whilst any potential

shortfall in parking provision within the City Centre brought about by this situation will need to be resolved, no new car park site has yet been identified. Policy T13 has, therefore, been formulated to address this issue in a manner which would allow for the provision of additional long or short stay public parking within the City Centre without compromising the overall aims of the parking strategy set out in both the Durham Package of the County Durham Local Transport Plan 2001-2006 and the Revised City of Durham Local Plan.

Table 1

CHANGES IN PUBLIC OFF-STREET PARKING 1999-2006

CHANGES IN PUBLIC OFF-STREET PARKING 1999-2006		
Car Park	Level in 1999	Expected Level in 2006
Riverside	263	263
Millburngate	210	210
Prince Bishops	400	400
Framwelgate Peth	190	-
The Sands	350	136
Walkergate	300	500
Sidegate	-	107
Total	1713	1616

- 6.66** The Durham Station Car Parks on the periphery of the City Centre are open for public use and have a capacity for approximately 300 spaces. The area is almost entirely occupied by long-stay parkers using the train services operating from Durham.

~~**POLICY T14 THE COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE THE USE OF EXISTING PRIVATE NON-RESIDENTIAL OFF-STREET CAR PARKS BY THE GENERAL PUBLIC THROUGH NEGOTIATION WITH APPROPRIATE BODIES.**~~

~~**Justification**~~

- ~~**6.67** Whilst Policy T11 seeks to reduce the number of private non-residential car parks within or on the periphery of the City Centre many of them are currently underused at weekends and public holidays. Their use temporarily, whilst the Parking Strategy outlined in Policy T11 was being implemented, by the general public, would help to cater for the extra parking demand created at these periods thereby reducing the problem of on-street parking in the residential streets on the periphery of the City Centre. The main off-street car parks are owned and controlled by either Durham University, various Government Departments or Durham County Council. It would be necessary to seek the agreement of the owners of these car parks if access to the general public were to be achieved.~~

~~**Parking in Residential Areas within Durham City**~~

~~**POLICY T15 THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO INTRODUCE CONTROLLED PARKING SCHEMES WHICH AIM TO:**~~

~~1. PROVIDE BETTER CONTROL OVER PARKING IN THE AREA;~~

~~2. RESTRICT PARKING FOR NON-RESIDENTS, PARTICULARLY LONG-STAY COMMUTERS.~~

~~PRIORITY WILL BE GIVEN TO THE INTRODUCTION OF SUCH SCHEMES IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS OF DURHAM CITY:~~

~~a) THE AREA BOUNDED BY CHURCH STREET, WHINNEY HILL AND STOCKTON ROAD;~~

~~b) THE AREA EAST OF SUTTON STREET INCLUDING CROSSGATE AND SOUTH STREET;~~

~~e) THE AREA IMMEDIATELY TO THE WEST OF SUTTON STREET FROM PRINCES STREET IN THE NORTH TO CROSSGATE PETH IN THE SOUTH;~~

~~d) THE AREA AROUND CLAYPATH, PROVIDENCE ROW AND GILESGATE.~~

~~Justification~~

- ~~6.68 Many of the residential areas which surround the City Centre have inadequate car parking and garaging facilities and consequently residents rely on the existing streets for parking spaces. Commuters and shoppers trying to avoid paying car park charges also park on these streets during the day to the detriment of the amenity of the local residents. The City Council, in conjunction with Durham County Council, will seek to introduce a viable residents permit parking scheme in these areas during the Plan period in order to alleviate this problem. Priority will be given to the introduction of resident permit parking schemes in the four areas fringing the City Centre identified in Policy T15 in accordance with the recommendations of the RTA Study on Decriminalised Parking Enforcement. In areas of environmental sensitivity, such as Conservation Areas, such as Conservation Areas, the Highway Authority will be expected to take into account the visual impact of the controlled parking scheme in order to minimise any damaging effects, thereby reflecting Policies E3, E6 and E22 of the Local Plan.~~

~~Coach Parking~~

~~POLICY T16 A NEW COACH PARK IS TO BE PROVIDED AS PART OF THE PROPOSED ENHANCEMENTS TO THE RIVERSIDE CAR PARK AT THE SANDS AS SHOWN ON THE PROPOSALS MAP.~~

~~Justification~~

- ~~6.69 The Walkergate coach park was opened in 1997 as a temporary facility. The site is allocated for redevelopment for commercial leisure use in accordance with~~

~~Policy CC2b. A permanent coach park is to be provided as part of the proposed enhancements to the Riverside Car Park at The Sands. The site of the coach park is close to the City Centre and has a capacity for up to 11 coaches. It will be the subject of substantial landscaping to break up the areas of tarmacadam in accordance with Policies Q3 and Q5.~~

Storage of Caravans and Boats

POLICY T17 THE COUNCIL WILL APPROVE THE STORAGE OF CARAVANS AND BOATS ON SECURE SITES WITHIN EXISTING BUILT UP AREAS OR WITHIN FARMSTEADS OR OTHER APPROPRIATE GROUPS OF BUILDINGS IN RURAL AREAS PROVIDED THAT:

- 1. IT DOES NOT HAVE A DETRIMENTAL VISUAL IMPACT ON THE AMENITY OF THE AREAS IN WHICH THEY ARE TO BE STORED; AND**
- 2. IT CAN BE ADEQUATELY SCREENED ALL THE YEAR ROUND; AND**
- 3. IT HAS A SATISFACTORY MEANS OF ACCESS; AND**
- 4. IT DOES NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE AMENITIES OF OCCUPANTS OF NEARBY OR ADJACENT PROPERTY.**

Justification

- 6.70** In some parts of the District, caravans and boats parked on the highway and in gardens and on drives within existing housing estates are a problem, reducing open space, car parking, and generally looking unsightly. The problem is most acute during winter and secure storage sites in unobtrusive locations would do much to alleviate this. Such sites should ideally be situated within built up areas but small numbers of caravans might be stored in farmsteads or other appropriate groups of buildings in rural areas where screening can be achieved all year round by existing buildings and trees.

TAXI RANKS

POLICY T18 THE COUNCIL WILL SUPPORT THE PROVISION OF TAXI RANKS AT CONVENIENT LOCATIONS THROUGHOUT THE DISTRICT PROVIDED THAT THERE IS A DEMAND FOR THE FACILITY AND THEY ARE SITED SYMPATHETICALLY WHERE THEY WOULD:

- 1. NOT CAUSE HIGHWAY PROBLEMS OR TRAFFIC CONGESTION; AND**

2. **BE SAFELY AND EASILY ACCESSED BY PEDESTRIANS; AND**
3. **NOT HAVE A DETRIMENTAL IMPACT ON THE CHARACTER AND ENVIRONMENT OF THE SURROUNDING AREA; AND**
4. **NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE AMENITY OF RESIDENTIAL AREAS.**

Justification

- 6.71 Taxis provide an important service as part of the transport network. Shoppers in the City Centre need ranks close to the pedestrianised streets and visitors needs ranks close to the railway station and bus station. They should also be provided within the local centres throughout the district, and at the Sherburn Road/Dragon Lane Centre and the Arnison/Mercia Centre at Pity Me and the new District General Hospital. Sympathetic consideration will be given to providing taxi ranks in other areas of the District if demand exists for such a facility. It is important that taxi ranks are located where they are accessible to people with disabilities in accordance with Policy Q1.
- 6.72 Although planning permission is not required for the provision of taxi ranks since they are located within the Highway, and, therefore are subject to the jurisdiction of the Highway Authority, the Council will seek to ensure that the location of a new rank would not lead to an unacceptable increase in traffic and congestion to the area and that the character of the area is not adversely affected by the proposal. Policy EMP15 addresses the issue of taxi booking offices.

CYCLING

POLICY T19 THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO ENSURE THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SAFE, ATTRACTIVE AND CONVENIENT NETWORK OF CYCLE ROUTES THROUGHOUT THE DISTRICT.

Justification

- 6.73 Cycling is an environmentally sustainable form of transport which is energy efficient and has considerable benefits to personal health. It is also an enjoyable leisure activity. The Integrated Transport White Paper and the National Cycling Strategy both stress the need to promote cycling. The national target is to double the existing level of cycle use by 2002 and to double it again by 2012.
- 6.75 Many journeys, especially in built up areas, are relatively short and could easily be made by bicycle rather than by car. It is important, therefore, that a comprehensive network of routes suitable for use at all times of the day is developed to facilitate utility and recreational cycling. This will often be best achieved through on-road routes giving priority to cyclists on the road network, as exemplified by the introduction of dedicated cycle lanes along part of the A167, clear sign posting of routes and links between routes to complete the overall network. In some

situations, particularly in rural areas, off-road routes may be necessary using both bridleways and footpaths converted to accommodate cyclists. Careful consideration will need to be given, however, to their ongoing maintenance and to the provision of lighting. The ultimate aim is to develop a cycle network which will not only link settlements across the District (as exemplified by the 'Five Villages Project', one of whose aims is to create a network of new trails and cyclepaths between Bowburn, Cassop, Quarrington Hill, Kelloe and Coxhoe), but will also provide connections to adjoining Districts and the National Cycle Network.

- 6.76** The Local Transport Plan for County Durham includes a 'neighbourhood package' for Newton Hall which seeks to develop a network of routes for use by cyclists and walkers within the area and linking it to adjacent retail, educational and employment sites. The Transport Plan also reflects the Durham City Cycling Strategy by seeking to encourage Durham University to provide dedicated cycle routes between its various colleges, halls of residence, libraries and teaching centres. Full consultation on any new proposed route will take place with all the owners and occupiers of land at the earliest opportunity.
- 6.77** In order to increase the opportunity for greater recreational use and enjoyment of the countryside, the Council will, during the Plan period, support the provision of additional safe and direct cycle links between the City Centre and the long distance cycle routes which connect Durham with Consett (via the Lanchester Valley), Esh Winning (via the Deerness Valley) and Bishop Auckland (via the Wear Valley). Provision will also be made for connections to other long distance routes such as the National Cycle Network which is being developed during the Plan period. The development of the Millennium Scheme and Framwelgate Peth will afford the opportunity to provide two new cycle crossings over the River Wear and over the A690 at Castle Chare.
- 6.78** The needs of cyclists in the design of roads and traffic management schemes are addressed in Policies T4 and T8, and in the design of new development by Policy Q2.

POLICY T20 THE COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE THE PROVISION OF FACILITIES FOR PARKING CYCLES IN THE CITY CENTRE AND AT OTHER APPROPRIATE LOCATIONS WHICH ARE SECURE, PROTECTED FROM THE WEATHER AND CLEARLY SIGNED.

Justification

- 6.79** Cycle routes will not be fully utilised unless there are safe places to leave cycles. The provision of cycle parking facilities should be attractive to users and located as close as possible to the destinations they serve. They should be situated where frequent surveillance is possible, suit all kinds of cycle without damage and be weather protected, lit at night and clearly signposted. Additionally, they should fit in with their surroundings and require a minimum of maintenance. Priority will be given to the provision of suitable cycle parking at shopping centres, factories, offices, educational establishments, sports and leisure centres, health centres, hospitals, libraries and other public buildings. Secure cycle parks provided at

transport inter-changes such as rail and bus stations would encourage the use of cycles as part of a longer journey.

- 6.80** Both the Council and the University have provided stands and loops for cycle parking at various locations within the City Centre and University Campus. More will be provided at appropriate locations throughout the cycle network during the Plan period.
- 6.81** In order to facilitate the establishment of a pro-bike culture, particularly for journeys to work, employers will be encouraged to provide dedicated and secure on-site cycle parking, changing and shower facilities for employees.

WALKING

POLICY T21 THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO SAFEGUARD THE NEEDS OF WALKERS BY ENSURING THAT:

- 1. EXISTING FOOTPATHS AND PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY ARE PROTECTED;**
- 2. A SAFE, ATTRACTIVE AND CONVENIENT FOOTPATH NETWORK IS ESTABLISHED THROUGHOUT THE CITY; AND**
- 3. THAT THE FOOTPATH NETWORK TAKES THE MOST DIRECT ROUTE POSSIBLE BETWEEN DESTINATIONS; AND**
- 4. THE FOOTPATH NETWORK IS APPROPRIATELY SIGNED.**

WHEREVER POSSIBLE, FOOTPATHS SHOULD BE CAPABLE OF USE BY PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES, THE ELDERLY AND THOSE WITH YOUNG CHILDREN.

DEVELOPMENT WHICH DIRECTLY AFFECTS A PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY WILL ONLY BE CONSIDERED ACCEPTABLE IF AN EQUIVALENT ALTERNATIVE ROUTE IS PROVIDED BY THE DEVELOPER BEFORE WORK ON SITE COMMENCES.

Justification

- 6.82** The majority of short journeys and parts of longer trips involve walking so it is important to cater for the needs of pedestrians. Footpaths should be designed with personal safety in mind and should be located so as to minimise any conflict with motor vehicles. They should also be designed, wherever possible, to accommodate people in wheelchairs, those with walking difficulties and those with pushchairs. The use of disabled persons crossings at appropriate locations should be encouraged to aid mobility for the disabled.

- 6.83** Priority will be given to the establishment of routes which directly link residential areas with bus stops, schools, shops, community facilities and places of employment and fulfil the objectives set out in Policies R13 and R14 relating to public access to the countryside. Footpaths may also have historical connections and although they may not necessarily be public rights of way, they are valued by local residents and visitors to the area.
- 6.84** Existing footpaths will be protected from development or incorporated within new proposals. However, this may not always be possible and in these circumstances the Council will require the developer to provide an acceptable and equivalent alternative route before the development can take place.
- 6.85** The needs of pedestrians, in the design of roads and traffic management schemes, are addressed by Policies T4 and T8 and, in the design of new development, by Policy Q2. The need to improve facilities for pedestrians in the City Centre is addressed by Policy CC1.

7 SHOPPING

INTRODUCTION

- 7.1** The Local Plan offers the opportunity to create a framework of Policies covering the provision of shopping facilities to satisfy the needs and expectations of the residents of the District and its wider catchment area, during the Plan period. The Policies are intended to ensure that there is clarity in meeting these needs and expectations.

GENERAL BACKGROUND

Existing Shopping Provision

- 7.2** Shopping provision in the District reflects the settlement pattern. Most shops are located within the urban area of Durham City, with some local provision in the surrounding villages. In the context of this settlement pattern the existing hierarchy of centres comprises Durham City Centre, the Sherburn Road/Dragon Lane and Arnison/Mercia Centre District Centres and a network of local centres both within the urban area and in outlying villages.
- 7.3** Durham City Centre is the principal shopping destination in the District. Although it is defined in the Structure Plan as a sub-regional centre and provides for much of the shopping needs of its catchment area, it is within the influence of major regional centres such as Gateshead Metro Centre and Newcastle City Centre, to which it loses trade. Durham City Centre has about 26,000 m² net floorspace and is primarily a destination for comparison (ie non-food) shopping. The City Centre fulfils other functions, for instance as an employment centre, academic centre and tourism destination, and provides other services such as banks and restaurants, but it is retailing and, particularly comparison goods retailing, which underpins the centre and on which its health and vitality depend.
- 7.4** The Prince Bishops Centre Retail Development on land adjacent to the Market Place, which was opened in October 1998, has added a further 12,500 m² gross of prime shopping floorspace to Durham City Centre. This is anticipated to consolidate its sub-regional role as a comparison goods shopping centre.
- 7.4A** The Sherburn Road/Dragon Lane and Arnison/Mercia Centre District Centres serve the needs of residents of the Eastern and Western halves of the City of Durham respectively. They both provide at least one large superstore and a range of other comparison and convenience goods services including banking facilities and Class A3 food outlets. The Local Plan provides for some additional growth of these centres subject to the conditions laid out in Policies S5 and S9A.
- 7.5** Local centres serving the day to day needs of nearby residents are found in certain village centres and within Durham City. These generally contain at least a small supermarket as well as other shops and services and community facilities. Further isolated or sporadic small groups of shops are dispersed throughout the District. The largest local centre is at Sherburn Road/Dragon Lane which has been

expanded significantly by a recent superstore development. The Structure Plan and Regional Planning Guidance recognise that the role, function and relative importance of centres may change over time and there may be scope for new or replacement district or local centres. The Council acknowledges that Sherburn Road/Dragon Lane centre should take on the role of a district centre by the end of the Local Plan period.

- 7.6** The Arnison/Mercia Centre lies on the northern edge of Durham City, some 2 miles north of the City Centre. It contains about 18,500 m² of floorspace and, although primarily offering comparison (non-food) goods, there is a significant food element. It is a district centre attracting trade from a wide. The Arnison/Mercia Centre, as defined on the proposals map offer a very limited capacity for expansion. Nevertheless, development within and extensions to existing units may be appropriate.

National Policy

- 7.7** Government shopping policy is contained in Planning Policy Guidance Note 6 (PPG6), a key aim of which is to protect and enhance the vitality and commercial viability of town centres. This should be achieved by the provision of a wide range of shopping, employment, and facilities and services to which people have easy access by different means of transport. Where sites for new development are required, therefore, town centre locations are preferred, followed by edge of centre, then by district and local centre sites. (These guidelines relate to the 'sequential approach'). Out of centre developments are subject to restricted limitations afforded by the criteria set out in PPG6 taking into account the evidence of need, the availability of sites and accessibility. Planning Policy Guidance Note 13 (PPG13) is also relevant to the extent that it is the Government's aim that new retail development should be located where the number and length of journeys by private vehicle can be minimised. Similarly, such new retail development should be readily accessible by public transport and/or other modes of travel.

Problems and Opportunities

- 7.8** In 1995 the Council commissioned advice on retailing and related matters. Consultants conducted surveys of the catchment area population and of various commercial and City Centre interests. They calculated the likely need for different types of new shopping development and concluded that over the Plan period:
- There was no need to provide sites for further comparison goods shopping floorspace in or adjacent to the City Centre. The Prince Bishops Centre would absorb any spare capacity, and the City Centre may take time to adjust to this extra provision; relocation of individual shops within the City Centre is anticipated.
 - There is a need for a second modern food superstore in the District. Surveys revealed a large number of food shopping trips to the Arnison/Mercia Centre, where the J. Sainsbury store was trading well in excess of average levels for a store of this size. The City Centre had an important role for convenience retailing, but as a bulk food shopping destination it was less significant than other centres or stores.

- A need for a limited amount of new floorspace for retail warehousing was identified. The Arnison/Mercia Centre provides a considerable amount of such floorspace, and attracts a significant number of trips from the eastern side of the City. Any new provision should seek to reduce the number and length of cross-city trips, counter-balance the attractiveness of the Arnison/Mercia Centre and address the imbalances and deficiencies in the distribution of these facilities.
- Consideration should be given to the identification of a “possible district centre” at Sherburn Road/Dragon Lane.

7.9 Government Policy and the 'sequential approach' would suggest that the City Centre is the most appropriate location for additional large food and DIY stores, but there appear to be limited opportunities, both suitable and available, either within or adjacent to it. PPG6 recognises that historic centres present particular difficulties in accommodating major retail development owing to their size, design and parking requirements, as well as their traffic generation. Furthermore, surveys demonstrated that the residential areas to the east of the City, where there were no shops of this type, generated a large number of trips to superstores and DIY outlets. All these factors suggested strongly that the eastern side of the City was the most appropriate location in which to redress these deficiencies. Part of the deficiency has now been met by the development of the Tesco superstore at Dragon Lane. Notwithstanding such a conclusion, any further major retailing proposals need to be subject of a rigorous assessment to ensure that any development either by itself or cumulatively would not adversely affect the vitality and viability of any existing main town or local centre, both within and outside the District. Major retail developments are defined as those in excess of 1,000 m² gross floorspace.

7.10 The consultants' findings indicated that the City Centre was vulnerable to competition both from those large centres within easy travelling distance (notably Newcastle City Centre and the Metro Centre), and from out of town developments. It is nevertheless considered attractive by prospective retailers and there is a demand for modern retail space in the prime areas of the City Centre. The success of the Prince Bishops Centre demonstrates that the City Centre has the potential to attract new retail development.

7.11 The consultants' advice is that, generally, Durham City Centre is attractive to shoppers and displays considerable vitality. They do suggest, however, that constraints and competition make it very vulnerable. In addition, particular parts of the centre, and certain aspects of it (such as a poor standard of security) detract from it, and that there is considerable potential for enhancement and improvement. Unless such positive measures are taken, the City Centre's health and viability will suffer in the longer term. Accordingly, the impacts of competing schemes need to be carefully assessed.

7.12 Local centres need to be protected from inappropriate competition which would threaten the services which they provide, and additional investment and environmental improvements are necessary in many cases. It is also essential to

protect and enhance shopping and related facilities in those villages which do not have recognisable local centres.

- 7.13** The consultants' conclusion that there was a need for a limited amount of new floorspace for retail warehousing has been reviewed in the context of recent planning applications for retail warehouse development in the Dragon Lane area. A revised capacity analysis based on up-to-date information and assumptions shows that there is a quantitative need for additional comparison goods shopping to meet demand in the Local Plan period. A growth in demand is expected to occur from the continued growth in consumer expenditure and from the potential for the District to retain more of the comparison goods expenditure that is currently lost as leakage to centres outside Durham. There is sufficient expenditure capacity to accommodate bulky goods retail warehouses to the east of the City. This should be focussed at the Sherburn Road/Dragon Lane centre and Dragonville Industrial Estate, on that part of the industrial estate identified as having potential for bulky goods retail development. Further comparison shopping provision could be accommodated in the City Centre and smaller amounts in the Arnison/Mercia Centre.

LOCAL PLAN OBJECTIVES

- 7.15** As a result of the above considerations, the Council's objectives for shopping are:
- To sustain and enhance the shopping function of Durham City Centre and thereby support the health and vitality of the City Centre in all of its various aspects including retail, cultural, leisure, housing and employment uses.
 - To adopt the 'sequential approach' with respect to the location of significant new retail development and to apply an assessment of need.
 - To provide a shopping hierarchy that takes account of future needs and aspirations to retain consumer expenditure within the District.
 - To ensure that, as far as possible, the shopping needs of City residents are satisfied in the City Centre, Sherburn Road/Dragon Lane District Centre, the Arnison/Mercia Centre and in local centres.
 - To improve the accessibility of shopping facilities to the population by all modes of travel.
 - To resist retail developments which would undermine the vitality and viability of the City Centre or local centres.
 - To improve the environment and appearance of shopping areas.
 - To encourage the retention of village shops.
- 7.16** These objectives, which refer only to shopping, should be seen within the wider context of those relating to the City Centre. The Government expects applicants to demonstrate both the need for additional facilities and that a 'sequential approach' has been applied in selecting the location or the site.

STRATEGY

- 7.17** The shopping strategy for the District acknowledges that there are limited opportunities for significant retail growth beyond the provisions made to satisfy expressed and anticipated needs. These are primarily designed to encourage most new retailing within the City Centre Shopping Area. They relate mainly, but not exclusively to comparison retailing, which will contribute to its continued viability, and complement other measures designed to maintain and improve the attractions and vitality of the Centre as a whole. Whilst there is an opportunity to capitalise upon the benefits of Durham as a historic centre of international importance, any new development must enhance the outstanding architectural and environmental qualities of the City Centre; and should not undermine the intrinsic character of the shopping area.
- 7.18** The Arnison/Mercia Centre fulfils a strategic purpose for those types of major shopping development which are inappropriate in the City Centre. There is, however, only limited space available for further development at the district centre. Sherburn Road/Dragon Lane district centre is considered a strategic location for retail investment which will maximise accessibility, reduce cross-city shopping trips by private vehicle and reduce journey lengths. Provision for new shopping development for food and certain types of non-food retailing has been made, in order to satisfy an identified need and address the imbalance in the distribution of food shopping which has become apparent since the establishment of supermarket facilities at the Arnison/Mercia Centre.
- 7.19** Further major retailing should reinforce the pattern of existing development and comply with the objectives set out in paragraph 7.15. Particular emphasis will be placed upon the need for retail facilities to be fully integrated with transport linkages in order to reduce dependence upon private vehicle use. It is important to keep a balance between shopping facilities in the east and west of Durham to minimise travel to shop. The strategy supports the development of the district centre at Sherburn Road/Dragon Lane to serve the needs of shoppers in the east of Durham. The strategy also aims to allow new retail warehouse development both in the Dragonville area and the Arnison/Mercia Centre to meet needs across the wider catchment area of Durham.
- 7.20** In past years Durham did not have any designated district centres. District centres have a wide range of shopping and non-retail services and community facilities, serving an extensive catchment area. Historically Durham has only had local centres outside the City Centre. These are smaller centres with concentrations of shops, generally including a supermarket, which provide an important function for those people living nearby. However, recently there has been expansion of both the Arnison/Mercia Centre and the Sherburn Road/Dragon Lane centre including the development of the Tesco superstore at Sherburn Road/Dragon Lane and there is also potential for further development/redevelopment in the Sherburn Road/Dragon Lane centre in the Local Plan period. Therefore it would now be appropriate to consider a change to the shopping hierarchy to reflect the enhanced status of the Arnison/Mercia and Sherburn Road/Dragon Lane centres as district centres. Therefore the future hierarchy of centres in the District, reflected in the Local Plan, is: Durham City Centre (Policy S1), Arnison/Mercia and Sherburn

Road/Dragon Lane District Centre (Policy S4) and local centres (Policy S5). This hierarchy is firmly based on the function of different centres through the Plan period.

- 7.21** Local centres will be protected from developments which prejudice their vitality or viability, and investment in appropriate new retail and other related facilities will be encouraged within them. New shops serving local needs may be permitted outside local centres, provided a deficiency exists and no harm is caused to any recognised local centre. Existing village shops fulfil an important social function and play a part in reducing the need to travel. The policies of the Plan will seek to encourage the retention of these facilities which are an important element in the overall sustainability in rural communities.
- 7.22** The Council will encourage improvements to the environments of the CCSA, local centres, and other shopping areas.

POLICIES

CITY CENTRE

POLICY S1A THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO PROTECT AND PROMOTE THE VITALITY AND VIABILITY OF ALL CENTRES WITHIN THE LOCAL RETAIL HIERARCHY OF THE CITY OF DURHAM AREA WHICH ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- 1. DURHAM CITY CENTRE.**
- 2. THE DISTRICT CENTRES AT DRAGON LANE/SHERBURN ROAD AND AT THE ARNISON/MERCIA CENTRE.**
- 3. THE LOCAL CENTRES AT NEWTON HALL, FRAMWELLGATE MOOR, GILESGATE, BELMONT, BRANDON, COXHOE, USHAW MOOR, ESH WINNING, LANGLEY MOOR AND SHERBURN.**

Justification

- 7.22A** Durham City Centre, the district centres at Sherburn Road/Dragon Lane and the Arnison/Mercia Centre, and the various local centres are shown on the Proposals Map.
- 7.22B** The functions of each centre are defined in the justification text for the relevant policies (S1, S4, S5 and S9A).

POLICY S1 WITHIN THE CITY CENTRE SHOPPING AREA, DEFINED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP, NEW SHOPPING DEVELOPMENT (CLASS A1) WILL BE PERMITTED, SUBJECT TO POLICY E6.

Justification

- 7.23** The primary and secondary retail areas of the City Centre Shopping Area are defined within the City Centre and is shown on the Proposals Map. Policy E6 is designed to ensure high standards of development within the historic City Centre which will enhance its outstanding environmental qualities.
- 7.24** The City Centre Shopping Area is the principal shopping destination within the District, and the most generally accessible; its continued health and vitality is of the utmost importance for the prosperity of the City Centre as a whole. Government policy and the Structure Plan indicate that new shopping development should be concentrated here unless there is a need for a particular type of development which can not be accommodated in the City Centre.
- 7.25** There is unlikely to be a demand for substantial levels of new shopping within or adjacent to the City Centre over the Plan period. With the completion of the Prince Bishops scheme, no further significant development projects are anticipated. Therefore the extent of the shopping area, where new development may be approved, is expected to remain broadly as it is now. However the need to sustain and enhance Durham City Centre means that opportunities to improve its retail provision should be taken when they arise, through redevelopment and changes of use.
- 7.26** For reasons of size, parking and servicing requirements, or design, large food superstores and retail warehouses cannot readily be accommodated here, and the Plan provides for such shops elsewhere in the District. However, the provision of these types of goods at a somewhat smaller scale is both possible and appropriate within the City Centre, and will be encouraged. Food retailing performs an essential function for those living, working and visiting the City Centre and can be related to multi-purpose linked trips involving other forms of retailing. It is important that the food retailing role is maintained as an integral element of the City Centre's vitality and viability.
- 7.27** New developments must be designed to the highest standards and enhance the Conservation Area and the historic City Centre. They should be accessible to all users (Policy Q1) and have satisfactory servicing arrangements (Policy Q2). Developers and applicants must conform to the requirements of Policy Q11 which relates to the design of new shopfronts and, Policy Q16 which deals with advertisements in the City Centre.

A2 and A3 Uses within the Primary Retail Area

POLICY S2A **DEVELOPMENT AT GROUND FLOOR LEVEL OF CLASS A2 (FINANCIAL AND PROFESSIONAL) AND CLASS A3 (FOOD AND DRINK) WITHIN THE PRIMARY AREA OF THE CITY CENTRE SHOPPING AREA, AS DEFINED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT IT DOES NOT RESULT IN MORE THAN 20% OF THE TOTAL STREET FRONTAGE BEING IN NON-RETAIL USE.**

A2 and A3 Uses within the Secondary Retail Area

POLICY S2B **DEVELOPMENT AT GROUND FLOOR LEVEL OF CLASS A2 (FINANCIAL AND PROFESSIONAL) AND CLASS A3 (FOOD AND DRINK) WITHIN THE SECONDARY AREA, AS DEFINED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP (INCLUDING SADDLER'S YARD AND UNITS 19-21 TO THE REAR OF ELVET BRIDGE) WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THEY DO NOT UNDERMINE THE RETAIL CHARACTER OF THE STREET.**

Elvet Bridge

POLICY S3 **IN ELVET BRIDGE NO FURTHER GROUND FLOOR DEVELOPMENT FOR A2 (PROFESSIONAL AND FINANCIAL SERVICES) WILL BE PERMITTED. DEVELOPMENT FOR A3 (FOOD AND DRINK) WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT IT DOES NOT RESULT IN MORE THAN 50% OF THE TOTAL STREET FRONTAGE BEING IN NON-RETAIL USE.**

Justification

- 7.28** Policies S2A, S2B and S3 refer only to ground floor or street level premises, and "development" includes both redevelopment and changes of use. Unimplemented planning permissions will be included in the assessment of whether or not a percentage figure has been exceeded.
- 7.29** Uses such as restaurants, banks, building societies and estate agents are essential features of the City Centre, and can add to its primary shopping function. These Policies seek to make reasonable provision for both types of use, while preserving the retail character of the centre, which can be eroded by the approval of too many non-retail uses, or by excessive concentration of them. However, A3 uses such as cafes and restaurants generally make a greater contribution to the vitality of town and city centres, particularly in the evening, and it is Government policy to encourage such vitality.
- 7.30** The figure of 20% identified in Policy S2A is considered to be an appropriate maximum guideline for occupation of ground floor by non-retail uses in those streets within the primary shopping area of the City Centre. It should be noted that A2 and A3 uses are not prohibited completely within this area.
- 7.31** In several streets, such as Saddler Street and the Market Place, the balance between Class A1, Class A2 and Class A3 uses has already been compromised, and there are significant concentrations of, for instance, financial services and estate agents, where the 20% figure has been exceeded. In most of North Road and in Claypath, which are within the City Centre Shopping Area identified in Policy S1 but outside the prime shopping area identified in Policy S2A, such concerns are less critical, although the Council considers a figure of 50% of the total street frontage is an appropriate maximum guideline for the occupation of the ground floor by non-retail uses in secondary retail areas identified in Policy S2B.

- 7.32** Due to its pedestrianised character and views towards the river, Elvet Bridge is considered particularly suitable for a mixture of shopping (Class A1 use) and restaurants and cafes (Class A3 uses). This adds vitality to this part of the City and, since Elvet Bridge is adjacent to the main access route to the Cathedral, it should also benefit tourism. In order to achieve this objective, no further development of Class A2 uses will be permitted within the Elvet Bridge area.
- 7.33** The guidelines used in calculating the frontages and percentages for the purposes of these Policies is set out in Appendix 5.
- 7.34** Notwithstanding any of these considerations, no change of use should involve the loss of or damage to a historic shopfront or facade thereby contravening Policy Q12. Neither must there be any adverse effects on the amenities of nearby occupiers, a particularly relevant factor when considering proposals for food and drink outlets.

SHERBURN ROAD/DRAGON LANE DISTRICT CENTRE

POLICY S4 THE SHERBURN ROAD/DRAGON LANE CENTRE WILL ACCOMMODATE ADDITIONAL RETAILING AND OTHER APPROPRIATE FACILITIES AND SERVICES, RELATING TO THE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY PROVIDED THAT:

- 1. EITHER BY ITSELF OR CUMULATIVELY IT WOULD NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE VITALITY AND VIABILITY OF ANY EXISTING MAIN TOWN CENTRE OR LOCAL CENTRE BOTH WITHIN AND OUTSIDE THE DISTRICT; AND**
- 2. IT WOULD NOT GIVE RISE TO SERIOUS PROBLEMS OF ACCESS, ROAD SAFETY AND TRAFFIC CONGESTION; AND**
- 3. THE PROPOSAL WOULD NOT HAVE AN UNACCEPTABLE IMPACT ON TRAVEL PATTERNS, AND NOT RESULT IN A SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE OF CAR USAGE AND ASSOCIATED VEHICLE MILEAGE AND POLLUTANT EMISSIONS.**

Justification

- 7.35** The need for a large modern foodstore on the east side of Durham City was highlighted in a shopping study carried out by Donaldsons and agreed by the Secretary of State. Existing facilities here and in the City Centre were of insufficient size to prevent large numbers of trips to the Arnison/Mercia Centre at Pity Me for bulk food shopping. Suitable sites did not exist within the City Centre to accommodate a major expansion of food retailing with associated parking requirements. The identified need for such development should be met in the Sherburn Road/Dragon Lane centre on the eastern side of the City. This is a

strategic location for major retailing well-related to public transport routes and will counter-balance growth which has occurred at the Arnison/Mercia Centre. The boundary of the centre has been extended to accommodate the predicted growth in retail demand.

- 7.36** Detailed planning permission for the construction of a Tesco store (8,081 m² gross) was granted in June 2000 and the store opened in September 2001. During the Local Plan period Sherburn Road/Dragon Lane has the potential to perform a more strategic role than that of the local centres in Durham. It could develop further to accommodate other types of retailing and services. Opportunities exist for comprehensive redevelopment of the older parts of the centre within the defined boundary of the centre. This form of development would contribute to the regeneration and future vitality and viability of the centre, which would, in turn, make a significant improvement to the environment of the Sherburn Road area and complement the recent housing initiatives.

LOCAL CENTRES

POLICY S5 **WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OF THE FOLLOWING LOCAL CENTRES, AS DEFINED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP, DEVELOPMENT OF CLASS A1 (SHOPS), CLASS A2 (SERVICE USES) AND CLASS A3 (FOOD AND DRINK OUTLETS) WILL BE PERMITTED, PROVIDED THAT:**

- 1. IT WILL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE VITALITY OR VIABILITY OF ANY OTHER LOCAL CENTRE;**
- 2. IT WILL NOT LEAD TO THE LOSS OF EXISTING COMMUNITY OR RECREATIONAL FACILITIES, OR OF AREAS WHICH MAY BE REQUIRED IN FUTURE FOR SUCH USES.**
- 3. IN THE CASE OF CLASS A2 AND CLASS A3 USES, IT WILL NOT UNDERMINE THE RETAIL CHARACTER OF THE CENTRE;**
- 4. THAT IT CONFORMS TO POLICIES Q1, Q2, Q11 AND T10:**
 - a) NEWTON HALL**
 - b) FRAMWELLGATE MOOR**
 - c) GILESGATE**
 - d) BELMONT**
 - e) BRANDON**
 - f) COXHOE**

- g) **USHAW MOOR**
- h) **ESH WINNING**
- i) **LANGLEY MOOR**
- j) **SHERBURN**

Justification

- 7.37** The local centres identified in Policy S5 have concentrations of shops, generally including a supermarket, as well as other businesses and services, which together form a recognisable centre. They provide an important function for those living either in the immediate vicinity, or slightly further afield in nearby settlements which do not have such centres. They are generally reasonably well served by public transport. Their position in the hierarchy of shopping provision in the district should be protected and, where possible, their physical structure consolidated; new shopping development of an appropriate type and scale will generally be encouraged within them. As a general rule shops of up to about 1,000 m² or a medium sized supermarket, will be appropriate. Shops such as larger foodstores, which are of a size or type which might serve a wider area, will not be permitted; These centres serve a local population, and development within them must not adversely affect road safety, or the amenities and environmental conditions in the immediate vicinity; parking provision should be made in accordance with the Council's parking standards.
- 7.38** Local centres contain services and facilities other than shops, which help make them focal points for the local community and enable trips there to serve several purposes. Existing community medical and social facilities, and public open space, must therefore not be eroded by new shopping development. Sites within local centres are particularly suitable for these uses and alternative locations for them may be hard to find within densely developed residential areas. It is important therefore that future requirements for them are fully considered before new shopping or other development is approved in local centres.
- 7.39** Subject to these safeguards, a number of other uses will generally be acceptable within local centres, particularly since they thereby offer the opportunity for trips which serve several purposes. Activities such as small scale offices and businesses, launderettes, amusement centres, and taxi offices would all normally be appropriate within them. It is nevertheless important to preserve their essentially retail function from erosion by other uses, and particularly food and drink outlets. Infill housing, or changes of use to housing, will be acceptable provided the development does not erode the supply of land required for shopping or community facilities, and is in scale and character with the local centre.

VILLAGE SHOPS

POLICY S6 WITHIN THE FOLLOWING VILLAGES, CLASS A1 (SHOPS) OF LESS THAN 1,000 M² WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT:

1. **IT WILL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE VITALITY OR VIABILITY OF ANY OTHER LOCAL CENTRE OR VILLAGE.**
2. **IT WILL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE CHARACTER OR THE AMENITY OF THE SURROUNDING AREA, NOR THE INTERESTS OF ROAD SAFETY.**
3. **IT IS SITUATED CLOSE, OR IS WELL RELATED TO EXISTING SHOPS OR OTHER FACILITIES WITHIN THE VILLAGE.**
 - a) **BEARPARK**
 - b) **BOWBURN**
 - c) **HIGH PITTINGTON**
 - d) **HIGH SHINCLIFFE**
 - e) **KELLOE**
 - f) **MEADOWFIELD**
 - g) **NEW BRANCEPETH**
 - h) **SHERBURN HILL**
 - i) **WEST RANTON**
 - j) **WITTON GILBERT**

Justification

- 7.40** These settlements are those larger villages (listed in Policy H3) which do not have an identifiable local centre and therefore are not included in Policy S5. Most do have some shops and other services, often dispersed throughout the village. Subject to the safeguards listed in Policy S6, additional convenience shopping will be permitted to increase variety and choice for local residents. Such new shops should be well related to any existing concentrations of retail or community uses within the village.
- 7.41** Bowburn in particular, has experienced growth in population over the last decade but still lacks any identifiable local centre. The shops and community facilities are scattered throughout the village. It is anticipated that during the Plan period consideration will be given to the improvement of convenience shopping within the village and a site has been allocated within the Bowburn South Industrial Estate identified in Policy EMP8d.

INDIVIDUAL SHOPS

POLICY S7 INDIVIDUAL SMALL SHOPS WILL BE PERMITTED WITHIN SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES PROVIDED THAT:

- 1. IT WILL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE VITALITY AND VIABILITY OF ANY OTHER LOCAL CENTRE OR VILLAGE; AND**
- 2. IT WILL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE CHARACTER AND AMENITY OF THE SURROUNDING AREA, NOR THE INTERESTS OF ROAD SAFETY.**

Justification

7.42 Small shops outside local centres often provide a valuable service, particularly for those who are less mobile. They can be sited on their own in large housing areas, or in sporadic groups with other shops. As a rule such shops should not exceed 100 m², the service which they provide must be a local one, and they must not cause any harm to an existing centre. Policy C9 of the Community Services Chapter highlights the Council's commitment to self-sufficient settlements by seeking the retention of their respective last remaining village shops.

7.43 It is also essential that the nearby residents and residential areas are not subjected to noise, disturbance, or any other loss of amenity as a result of such new shopping development. Questions such as adequacy of parking, hours of opening, type of goods sold and highway safety will be critical in assessing the merits of any proposal under this Policy.

RETAIL WAREHOUSING OUTLETS

POLICY S8 NEW RETAIL WAREHOUSE DEVELOPMENT, SELLING D.I.Y. AND HOME IMPROVEMENT GOODS, GENERAL BUILDING MERCHANDISE, FURNITURE, BEDDING, FLOOR COVERINGS, OFFICE EQUIPMENT, ELECTRICAL GOODS, MOTOR ACCESSORIES, PET PRODUCTS AND GARDEN CENTRE PRODUCTS WILL BE PERMITTED ON THAT PART OF THE DRAGONVILLE INDUSTRIAL ESTATE DESIGNATED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP, PROVIDED THAT:

- 1. SUCH DEVELOPMENT SATISFIES A DEMONSTRABLE NEED, CONFORMS TO THE 'SEQUENTIAL APPROACH' AND CANNOT BE ACCOMMODATED WITHIN THE SHERBURN ROAD/DRAGON LANE CENTRE IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY S4.**
- 2. IT IS LOCATED IN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO THE SHERBURN ROAD/DRAGON LANE CENTRE IN**

ORDER TO FACILITATE LINKAGES WITH THAT CENTRE.

3. **EITHER BY ITSELF OR CUMULATIVELY IT WOULD NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE VITALITY AND VIABILITY OF ANY EXISTING CENTRE BOTH WITHIN AND OUTSIDE THE DISTRICT.**
4. **THE PREMISES SHALL NOT BE USED FOR THE SALE OF FOOD OR DRINK, CLOTHING, SPORTS GOODS OR EQUIPMENT, SHOES, TOYS AND GAMES, JEWELLERY, TOILETRIES, FASHION ACCESSORIES, LUGGAGE, BOOKS OR STATIONERY NO RETAIL UNITS HAVE LESS THAN 750 SQUARE METRES GROSS FLOOR AREA.**
5. **IT WOULD NOT GIVE RISE TO PROBLEMS OF ACCESS, ROAD SAFETY AND TRAFFIC CONGESTION ON THE WIDER ROAD NETWORK OR COMPROMISE THE OPERATIONAL NEEDS OF USERS OF DRAGONVILLE INDUSTRIAL ESTATE.**
6. **IT IS ACCESSIBLE BY A CHOICE OF DIFFERENT MODES OF TRANSPORT.**
7. **IT DOES NOT CONFLICT WITH THE NEED TO MAINTAIN A SUPPLY OF SITES AND PREMISES FOR GENERAL INDUSTRIAL PURPOSES (POLICY EMP8).**

Justification

- 7.44** There is an identified need for additional floorspace for bulky goods retail warehousing which cannot easily be sold in a historic city centre such as Durham. The existing concentration of this type of shopping is at the Arnison Centre/Mercia Retail Park, but this should not be extended beyond its existing limits. This extra bulky goods floorspace should for strategic reasons be located on the eastern side of the City, which currently lacks such facilities and to reduce car-borne trips from there to the Arnison Centre and similar facilities elsewhere.
- 7.45** The City Council has made a resolution to grant planning permission on the Dragonville Industrial Estate at Renny's Lane for a bulky goods retail warehouse development, including a large DIY store. There is potential for further retail warehouse developments on part of the Dragonville Industrial Estate provided that such uses are restricted to bulky goods only, that they demonstrate need, satisfy the 'sequential approach' and cannot be accommodated within the Sherburn Road/Dragon Lane centre. Proposals for future development in this location should have good pedestrian linkages with the Sherburn Road/Dragon Lane centre to encourage linked trips. Proposals should also be acceptable in terms of retail impact, be accessible by a choice of means of transport and should not conflict

with the need to maintain a supply of sites and premises for general industrial purposes. An area of the Dragonville Industrial Estate which lies in proximity to the Sherburn Road/Dragon Lane centre is identified on the Proposals Map as being designated for retail warehouse development.

- 7.46** It is vitally important that retail warehouse development does not prejudice the health of the City Centre, and its new shopping investment, by selling goods on which the City Centre's viability depends. Therefore, restrictions will be placed upon the size of retail units and the range of goods to be sold at Dragonville Industrial Estate so that developments do not subsequently change their character, thereby limiting their impact upon the vitality and viability of existing centres. Planning conditions will be placed on any planning permissions granted in order to ensure that the criteria of this policy are complied with Dragonville Industrial Estate has limited capacity to absorb additional traffic. Improvements to the road network may be required connecting the estate with the wider area. A system of integrated road/junction improvements in the vicinity of this site may be required in accordance with the Department for Transport's policy as set out in Appendix 7 of this Plan.

THE ARNISON/MERCIA CENTRE

POLICY S9A DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS WHICH WOULD CONSOLIDATE THE ROLE OF THE ARNISON/MERCIA CENTRE AS SHOWN ON THE PROPOSALS MAP, AS A DISTRICT CENTRE MEETING THE NEEDS OF RESIDENTS ON THE WESTERN SIDE OF DURHAM CITY, WILL BE ENCOURAGE PROVIDED THAT THEY:

- 1. WOULD NOT UNDERMINE THE ROLE OF THE CITY CENTRE OR ANY OTHER CENTRES IN THE LOCAL RETAIL HIERARCHY; AND**
- 2. WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE IN TERMS OF ROAD SAFETY AND HIGHWAY CAPACITY.**

Justification

- 7.47** The Arnison/Mercia Centre is a district centre serving the needs of residents of the western side of Durham city. It also satisfies a demand for comparison goods that could not be accommodated within the City Centre or on an edge of centre site.
- 7.48** The Arnison/Mercia Centre has only a very limited capacity for further development. Nevertheless, development within the defined boundary on the Proposals Map and extensions to existing units may be appropriate to enable the district centre to sustain its function as a location for convenience and comparison retailers serving the needs of residents of the western side of Durham City. All proposals will be expected to be acceptable in terms of retail impact on the City Centre, highway safety, accessibility, impact on car travel, and design.
- 7.49** It is necessary to outline a policy for the future management and development of the Arnison/Mercia Retail Centre to ensure that the district centre, as defined on

the Proposals Map do not extend beyond their existing limits. For the purpose of this Policy, in relation to retaining the generally open nature of the northern and eastern parts of the Arnison Centre and the eastern part of the Mercia Centre, this comprises the area of the main car parks and those smaller units situated on the northern boundaries of the site. Adjacent undeveloped land within the settlement boundary is required for other non-retail uses (for example the development of Abbeywoods Business Park in accordance with Policy EMP4 a), but, equally importantly, any addition to this extensive retail provision would increase vehicular trips and could have an adverse impact on the City Centre.

MAJOR OUT OF CENTRE PROPOSALS

POLICY S9B WHERE THERE IS AN IDENTIFIED NEED FOR LARGE SCALE RETAIL AND LEISURE DEVELOPMENT, WHICH CANNOT BE MET THROUGH EXISTING ALLOCATIONS, PREFERENCE SHOULD BE FOR SITES WITHIN THE CITY CENTRE, FOLLOWED BY EDGE OF CITY CENTRE LOCATIONS, THE DISTRICT CENTRES AT SHERBURN ROAD/DAGON LANE AND THE ARNISON/MERCIA CENTRE, AND THEN LOCAL SHOPPING CENTRES WITHIN THE BUILT UP AREA OF DURHAM CITY (IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICIES S1, S4, S5 AND S8.

WHERE SUCH DEVELOPMENT CANNOT BE ACCOMMODATED IN THE ABOVE LOCATIONS, THEN LOCATIONS ELSEWHERE WITHIN THE BUILT UP AREA OF DURHAM CITY WOULD ONLY BE APPROPRIATE PROVIDED THAT:

1. IT SATISFIES A DEMONSTRABLE NEED AND CONFORMS TO THE 'SEQUENTIAL APPROACH'.
2. EITHER BY ITSELF OR CUMULATIVELY IT WOULD NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE VITALITY AND VIABILITY OF ANY EXISTING CENTRE BOTH WITHIN AND OUTSIDE THE DISTRICT; AND
3. IT WOULD NOT GIVE RISE TO SERIOUS PROBLEMS OF ACCESS, ROAD SAFETY AND TRAFFIC CONGESTION; AND
4. THE SITE IS ACCESSIBLE BY A CHOICE OF MEANS OF TRANSPORT HAVING PARTICULAR REGARD TO THE NEEDS OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT, PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS; AND
5. THE PROPOSAL WOULD NOT HAVE AN UNACCEPTABLE IMPACT ON TRAVEL PATTERNS, NOR RESULT IN A SUBSTANTIAL

**INCREASE IN CAR USAGE AND ASSOCIATED
VEHICLE MILEAGE AND POLLUTANT EMISSIONS.**

Justification

- 7.50** For the purposes of Policy S9, large scale retail developments are defined as those which are in excess of 1,000 m² gross floorspace.
- 7.51** The primary aim of Government Policy is to sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of town centres. It recognises that there is a requirement to demonstrate the need for development when major retail proposals are brought forward for consideration. Furthermore, Government Policy seeks to ensure that all new major retail and leisure developments are well located in relation to the local transport network, are accessible by a choice of transport modes and will not give rise to substantial increases in overall vehicle mileage. Accessibility by public transport is a key consideration as embodied in the Government's White Paper on Transport. In seeking to direct most new major shopping and leisure developments to town centres, the 'sequential approach' referred to in PPG6 is applied which imposes restrictions outside existing centres. The Council's retail strategy takes into account the need for various types of retailing, including factory outlet centres, and appropriate allocations have been made in Policies S4 and S8.
- 7.52** Major leisure developments are proposed in Durham City Centre, and these are described in Chapter 12 and Policy CC2.
- 7.53** Any major out-of-centre application will need to be accompanied by a retail impact study to enable its economic effects on established centres, and on prospective investment within them, to be assessed. If demonstrable harm is likely to be caused in either respect, permission will be refused.
- 7.54** It will be necessary to demonstrate that any large facilities could not otherwise be provided in the form of smaller developments, including extensions, at existing centres.

FOOD AND DRINK

**POLICY S10 WITHIN SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES, DEVELOPMENT
FOR CLASS A3 (FOOD AND DRINK) USE WILL BE
PERMITTED PROVIDED:**

- 1. THERE ARE NO ADVERSE EFFECTS ON THE
 AMENITIES OF NEARBY OCCUPANTS; AND**
- 2. ADEQUATE PROVISION IS MADE FOR PARKING
 IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY T10**
- 3. IT IS IN SCALE AND CHARACTER WITH ITS
 SURROUNDINGS; AND**
- 4. IT DOES NOT COMPROMISE THE LEVEL OF
 PROVISION IDENTIFIED IN POLICIES S2 AND S3.**

Justification

- 7.55** The A3 (Food and Drink) use class includes such diverse establishments as restaurants, public houses, "take-aways", snack bars and cafes. Whilst they are generally most appropriate in town and local centres, they frequently occur elsewhere, in a wide variety of locations.
- 7.56** They have obvious benefits by providing services and facilities to the local population, as well as to tourists and visitors. Class A3 uses can, however, cause difficulties in terms of their relationship with the surrounding area, particularly in respect of factors such as traffic and parking, noise, disturbance and cooking odours. Applications will be judged carefully against these criteria and conditions will be imposed to ensure that such problems do not arise.
- 7.57** Apart from these considerations, any new development must respect the scale and the character of its surroundings, and this will be an important matter when assessing larger scale Class A3 proposals. Similarly there may be concern about the effect of an accumulation of Class A3 permissions on the character of a particular locality; for example "take-away" restaurants can dominate small parades of shops, and restrict their wider functions, unless they are carefully controlled.

MISCELLANEOUS SALES

POLICY S11 THE SALE OF MOTOR VEHICLES, CARAVANS, BOATS, HEAVY BUILDING MATERIALS, GREENHOUSES AND GARDEN SHEDS WILL BE PERMITTED WITHIN GENERAL INDUSTRIAL ESTATES. ELSEWHERE WITHIN SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES SUCH A PROPOSAL WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT:

- 1. IT IS NOT CONTRARY TO ANY OTHER POLICY OF THE PLAN; AND**
- 2. IT IS NOT WITHIN A PREDOMINANTLY RESIDENTIAL AREA; AND**
- 3. THERE IS NO ADVERSE EFFECT ON THE AMENITIES OF NEARBY OCCUPIERS ON THE CHARACTER OR VISUAL AMENITY OF THE AREA, OR ON HIGHWAY SAFETY.**

ANY PERMISSION GRANTED WILL BE LIMITED BY CONDITION AND/OR AGREEMENT TO THE GOODS TO WHICH THE APPLICATION REFERS.

Justification

- 7.58** Showrooms for vehicles, boats and similar types of goods provide an important retail function and complement other shopping facilities. They have particular site

and locational requirements which cannot normally be met within existing shopping centres. They often require large, prominent, frontage sites along major highways, a significant proportion of which is dedicated for storage, often in the form of open sales areas and customer parking.

- 7.59** If not adequately controlled, such outlets can dominate their surroundings and suitable siting of them is critical so that their adverse effects on residential or other amenities are minimised. Promotional advertising and display of goods, which can be detrimental to both the appearance and character of the surrounding area, must also be strictly controlled.

OCCASIONAL MARKETS

POLICY S12 OCCASIONAL MARKETS (INCLUDING CAR BOOT SALES) CONSISTING OF MORE THAN 14 DAYS IN TOTAL IN ANY CALENDAR YEAR WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED IF THERE ARE NO ADVERSE EFFECTS ON THE FOLLOWING:

- 1. THE VITALITY AND VIABILITY OF THE CITY CENTRE OR ANY LOCAL CENTRE; OR**
- 2. THE AMENITIES OF NEARBY RESIDENTS OR BUSINESSES; OR**
- 3. THE HIGHWAY NETWORK; OR**
- 4. THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE AREA.**

ADEQUATE ACCESSIBILITY BY A CHOICE OF TRANSPORT MODES IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COUNCIL'S STANDARDS, MUST BE PROVIDED.

Justification

- 7.60** The most common occasional markets are car boot sales, which often attract large numbers of car-borne visitors. Such activities generally take place at weekends and bank holidays and can cause considerable nuisance to nearby residents as well as being intrusive in rural locations. For these reasons they need to be strictly controlled, and an urban location, away from residential property, is likely to be most appropriate. In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995, Occasional Markets consisting of 14 days in total in any calendar year would not require planning permission and would not be subject to this Policy.
- 7.61** Whenever such markets take place they must not undermine the viability of shops and businesses in established centres which offer a permanent service.
- 7.62** Trading on streets or other areas of the highway, such as lay-bys, from mobile vans, kiosks or caravans can have implications for visual amenity and highway

safety. In general this activity is more effectively controlled under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982, which lays down licensing and consent procedures, and which has proved quicker and more effective than action under planning legislation.

FACTORY AND FARM SHOPS

POLICY S13 THE INCIDENTAL SALE OF GOODS DIRECT TO THE PUBLIC FROM MANUFACTURING OR BUSINESS PREMISES OR FARM PRODUCTION UNITS, WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT:

- 1. IN THE CASE OF FACTORY SHOPS THE GOODS ARE PRODUCED ON THE PREMISES AND THE RETAILING IS ANCILLARY/SUBSIDIARY TO THEIR MANUFACTURE; AND**
- 2. IN THE CASE OF FARM SHOPS, THE GOODS SOLD ARE PRIMARILY PRODUCED IN THE LOCALITY AND WOULD NOT HAVE A SIGNIFICANT EFFECT UPON THE VIABILITY OF NEARBY VILLAGE SHOPS; AND**
- 3. THE PROPOSAL WOULD NOT HAVE A DETRIMENTAL IMPACT UPON ROAD SAFETY OR EXISTING SERVICING AND CAR PARKING ARRANGEMENTS; AND**
- 4. THE PROPOSAL WOULD NOT HAVE A DETRIMENTAL EFFECT UPON THE AMENITY OF NEIGHBOURING OCCUPIERS OR ON THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE AREA; AND**
- 5. THE SALES AREA DOES NOT EXCEED 100 M² FLOORSPACE (GROSS) WITHOUT ACCOMPANYING JUSTIFICATION.**

Justification

7.63 Factory shops are outlets for goods manufactured on the premises, often selling "seconds" or discounted items. Frequently they only operate on an occasional basis. To be acceptable in planning terms it is essential that such an operation is incidental to the main manufacturing or other activity, and is small scale, and hence will not pose any threat to conventional shops in established centres. Such proposals will normally be acceptable provided there are no other harmful effects in terms of parking, or traffic generation, and they do not detract from the character of the area or the amenity of its inhabitants.

7.64 This Policy does not cover factory outlet centres which are substantial developments of shops selling seconds and end of line goods at discounted prices,

and which are physically separate from the factories which manufacture them. Such proposals are covered by Policy S9.

- 7.65** The sale of goods produced on the farm itself is generally regarded as an ancillary use which does not require planning permission. This Policy refers to the sale of agricultural goods imported from elsewhere, which will generally be acceptable provided it does not contravene the above safeguards. Generally such products must be produced locally (defined in PPG7 as the farmholding and its environs). Farm shops should be incidental to the running of the holding or enterprise, should not in themselves attract significant traffic, and should be appropriate to their rural location. It is important to ensure that farm shops do not have a significant effect on the viability of nearby shops.
- 7.66** The Council recognises, however, that in order to provide a service throughout the year, farmers may have to bring in non-local produce to overcome the problems of seasonality, provide continuity of employment and ensure that a sufficiently wide selection of produce can be offered. The Council does not wish to be prescriptive about the level of imported goods which will be considered acceptable as this is likely to vary according to local circumstances such as the location of the farm shop, the presence or otherwise of nearby village shops and the level of activity including traffic movements which would be generated. The key test will be whether the function of the farm shop remains primarily for the sale of local produced goods.
- 7.67** In order to ensure that the retailing element of factory and farm shops is incidental, the sales area should be restricted to 100 m² (gross) unless there is an accompanying justification in support of a higher figure.

AMUSEMENT CENTRES

POLICY S14 **AMUSEMENT CENTRES WILL BE PERMITTED WITHIN LOCAL CENTRES IDENTIFIED IN POLICY S5 AND WITHIN NOS. 5-80 NORTH ROAD AND IN THAT PART OF CLAYPATH INCLUDED WITHIN THE CITY CENTRE SHOPPING AREA PROVIDED THAT THERE IS NO ADVERSE EFFECT ON THE RETAIL CHARACTER OF THE CENTRE, OR ON ITS AMENITIES OR THOSE OF NEARBY RESIDENTS AND OCCUPANTS.**

THEY WILL NOT BE PERMITTED ELSEWHERE.

Justification

- 7.68** Amusement centres normally consist of 'amusement-with-prizes' machines, and are most appropriately sited in secondary shopping areas or areas of mixed commercial development, rather than in prime shopping streets. They are not likely to be suitable within the historic centre of the City, where Policies S2A, S2B and S3 apply because they would detract from the Conservation Area and from the retail character of that part of the City Centre.

- 7.69** Amusement centres do sometimes give rise to problems of noise and disturbance and they will not generally be permitted where they will affect the amenities or, for instance, dwellings, schools, churches or other public buildings. Conditions will normally be attached to any planning permission restricting matters such as hours of operation and noise.

GARDEN CENTRES

POLICY S15 **NEW GARDEN CENTRES, AND EXTENSIONS TO EXISTING GARDEN CENTRES WILL BE PERMITTED WITHIN SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES, PROVIDED THERE IS NO ADVERSE EFFECT ON THE AMENITY OF NEARBY RESIDENTS OR ON HIGHWAY SAFETY.**

THEY WILL BE PERMITTED ELSEWHERE ONLY IF:

- 1. THE SITE IS NOT IN THE DURHAM CITY GREEN BELT;**
- 2. THEY DO NOT INTRUDE VISUALLY INTO THE COUNTRYSIDE, OR DETRACT FROM THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE LOCAL LANDSCAPE;**
- 3. THEY ARE SATISFACTORILY RELATED TO EXISTING BUILDINGS OR SETTLEMENTS;**
- 4. THERE IS NO ADVERSE EFFECT ON THE AMENITY OF NEIGHBOURING PROPERTY OR ON HIGHWAY SAFETY;**

Justification

- 7.70** Garden centres are generally either found within urban areas, attached to large DIY stores, or on the edges of towns and villages or in the countryside. They can attract considerable amounts of traffic, particularly at weekends at certain times of the year. Provided such traffic is adequately catered for, and residential amenity is not adversely affected, they are appropriate within settlement boundaries.

- 7.71** Garden centres are excluded from the range of uses which are acceptable in the Green Belt. Elsewhere in the countryside the principal consideration in assessing applications will be the visual effect of the development on the landscape, and whether or not it can be easily assimilated within its surroundings. Suitable locations may be on the edge of settlements or in the grounds of existing large buildings; they will seldom be acceptable in free-standing rural locations or where they are unrelated to other development. Whatever their location, they must not be visually intrusive or otherwise damaging to the character and appearance of the countryside. Access arrangements and protection of residential amenity are vital considerations in all cases.

PETROL FILLING STATIONS

POLICY S16 PETROL FILLING STATIONS WILL BE PERMITTED WITHIN SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES PROVIDED THAT:

- 1. THERE IS NO ADVERSE EFFECT ON THE AMENITIES OF LOCAL RESIDENTS OR ON HIGHWAY SAFETY; AND**
- 2. ANY ASSOCIATED RETAIL PROVISION IS RESTRICTED IN AREA TO 50 M², ON THE BASIS THAT IT IS ANCILLARY TO THE MAIN ACTIVITY, SO AS NOT TO UNDERMINE THE VITALITY AND VIABILITY OF ESTABLISHED SHOPPING CENTRES AND VILLAGE SHOPS AS SET OUT IN POLICIES S1, S4, S6 AND S7.**

PETROL FILLING STATION WILL NOT BE PERMITTED WITHIN THE COUNTRYSIDE.

Justification

- 7.72** Petrol filling stations are frequently visually intrusive, are open for longer periods than conventional shops, and attract significant volumes of traffic. When established they can lead to pressure for further related development on the site such as a restaurant, cafe or hotel. They must therefore be located on sites where they cause no harm to highway safety, to the character and appearance of the surroundings or to the living conditions of local residents. Although Policy S16 is primarily concerned with the development of new petrol filling stations, any proposal to renovate an existing petrol filling station will be expected to comply with the criteria set out in the policy.
- 7.73** According to Government criteria there is no need to provide sites for additional facilities for through traffic on the A1(M) or trunk road A167. Proposals along less strategic routes should be judged against the above criteria; they should be within settlements rather than in the countryside where they will be intrusive and inappropriate.
- 7.74** Retailing from petrol filling stations should be incidental to their primary function of selling petrol and similar fuels, and should be restricted to goods which are commonly required by road users on their journeys. It is also important to ensure that the sale of convenience goods will not undermine the viability of any recognised retail centres or nearby village shops. These sales areas should not, therefore, generally exceed 50 m² (net) in size.

8 RECREATION AND LEISURE IN DURHAM

INTRODUCTION

- 8.1** This Chapter of the Local Plan deals with the recreation and leisure needs of the residents of the District. The Council's Leisure Strategy is based on the fundamental principle that provision should be made for a wide spectrum of recreational and leisure opportunities which are readily accessible to all sections of the population regardless of age, gender, income and place of residence. This not only enhances people's quality of life but also improves the image of the locality.
- 8.2** Sport and recreation are major land uses. Development Plans have a key role to play in allocating adequate areas of land for this use and safeguarding open space with recreation value. Local Planning Authorities also have a responsibility to take account of the community's needs for recreation space in determining planning applications, to assess current provision and requirements and to resist development of open space if it would conflict with the wider public interest.
- 8.3** The Local Plan, therefore, focuses on providing and safeguarding open space in a form which meets the sporting, recreational and leisure needs of all residents of the District. The Plan also refers to the provision of particular sports facilities for which there is a perceived need identified in the Council's Leisure Strategy.

GENERAL BACKGROUND

- 8.4** A Leisure Survey carried out in 1996 as part of the background to the Council's Leisure Strategy identify that walking, cycling, golf and football were the most popular outdoor recreational activities undertaken by the general public in the District. Swimming, snooker, keeping fit and badminton were the most popular indoor pursuits.
- 8.5** Due to the Council's commitment to support leisure services, the District is able to offer its residents access to a wide range of recreational and leisure activities. These include five Leisure Centres at strategic locations throughout the District, a centrally located swimming pool and 16 major outdoor recreation areas providing facilities for both organised and informal sporting and leisure activities for all age ranges of the community. The Council is also responsible for 84 equipped play areas.
- 8.6** The River Wear provides a valuable source of recreational and leisure opportunities for both residents and visitors to Durham. These include pleasure trips on the river, rowing, angling and canoeing/kayaking as well as walks along the riverbanks.
- 8.7** In recent years the Council has used sport as a means of enhancing the image of Durham at regional, national and international level. This has been exemplified by a recognition of Durham City's increasingly important role as a location for cross country running, culminating with the successful hosting of the World Cross Country Championships in March 1995.

- 8.8** Although the District has a public swimming pool it is housed within a building which is over 60 years old and now in need of replacement. The provision of a new swimming facility is top priority in the Council's Leisure Strategy.
- 8.9** There are a large number of voluntary and private sporting clubs within the District, with their own facilities, providing a major contribution to the sporting and social life of Durham. They cover the full spectrum of recreational activity and provide the basis of the City of Durham Sports Forum, whose purpose is to discuss leisure issues in the District and provide grant aid for sporting excellence.
- 8.10** Shared use arrangements have been agreed between the Council and County Council for public access to the recreational and leisure facilities provided at Belmont, Framwellgate Moor, Gilesgate, Deerness and Durham Johnston Comprehensive Schools and Laurel Avenue Primary School.
- 8.11** Both the University and New College provide recreational facilities, which are available for use by the general public, particularly outside term time. Their main contribution to leisure activity within the District, however, is their ability to accommodate arts and entertainment programmes, such as concerts, plays, festivals, lectures and other similar events.
- 8.12** The Council has been involved in improving access to the countryside via the development of a comprehensive network of recreational routes for pedestrians and cyclists. It has supported the County Council in the development of long-distance leisure routes along former railway lines in the Lanchester Valley, Deerness Valley and the Brandon/Bishop Auckland Walkway. The Council has also assisted Groundwork East Durham in the creation of circular walks around Cassop Vale and in the Bearpark/Ushaw Moor area.

LOCAL PLAN OBJECTIVES

- 8.13** The Council's objectives for Recreation and Leisure, to be pursued through the Policies and Proposals contained in this Chapter of the Plan are:
- to encourage the provision of a wide range of recreational and leisure facilities;
 - to encourage the use and quiet enjoyment of the River Wear, especially for water-based recreational activities and whilst improving access to this important facility, having regard to wildlife interests, the setting of the World Heritage Site and existing uses;
 - to provide for the needs of informal, and, where appropriate, formal recreational and leisure pursuits in the countryside;
 - to safeguard and improve existing facilities;
 - to ensure that the environmental impact of recreation and leisure provision is sustainable, for example, by ensuring that new developments are easily accessible by foot, cycle or public transport.

POLICIES

PROVISION OF OPEN SPACE

General

POLICY R1 THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO ENSURE THAT THE PROVISION OF OPEN SPACE FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION WITHIN THE DISTRICT IS EVENLY DISTRIBUTED AND IS MAINTAINED AT A LEVEL WHICH MEETS THE NEEDS OF ITS POPULATION. A MINIMUM OVERALL STANDARD OF 2.4 HA. OF OUTDOOR SPORTS AND PLAY SPACE PER 1,000 POPULATION WILL BE SOUGHT.

Justification

8.14 The Council supports the recommendation of the National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) which sets a minimum standard for outdoor playing space of 2.4 hectares per 1,000 population. This figure is sub-divided as follows:

1.6 - 1.8 ha for outdoor sport (youth and adult use)

0.2 - 0.3 ha for equipped children's playgrounds

0.4 - 0.5 ha for informal children's play space within housing areas

8.15 The level of public and private open space provision within the District for outdoor sport and recreation is currently being reassessed. The level of usage and demand for outdoor pitch sports is being assessed through the preparation of a playing pitch strategy, based on the methodology set out by Sport England (formerly The Sports Council) in "Assessing Playing Pitch Requirements at the "Local Level". The results of this study will allow the Council to reconsider whether the NPFA standard is appropriate, or whether a District standard for the level of provision of sports pitches should be introduced.

8.16 The Council is also reviewing the level of provision of outdoor playgrounds and informal play areas for children, facilities also encompassed within the NPFA standard. Any areas of under-provision will therefore be identified. These can then be addressed as appropriate.

8.16A In the light of changes to national policy guidance, set out in PPG17, future standards of open space provision should be set locally. Therefore the Council will endeavour to produce a new set of standards for open space provision within the lifetime of the plan, to be published as SPG. Until such time as these new standards can be adopted the Council will continue to apply the NPFA standards in the absence of any other guidance.

8.17 The Council will encourage School Governors and other institutions to allow greater use of school playing fields and private sports grounds by the community.

The retention of surplus school playing fields for community use will also assist in increasing provision within the District.

Recreational and Amenity Space in New Residential Developments

POLICY R2 **IN NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OF 10 OR MORE DWELLINGS, OPEN SPACE WILL BE REQUIRED TO BE PROVIDED WITHIN OR ADJACENT TO THE DEVELOPMENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FOLLOWING MINIMUM STANDARD:**

- 1. INFORMAL PLAY SPACE: 0.4ha PER 1,000 POPULATION (I.E. 100 M² PER 10 DWELLINGS)**

- 2. AMENITY SPACE: 0.8ha PER 1,000 POPULATION (I.E. 200 M² PER 10 DWELLINGS)**

WHERE THERE IS AN IDENTIFIED DEFICIENCY AND IT IS CONSIDERED APPROPRIATE, THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO ENTER INTO A PLANNING AGREEMENT WITH DEVELOPERS TO FACILITATE THE PROVISION OF NEW OR IMPROVED EQUIPPED PLAY AREAS AND RECREATIONAL/LEISURE FACILITIES TO SERVE THE DEVELOPMENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY Q8.

Justification

- 8.18** For the purpose of implementation "equipped play areas and recreational / leisure facilities" encompass formal open space for outdoor sports as well as equipped playgrounds and informal open space. The level to be provided will, where there is an identified deficiency, be commensurate with that set out at Policy R1. The requirements set out in Policy R2 and Appendix 3 only apply to development of ten or more dwellings. For smaller sites, where it may be impractical to make provision on site, the Council would consider a financial contribution from the developer to provide an equivalent amenity or open space facility in the locality. The amount of contribution will be based on the cost (per dwelling) of providing the appropriate facility. Landowners and developers should have regard to those requirements when preparing their development proposals, and may wish to discuss relevant costs with the Council.
- 8.19** Children need a range of playing facilities accessible by safe routes with easy access to houses. The contribution that new development can make towards achieving a good distribution of playing facilities throughout the District is important. Developers are, therefore, requested to make provision for children's play whether in the form of equipped playgrounds or informal play space to meet the needs of their development. This space should be thoughtfully located within the context of the site to minimise conflict between householders and users of the space, to encourage its safe use and to enable easy maintenance. In practice these measures are most likely to be fulfilled if the open space is incorporated as one area, rather than as a series of small sites within the development.

- 8.20** Amenity open space comprises a landscaped area available for public enjoyment, but not specifically designed for sports or children's play. It can be used to provide attractive spaces within the new development or can enhance its setting and assimilation within its immediate locality.
- 8.21** The breakdown of informal play space requirement as set out in Policy R2 provides an indication of the normal level of provision which is desirable in family housing development (ie those with two or more bedrooms). The desired balance may be different in specialised forms of housing such as starter homes or elderly persons dwellings where the emphasis will be on amenity open space and where children's playing facilities may not be required at all.
- 8.22** Equipped children's play areas can have a detrimental effect on the amenity of local residents, particularly in terms of noise and general disturbance. Such facilities are often more appropriately located within parks or recreation grounds, although other suitable locations may be close to community centres or District Leisure Centres where a degree of surveillance is possible. Contributions by developers towards off-site provision of the play equipment as part of a planning agreement, in accordance with Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 may be sought by the Council in appropriate circumstances as advised by Government Guidance set out in PPG17 (Sport and Recreation). The level of contribution will be assessed as set out in paragraph 8.18.
- 8.23** In all instances, the provision of open space should be planned as an integral part of a new housing area. It should not be included as an afterthought or to make convenient use of an awkward or residual site incapable of being developed.
- 8.24** The Council consider that where recreational facilities and amenity spaces are provided exclusively or primarily for the benefits of residents of a new development, it is reasonable that the cost of maintaining those facilities should be met, initially, by the developer rather than the local authority. The developer may choose to make private arrangements for maintenance. If not, the Council may seek a formal planning agreement requiring open spaces and play equipment to be retained and maintained to a reasonable standard. If, however, the Council is asked to adopt facilities, a commuted sum may be sought through agreement with a developer, calculated to cover maintenance costs for a period of 10 years.

PROTECTION OF OPEN SPACE USED FOR RECREATION

POLICY R3 DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD RESULT IN THE LOSS OF AN AREA OF OPEN SPACE CURRENTLY USED FOR RECREATION AND LEISURE PURSUITS WILL NOT BE PERMITTED UNLESS:

- 1. IT IS FOR NEW OR IMPROVED FACILITIES RELATED TO THE USE OF THE EXISTING AREA FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION; OR**
- 2. IT INVOLVES A SMALL PART OF A LARGER RECREATIONAL AREA WHICH BY DOING SO**

WILL BRING ABOUT THE ENHANCEMENT OF THE REMAINDER; OR

- 3. AN ALTERNATIVE AREA OF AT LEAST EQUIVALENT COMMUNITY BENEFIT/VALUE WILL BE PROVIDED LOCALLY; OR**
- 4. ITS LOSS WILL NOT PREJUDICE THE OVERALL STANDARD OF OPEN SPACE FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION WITHIN THE IMMEDIATE AREA AS SET OUT IN POLICY R1.**

Justification

8.25 Whilst the Council is committed to protect open spaces of special landscape significance and importance to the character and setting of the City (Policy E5), it acknowledges that other areas of open space which are specifically used for outdoor recreational and leisure purposes are a particularly valuable resource which must be protected from development. These areas provide a vital function in the community by accommodating both formal and informal outdoor sports and leisure activities on sports/recreation grounds, playing fields, public parks and children's play areas.

8.26 Whilst the protection and retention of these open spaces is of paramount importance to the Council, there may be circumstances which could justify their development. Examples would include the construction of changing rooms to improve the use of sports pitches; the development of a small part of a larger area of open space to enable new recreational facilities to be provided; or the provision by a developer of an alternative area of open space of comparable quality and accessibility. The loss of an area of open space used for recreational and leisure pursuits will be judged against the effect it will have on the overall standards set out in Policy R1.

LAND SURPLUS TO EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

POLICY R4

THE DEVELOPMENT OF LAND (INCLUDING PLAYING FIELDS) WITHIN SCHOOL OR OTHER EDUCATION ESTABLISHMENT GROUNDS, WHICH HAS BEEN DECLARED SURPLUS TO EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS, WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT:

- 1. IT HAS BEEN DEMONSTRATED, TO THE SATISFACTION OF THE COUNCIL, THAT IT IS NOT LIKELY TO BE NEEDED FOR EDUCATIONAL OR COMMUNITY PURPOSES IN THE FUTURE; AND**
- 2. IT WILL NOT REDUCE THE OVERALL STANDARD OF OPEN SPACE FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION IN THE AREA AS SET OUT IN POLICY R1; AND**

3. IN THE CASE OF LAND OF SPORT AND RECREATIONAL VALUE TO THE COMMUNITY ITS DEVELOPMENT IS IN ACCORD WITH POLICY R3.

Justification

- 8.27** Land within school and other educational institution's grounds can make a significant contribution to the amenity of the area in which they are located by helping to create a feeling of openness. In certain areas, such playing fields also provide an important recreational facility for the community. For example, the "dual-use" of school playing fields (where permitted). The changing needs of schools and other educational establishments may, however, require rationalisation of land and playing facilities. Where such land has been declared surplus to educational requirements it should not automatically be regarded as offering a development opportunity. Any proposal will need to satisfy the Council that the interests of the community have been safeguarded, the long term interests of the school or other educational establishment have been taken into account and the loss of overall provision of outdoor recreation in the area will not fall below the standard set out in Policy R1 and accords with Policy R3.

PROTECTION OF ALLOTMENTS

POLICY R5 PLANNING PERMISSION WILL NOT BE GRANTED FOR DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD RESULT IN THE LOSS OF ALLOTMENTS UNLESS:

- 1. THE ALLOTMENTS ARE GENUINELY REDUNDANT AND ARE NOT LIKELY TO BE REQUIRED TO MEET POSSIBLE FUTURE NEEDS, OR**
- 2. IN THE CASE OF UNDERUSED ALLOTMENTS THE FACILITY CAN BE BEST RETAINED AND ENHANCED THROUGH THE REDEVELOPMENT OF A SMALL PART OF THE SITE OR ALTERNATIVE PROVISION OF EQUIVALENT STANDARD AND BENEFIT IS MADE ELSEWHERE IN THE IMMEDIATE VICINITY; OR**
- 3. IN THE CASE OF ALLOTMENTS WITH HIGH OCCUPANCY LEVELS AND WHICH SERVE AN AREA OF LOCAL NEED ALTERNATIVE PROVISION OF EQUIVALENT STANDARD AND BENEFIT IS MADE ELSEWHERE IN THE IMMEDIATE VICINITY.**

Justification

- 8.28** Allotments both statutory and non-statutory provide an important recreational resource within the District especially for those people with no gardens or small gardens, as well as having community and nature conservation value. Although

the level of plot occupancy varies between sites, they are generally well used and as such should, under normal circumstances, be protected from development, which would lead to the irreversible loss of this facility.

- 8.29** There may, however, be occasions when the loss of existing allotment land to development could be justified. In assessing any such development proposal, which would result in this, the Council will firstly consider the level of occupancy of the allotment site, the perceived local need and opportunities to relocate occupiers of the affected allotment within similar facility in the locality.
- 8.30** Part of the Browney Lane Allotment site is located within the B6300 Browney Lane Improvement Corridor (see Policy T3). The road should be aligned to ensure that any loss of plots is kept to a minimum and, where losses do occur these will be compensated by the provision of new allotments in the vicinity.

PROVISION OF RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

District Sport and Leisure Centres

POLICY R6 THE DEVELOPMENT OF FURTHER LEISURE/SPORTS FACILITIES AT, AND ADJOINING, THE COUNCIL LEISURE CENTRES AT COXHOE, DEERNESS, MEADOWFIELD, SHERBURN AND ABBEY ROAD WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT:

- 1. ANY INTENSIFICATION IN USAGE OF THE SITE WILL NOT:**
 - a) ADVERSELY AFFECT RESIDENTIAL AMENITY; AND**
 - b) RESULT IN VEHICULAR PARKING PROBLEMS IN THE VICINITY OF THE CENTRE.**
- 2. ITS APPEARANCE AND USE WILL NOT BE DETRIMENTAL TO THE CHARACTER OF THE AREA.**

Justification

- 8.31** The Council recognises that it is essential for leisure services to respond to the changing requirements of the general public and will encourage the development of further leisure and sports facilities at its existing leisure centres. The refurbishment of existing facilities and the provision of new ones both indoors and outdoors will provide the opportunity for residents of the District, of all ages, to lead an active and healthy lifestyle. Recent examples of improved facilities include the introduction of cardio vascular fitness rooms at the sports centres and the provision of a new type of creative outdoor playing facility adjacent to the Meadowfield Leisure Centre.

- 8.32** The combination of facilities at existing Centres has led to the development of the concept of fully flexible linked centres for both outdoor and indoor recreational activities. Research carried out by the Council has indicated that these combined facilities are very popular and, therefore, a programme will be initiated during the Plan period to develop linked indoor and outdoor recreational facilities at the Coxhoe, Deerness, Meadowfield, Sherburn and Abbey Road Leisure Centres. The recently opened flat green indoor bowling centre on Council land next to the Abbey Road Leisure Centre is a good example of public/private partnership in the provision of facilities.
- 8.33** When considering proposals for such facilities care will be exercised to ensure that they respect the amenity of the surrounding residential areas. The centres are well distributed around the District, within walking and cycling distance of many residents, and are generally located on good public transport routes. Nevertheless parking provision will be reviewed when considering additional facilities so that the impact of street parking nearby can be minimised. Facilities will be designed and located to minimise their impact on the surroundings, for example: floodlighting, children's play areas and other outdoor facilities.

New Swimming Pool

POLICY R7 **THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK, AS A PRIORITY DURING THE PLAN PERIOD, THE REPLACEMENT OF THE EXISTING SWIMMING POOL AND ASSOCIATED FACILITIES ON A SITE WITHIN DURHAM CITY CENTRE. THE LOCATION WILL BE DEPENDENT UPON THE NEED TO ENSURE THAT:**

- 1. IT IS ACCESSIBLE FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORT, CYCLISTS AND PEDESTRIANS; AND**
- 2. SATISFACTORY CAR PARKING IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY T10 CAN BE PROVIDED; AND**
- 3. ITS DESIGN IS NOT DETRIMENTAL TO THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE CITY CENTRE IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY E6; AND**
- 4. THE GREEN BELT AND OPEN SPACES ARE NOT COMPROMISED IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICIES E1 AND E5; AND**
- 5. IT WOULD NOT CAUSE MATERIAL HARM TO THE AMENITIES TO THOSE LIVING NEARBY, IN PARTICULAR THROUGH ADDITIONAL TRAFFIC, ON-STREET PARKING OR NOISE.**

Justification

- 8.34** The existing swimming pool is contained within a building over 60 years old, which is a constraint on its ability to satisfy modern demands. Sport England (formerly

The Sports Council) and Durham County Council have identified the need for a new swimming pool in Durham as a top priority within the region and replacement of the swimming pool has been a priority of the Council for a number of years. As yet it has not been possible to identify a site for a replacement facility, although a City Centre location, convenient for public transport users will be sought. Until such time as a replacement facility is available or detailed redevelopment proposals are implemented on the site it is intended that the Durham Swimming Baths remain in its present use.

New Recreational Facilities

POLICY R8 THE LOCATION OF ANY NEW RECREATIONAL FACILITY WILL BE DEPENDENT UPON THE NEED TO ENSURE THAT:

- 1. ITS APPEARANCE AND USE IS NOT DETRIMENTAL TO THE CHARACTER AND AMENITY OF THE AREA; AND**
- 2. IT IS ACCESSIBLE FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORT, CYCLISTS AND PEDESTRIANS; AND**
- 3. SATISFACTORY CAR PARKING CAN BE PROVIDED; AND**
- 4. IT ACCORDS WITH POLICIES E1, E5, E10 AND CC1.**

Justification

- 8.35** The Council's Leisure Strategy has identified demand for other specialist recreational facilities within the District which can be provided through organisations and governing bodies relating to cricket, rugby, rowing and hockey. It is hoped that these or other recreational activities, for example private health clubs and gymnasia, can be accommodated during the Plan period on sites which accord with the parameters set out in Policy R8.

All-Weather Athletics Track

- 8.36** The Council will support the provision of an all-weather athletics track within the District during the Plan period. The development of an all weather running track, available for use by the general public, would enable the District to sustain its position as a major centre for athletics within the county and the region. Although no specific site has been identified in the Plan for this facility, land is available next to the Meadowfield Leisure Centre, which would allow for the provision of a synthetic track within the parameters set out in Policy R8. This land, which is owned by the Council, was allocated as public open space in the original Local Plan but remains under-utilised. It has the capacity to accommodate a variety of recreational facilities including an all-weather athletics track which could be linked to the amenities provided within the Meadowfield Leisure Centre (e.g. changing rooms, showers etc.). Alternatively, it may be appropriate to consider providing the

athletics track in partnership with another body such as Durham County Council or the University of Durham linked to an existing educational or recreational facility, provided it complies with the parameters set out in Policy R8 and is available for use by the whole community.

Specialist Gymnastic Centre

- 8.37** The Council will support the provision of a Specialist Gymnastic Centre within the District during the Plan period. Deerness Valley Gymnastics Club has recently obtained international success with two of its members becoming World Champions in their respective classes. The Club currently uses the facilities offered by Deerness Comprehensive School. The Gymnastic Federation is anxious to develop a centre of excellence to complement the existing facility at Lillishall. The Council will, therefore, seek to investigate with the Federation, Sport England and other appropriate bodies the possibility of establishing such a facility within District, which meets the parameters set out in Policy R8, during the Plan period.

Public Parks and Recreation Grounds

POLICY R9 THE COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE THE PROVISION OF ADDITIONAL PLAY EQUIPMENT AT THE PUBLIC PARKS AND RECREATION GROUNDS WITHIN THE DISTRICT.

Justification

- 8.38** The Council has initiated a programme of refurbishment of the facilities contained within its public parks and recreation grounds. Extensive work has already been undertaken at Wharton Park and The Racecourse in Durham City, at Holliday Park in Langley Moor, Addison Park in Meadowfield and at Sherburn Recreation Ground.
- 8.39** The upgrading of facilities in the public parks and recreation grounds set out below will provide a comprehensive range of conveniently located recreational opportunities for the younger residents of the District.

Durham City:

Belmont Park – Moor Field
Church Street
Laburnum Avenue
Lowes Barn
Newton Hall – Low Carr

Remainder of District:

Bowburn Park
Brandon Park
Meadowfield – Addison Park
Croxdale Front Street
Witton Gilbert – Cooper Hall
Esh Winning – Woodland Road
Kelloe/Quarrington Hill Sports Ground
Pittington - Manor View

- 8.40** Although the Council will endeavour to provide this equipment, it may, when appropriate, consider entering into discussions with developers of land close to these recreation grounds in order to assist in the provision of the new facilities in accordance with Policy R2.

RECREATION AND LEISURE IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

New Development for Recreation or Leisure in the Countryside

POLICY R10 EXCEPT WHERE SPECIFICALLY REFERRED TO IN POLICIES R12 TO R19 PLANNING PERMISSION FOR LEISURE USES IN THE COUNTRYSIDE AND FOR ESSENTIAL MINOR FACILITIES FOR THOSE USES WILL BE GRANTED WHERE THEY WOULD NOT:

1. BE DETRIMENTAL TO THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE COUNTRYSIDE, AREAS OF HIGH LANDSCAPE VALUE OR OPENNESS OF THE GREEN BELT; OR
2. ADVERSELY AFFECT THE NATURAL OR HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT; OR
3. ADVERSELY AFFECT EXISTING PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY OR ESTABLISHED RECREATIONAL ROUTES; OR
4. ADVERSELY AFFECT EXISTING FLORA AND FAUNA, WILDLIFE HABITATS AND WILDLIFE CORRIDORS; OR
5. HAVE A DETRIMENTAL EFFECT ON THE AMENITY OF RESIDENTS OR PEOPLE USING THE AREA FOR OTHER RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES; OR
6. LEAD TO IRREVERSIBLE LOSS OF THE BEST AND MOST VERSATILE AGRICULTURAL LAND; OR
7. RESULT IN CONGESTION ON THE LOCAL ROAD NETWORK; OR
8. BE INACCESSIBLE BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT, CYCLISTS AND PEDESTRIANS.

FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS POLICY, ESSENTIAL MINOR AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES INCLUDE; SMALL CHANGING ROOMS, UNOBTRUSIVE SPECTATOR ACCOMMODATION FOR OUTDOOR SPORT, OR SMALL STABLES.

Justification

- 8.41** The countryside is a preferred location for many recreation and sporting pursuits apart from the 'access activities' of walking, cycling and horse riding. Some involve simple enjoyment of the countryside, such as bird watching, and pose no threat to its character and amenity. Others may be organised uses of land requiring planning permission which are potentially damaging because of noise or other disturbance, such as motorised sports.
- 8.42** Fishing is a widespread recreational pursuit, both on rivers and on still water. Still water fisheries can be a landscape and nature conservation asset if carefully planned. Proposals for the provision of new, or extensions to existing, still water fisheries should be accompanied by full details of its design and impact in relation to the criteria set out in Policy R10.
- 8.43** With the encouragement of agricultural diversification and trends in development of leisure facilities there is likely to be an increasing variety of proposals for leisure activities in the countryside. There is a need to ensure that such facilities are located where they will not adversely affect the appearance and character of the countryside, where they will not affect the amenity of local residents, where they will not lead to irreversible loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land and where the local road network is adequate to serve them.
- 8.44** The District contains an assortment of historic gardens, landscapes, landforms and geological features, woodland and wildlife habitats. The Council recognises the importance of these in developing recreational and educational resources for residents. It will encourage greater public access to these areas wherever possible by establishing planning and management agreements and developing the Council's Visitor Access Scheme. Opportunities may also exist to provide works of public art, of both a permanent or temporary nature, in the broader landscape which will in themselves be a source of leisure and recreational interest to the general public.
- 8.45** This Policy provides a framework to enable the Council to consider proposals for essential minor recreational and leisure developments that require to be located in the countryside. For the purpose of this Policy, essential minor recreational facilities include small changing rooms, unobstructive spectator accommodation for outdoor sport or small stables for outdoor sport and recreation. Policies R16, R18 and R19 relate specifically to the major countryside based activities of horse riding, golf and off-road motor sports. While the development for any other major recreation or leisure activities can be adequately determined using the Town and Country Planning (Development Plans and Consultation)(Departures) Directions 1999, and may, in certain circumstances justify a Departure from the development plan. Other Policies contained in the Environment Chapter of the Plan emphasise the need to protect the Green Belt and Areas of Landscape Value from activities which will damage their intrinsic character. While the development for any other major recreation or leisure activities can be adequately determined using the Town and Country Planning (Development Plans and Consultation) (Departures) Directions 1999, and may, in certain circumstances justify a Departure from the development plan.

- 8.46** Opportunities for developing recreational facilities may exist as part of larger reclamation or restoration schemes at former mineral working sites. These would include former quarries and opencast sites as well as the former colliery sites such as Bearpark and East Hetton. A project which seeks to promote the interests of outdoor recreation, protect the natural environment and improve the landscape surrounding the Coxhoe landfill site was launched in 1999. This 'Five Villages Waste to Wildlife Initiative' is a partnership of local authorities, Parish Councils and other parties involved in either the management and protection of the countryside or its operational uses. Using funding from the County Durham Environmental Trust and other available sources, various schemes, which particularly benefit the communities around the site, will take place during the Plan period. These include the provision of new and enhanced cycle and walking routes to and through the area, picnic and wildlife sites, amenity planting and reclamation of degraded landscapes.

Public Rights of Way and Other Paths

POLICY R11 PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE COUNTRYSIDE WILL BE ENCOURAGED AND SAFEGUARDED BY PROTECTING THE EXISTING NETWORK OF PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY AND OTHER PATHS FROM DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD RESULT IN THEIR DESTRUCTION OR DIVERSION UNLESS:

- 1. A SUITABLE ALTERNATIVE ROUTE IS PROVIDED;
AND**
- 2. THE PROPOSAL ACCORDS WITH POLICY T21.**

WHERE POSSIBLE THE EXISTING NETWORK OF PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY AND OTHER PATHS WILL BE EXTENDED.

Justification

- 8.47** Walking is widely acknowledged as being the most common form of leisure activity and, therefore, the existing network of Public Rights of Way is potentially the most important recreational asset within the District. Cyclists and horse riders also benefit from the network in varying degrees although their particular needs are dealt with elsewhere in the Plan by Policies R16, T19 and T20. The Council is committed to safeguarding and improving Public Rights of Way within the District and wherever possible ensuring that footpaths are capable of use by people with disabilities, the elderly and those with young children in accordance with Policy T21.
- 8.48** Emphasis will be placed on providing opportunities to gain access from the built up areas into the countryside. Several routes have already been established which fulfil this objective including the Coxhoe/Cornforth Walkway, the Cassop Vale Circular Walkway, the Bearpark/Ushaw Moor Circular Walkway and the Neville's Cross Battle Circular Walkway. The recent reclamation schemes of Bearpark and East Hetton Collieries have also provided the opportunity for improving public

access to the countryside by the creation of new footpaths, bridleways and areas of amenity open space.

- 8.49** In considering improvements, diversion, and extensions to routes, their impact on landowners and existing occupiers of land will be carefully assessed in order to minimise, and where possible, prevent any disruption to privacy or commercial interests.

River Wear

POLICY R12 THE COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE USE OF THE RIVER WEAR FOR WATER BASED RECREATIONAL AND LEISURE ACTIVITY, PARTICULARLY IN THE AREA BETWEEN MAIDEN CASTLE AND THE SANDS PROVIDED THAT PROPOSALS:

- 1. DO NOT LEAD TO POLLUTION OF THE WATER OR THE WATER RELATED ENVIRONMENT; AND**
- 2. DO NOT HAVE AN ADVERSE IMPACT ON OTHER WATER BASED RECREATIONAL AND LEISURE ACTIVITIES; AND**
- 3. ACCORD WITH POLICIES E5, E10 AND E16-E20.**

Justification

- 8.50** The River Wear is of great recreational value to the City of Durham. In the area between Maiden Castle and The Sands it is used for a variety of purposes including angling, competitive rowing, canoeing and pleasure boating.
- 8.51** Although the Council seeks to encourage the use of the River Wear for water based recreational and leisure activities, in the area identified in Policy R12, it acknowledges that any such intensification of use must recognise the environmental constraints set out in Policies E5 and E10 which seek to protect the overall character of this very sensitive area.
- 8.52** Any water based recreational and leisure activities must respect the wildlife value of The River Wear, as a habitat for species such as otters and water voles and as a wildlife corridor, recognising the constraints set out in Policies E16-E20.

River Wear Walkway

POLICY R13 THE COUNCIL WILL SUPPORT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A CONTINUOUS WALKWAY ALONG THE BANKS OF THE RIVER WEAR BETWEEN CROXDALE AND FINCHALE PRIORY AS PART OF THE WEARDALE WAY, WHILST ENSURING THAT THE PROPOSAL ACCORDS WITH POLICIES E16-E20

Justification

- 8.53** The whole of the Wear Valley is an important and attractive area for walking. The Council supports the establishment of the strategic Weardale Way recreation route between Croxdale and Finchale via the City Centre during the course of the Plan period. Such a route would take in several points of interest including Old Durham Gardens, Kepier Hospital, Finchale Priory and several examples of public art (e.g. 'The Durham Cow' and 'Kathedra'), and eventually become part of a continuous walkway along the Wear from its source high in the Pennines to its mouth in the North Sea at Sunderland.
- 8.54** The exact route of this proposal has yet to be finalised, although paths already exist along part of the route. Any precise route must respect nature conservation interests in accord with Policy E16-E20. Similarly, it will be routed and designed to minimise disruption to existing landowners, occupiers of land and riverside users (eg fishing rights).

Browney Valley

POLICY R14 THE INFORMAL RECREATIONAL POTENTIAL OF THE BROWNEY VALLEY WILL BE ENCOURAGED BY:

- 1. PROMOTING THE HISTORIC INTEREST OF THE BEAUREPAIRE ESTATE AND MANOR HOUSE.**
- 2. EXAMINING OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE CYCLE LINKAGES TO EXISTING ROUTES AND DURHAM CITY IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY T19.**
- 3. EXAMINING OPPORTUNITIES TO CREATE A CONTINUOUS PUBLIC FOOTPATH ALONG THE RIVER VALLEY FROM TOLLHOUSE ROAD TO HOLLIDAY PARK.**
- 4. ALLOWING APPROPRIATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ANGLING IN THE RIVER VALLEY**

ALL PROPOSALS SHOULD ACCORD WITH POLICIES E1, E10 AND E26 AND POLICIES AND E16 TO E20.

Justification

- 8.55** The Valley of the River Browney extends from the boundary of the District at Langley Park to Farewell Hall West. It is an attractive mixture of woodland and countryside within easy reach of the built up area of both Durham City and the surrounding villages. It is this proximity which makes the area particularly valuable in amenity terms and worthy of protection. The Council has recognised this by adopting a Policy which seeks to improve facilities for informal recreation, whilst protecting nature conservation and landscape interests.

- 8.56** For the purpose of this Policy the area of the Browney Valley is set out on the Proposals Map. A high proportion is within the Durham City Green Belt and the Area of High Landscape Value, whilst it also encompasses the Beaurepaire Estate (defined as an Historic Park and Garden at Policy E26). All proposals to be encouraged under the Browney Valley Policy will be expected to conform therefore to Policies E1, E10 and E26, although it is not intended that the proposals envisaged will have an adverse impact on the landscape. The Bearpark Park and Garden (Beaurepaire Estate and Garden) is of mediaeval origin. The area includes the ruin of the Manor House, a Scheduled Ancient Monument, and a number of historic features. The Council will seek opportunities to aid public interpretation of the site.
- 8.57** The designated area as defined in Policy E26 comprises, for the most part, a working agricultural landscape. All proposals will be carefully considered to minimise their impact on existing land users and residents. New footpaths and cycleways, for example, will be routed to respect privacy. New cycleways will, however, aim to improve linkages to Durham City and to existing routes along the disused railway lines abutting the Valley.
- 8.58** In developing the area for informal recreation it is acknowledged that some visitors will arrive by car. Should the need arise for additional parking, the Council will endeavour to facilitate provision at suitable locations convenient for public rights of way.
- 8.59** Nature conservation interests will be maintained and, where possible, enhanced. The Council, would, for example, support the restoration of a migratory salmon run on the River Browney.

Picnic Sites

POLICY R15 THE PROVISION OF PICNIC SITES IN THE COUNTRYSIDE WILL BE ENCOURAGED AT APPROPRIATE LOCATIONS THROUGHOUT THE DISTRICT DURING THE PLAN PERIOD.

Justification

- 8.60** The availability of picnic sites is an important element in the enjoyment of the countryside for casual leisure pursuits. They already exist at strategic points along the Deerness and Lanchester Valley walkways as well as adjacent to major routes such as the A690 and the A167. Further sites are proposed (in accordance with Policy V2), in conjunction with other facilities at Beaurepaire, Coxhoe Old Hall, Old Durham Gardens, Ludworth Tower and Brandon Hill. Additional sites will be developed at other locations as demand dictates, as resources permit and by negotiation with appropriate landowners.

Equestrian Facilities

POLICY R16 THE ESTABLISHMENT OF EQUESTRIAN FACILITIES IN THE COUNTRYSIDE WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT:

1. PROPOSALS IN THE GREEN BELT ARE CONSISTENT WITH POLICY E1;
2. THE NUMBER OF STABLES PROPOSED AND THE NUMBER OF HORSES TO BE GRAZED RELATES TO THE AMOUNT OF GRAZING LAND AVAILABLE;
3. NEW COMMERCIAL ESTABLISHMENTS WHERE TREKKING FACILITIES ARE NEEDED ARE IN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO EXISTING BRIDLEWAYS. OTHER TYPES OF COMMERCIAL ESTABLISHMENTS SHOULD EITHER BE CLOSE TO BRIDLEWAYS OR PERMISSIVE PATHS OR MAKE PROVISION WITHIN THE SCHEME TO ADEQUATELY EXERCISE HORSES;
4. NEW COMMERCIAL ESTABLISHMENTS ARE SUFFICIENTLY CLOSE TO EXISTING RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION TO ALLOW PROPER SUPERVISION AT ALL TIMES;
5. NEW FACILITIES ARE OF AN APPROPRIATE SCALE, AND, WHERE POSSIBLE, ARE SITUATED NEXT TO EXISTING BUILDINGS, AND DO NOT DETRACT FROM THE LANDSCAPE;
6. PROPOSALS ACCORD WITH NATURE CONSERVATION POLICIES E16 TO E20.

Justification

- 8.61** Durham, like other parts of the County is experiencing growth in horse riding as a leisure pursuit and an increase in demand for land to graze and stable horses. The countryside is easily accessible from many built up areas of the District. The combination of this demand and accessibility coupled with changes in the farming economy is making the release of agricultural land by farmers for grazing and stabling increasingly attractive.
- 8.62** The grazing and breeding of horses for personal and commercial use requires planning permission except where their use is related to the farming of land. When grazing horses it is important to ensure that sufficient land is available to support the number of horses to be grazed. The British Horse Society suggests that between 0.6 and 0.8 hectares (1.5 to 2 acres) can provide summer pasture for a single horse, but that less than 0.4 hectares (1 acre) can be inadequate.
- 8.63** In establishing new riding stables the Council will need to be convinced that adequate investment is being made in the new enterprise to ensure that it is viable in the long term. To avoid a proliferation of new buildings in the countryside unrelated to existing buildings and to demonstrate that the enterprise is genuine

and adequately resourced such enterprises will only be permitted where there is existing residential accommodation which will allow proper supervision of horses at all times. To discourage horse-riding along roads and footpaths it will usually be expected that commercial establishments are located near to existing bridleways, except where it can be demonstrated that this is not necessary and adequate facilities can be provided within the site to exercise horses.

Stables

POLICY R17 STABLES FOR PERSONAL USE IN THE COUNTRYSIDE WILL BE PERMITTED WHEN:

- 1. SENSITIVELY LOCATED, PREFERABLY NEXT TO EXISTING BUILDINGS AND TAKING ADVANTAGE OF MATURE LANDSCAPING AND LANDFORMS; AND**
- 2. OF A SMALL SCALE, CONSISTING OF NO MORE THAN THREE STANDARD SIZED STABLES; AND**
- 3. CONSTRUCTED OF APPROPRIATE MATERIALS.**

Justification

- 8.64** The construction of stables for personal use in the countryside will only be permitted if they are sensitively located and constructed of appropriate materials. Rendered and painted breeze block or timber stables can be appropriate in many situations but should be regularly and adequately maintained. Stable blocks should also be small in scale and should generally not consist of more than three standard sized stables. Beyond this scale stables can become jarring and obtrusive features in the landscape.

Golf Courses and Golf Driving Ranges

POLICY R18 THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW GOLF COURSES OR GOLF DRIVING RANGES, OR IMPROVEMENT TO EXISTING COURSES OR DRIVING RANGES WILL BE PERMITTED IF IT CAN BE DEMONSTRATED THAT THE PROPOSAL WOULD NOT HAVE A DETRIMENTAL IMPACT UPON:

- 1. THE OPENNESS OF THE GREEN BELT; OR**
- 2. THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE COUNTRYSIDE; OR**
- 3. THE NATURAL OR HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT; OR**
- 4. THE EXISTING FLORA AND FAUNA IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICIES E14-E20; OR**

5. **AGRICULTURAL VIABILITY OR THE BEST AND THE MOST VERSATILE AGRICULTURAL LAND; OR**
6. **PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY; OR**
7. **RESIDENTIAL AMENITY; OR**
8. **TRAFFIC/HIGHWAY SAFETY.**

IN THE CASE OF DRIVING RANGES, ASSOCIATED FLOOD LIGHTING DOES NOT HAVE A SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE IMPACT ON RESIDENTIAL AMENITY OR HIGHWAY SAFETY.

ALL PROPOSALS FOR GOLF COURSES AND DRIVING RANGES SHOULD BE ACCOMPANIED BY FULL DETAILS OF THE DESIGN AND ITS IMPACT ON THESE INTERESTS.

Justification

- 8.65** There are five golf courses within the District. Three 18-hole golf courses are located at Brancepeth, Littleburn and Mount Oswald. In addition, Ramside Hall provides a course with a total of 27 holes. A 9 hole, par 3 golf course is provided at Cocken Lodge, Leamside. Driving range facilities are also available at Ramside Hall and Cocken Lodge.
- 8.66** Golf courses can be a landscape amenity and nature conservation asset. Equally an insensitive design without regard to landscape considerations can be damaging and disruptive particularly in parkland settings or in areas of landscape value. It is essential that the Council is able to assess the impact of proposals for golf course development on landscape and wildlife and full details of course design and construction will be sought at the outset.
- 8.67** Driving ranges also need to be carefully located because they operate during hours of darkness and the floodlighting associated with their use can have a significant detrimental impact on both residential amenity and highway safety if the facility is close to an urban area or the main road network.

Off Road Motor Sports

POLICY R19 THE PROVISION OF A SITE FOR ORGANISED AND SUPERVISED OFF ROAD MOTOR SPORTS ACTIVITIES WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT:

1. **IT WOULD RESULT IN NO MATERIAL LOSS OF OPENNESS TO THE GREEN BELT OR MATERIAL HARM TO THE CHARACTER OF AN AREA OF HIGH LANDSCAPE VALUE; AND**

2. IT IS LOCATED WHERE IT WILL NOT BE DETRIMENTAL TO RESIDENTIAL AMENITY, OR THE CHARACTER AND ENJOYMENT OF OPEN LAND AND COUNTRYSIDE; AND
3. IT IS ACCESSIBLE TO POTENTIAL USERS WITHOUT DETRIMENTAL EFFECT TO HIGHWAY SAFETY; AND
4. IT COMPLIES WITH THE CRITERIA SET OUT IN PARTS 3, 4, 6 AND 7 OF POLICY R10; AND
5. IT ACCORDS WITH NATURE CONSERVATION POLICIES E16 TO E20.

Justification

- 8.68** Off-road motor sports cover a wide range of vehicles racing over tracks or rugged ground. These sports generate a lot of noise and some may attract a large volume of traffic from spectators.
- 8.69** The main concerns with proposed off road motor sports are to ensure that the quality of the surrounding countryside, the amenity of residents and other land users in the area are protected. Finding suitable sites for off road motor sports within the District which will satisfy the criteria set out in Policies R10 and R19 is difficult. They must not be located close to housing but they should have good means of access and be well screened.
- 8.70** In view of the potential problems and objections which can arise from these activities, the Council may consider it appropriate to grant a temporary permission in order to assess the impact of the proposal over a given period of time in terms of frequency of use, hours of operation and noise levels generated.

9 TOURISM

INTRODUCTION

- 9.1** Tourism is a major element in the City of Durham's economic and social life. This Chapter examines the contribution visitors make to the local economy and considers the implications of tourism on the District and its infrastructure.

GENERAL BACKGROUND

- 9.2** Durham City is recognised as the major tourist centre in the Region. With its superb setting, outstanding townscape, and World Heritage Site, encompassing the Cathedral and Castle, it has been estimated that the District attracts approximately 1.8 million visits per annum. Durham can claim to be an all-year-round destination in that its attractions are not dependent on the weather and accommodation is available throughout the year. There is, however, a peak of visitors during the summer months.
- 9.3** Apart from the Cathedral and Castle, the main attractions for visitors to the City are the Durham Light Infantry Museum and Art Gallery, the Oriental Museum, the Museum of Archaeology, Durham Heritage Centre, Durham Botanical Gardens. Pleasure boat trips on the River Wear and walks along the riverbanks are also very popular. There are a number of impressive churches and ecclesiastical remains throughout the District including the 13th century Benedictine Priory at Finchale, and the Churches of St. Oswald (Church Street), St. Lawrence (Pittington) and St. Helen (Kelloe). The District also contains many areas of scenic beauty including the Browney Valley, the Upper Deerness Valley and Cassop Vale. Due to its central location within the County, the City of Durham is very accessible to the major regional tourist attractions such as Beamish Museum, The Metro Centre, the Durham Dales and the recently opened National Glass Centre in Sunderland.
- 9.4** It has been estimated that 2.5 million people live within 60 minutes drive of Durham, giving the City a guaranteed market for day trip visits. Tourism directly and indirectly assists the local economy by creating employment for some 2,500 people and provides a valuable source of income particularly in retailing and catering. A study by the Northumbria Tourist Board in 1996 estimates that the total visitor spend in the City, based on 1993 expenditure data, was in the region of £52m.
- 9.5** Whilst visitors to Durham have a positive impact on the City's economy, indiscriminate expansion of tourism, particularly within the City Centre, could create the environmental and social conflicts of interest between visitors and residents that are being experienced in some of the more traditional tourist destinations. The Council will, therefore, seek to avoid this problem by developing a strategic approach to visitor management as recommended in the Northumbrian Tourist Board 'Strategy for Tourism in Northumbria 1998-2002'. The preparation of a Visitor Management Plan for the City Centre will ensure the co-ordination of future action on matters relating to visitor information, public art, further pedestrianisation, signposting, car and coach parking, public transport and traffic management. It will

complement the Transport Strategy referred to in the Transport Chapter and Town Centre Management referred to in the City Centre Chapter.

- 9.6** The Council recognises, however, that the tourist potential of Durham is limited by two important factors. The first relates to the physical constraints of the historic centre since the major visitor attractions of the City are confined to the Peninsula area and the narrow shopping streets in the City Centre. The second relates to the fact that Durham lacks a base of secondary attractions creating the perception that although it is a worthwhile stop-over point between York and Edinburgh, it provides only sufficient interest for a relatively short visit.
- 9.7** Although it is a fundamental objective of the Council to encourage more visitors to the District as a whole, it is recognised that further tourist development must embody the principles of sustainability if it is to flourish. This means ensuring that in assessing any new tourism activities and developments within the District, the City Council will need to balance the economic benefits with environmental protection in order to ensure that even when, in exceptional circumstances, economic benefit might prevail environment gain will always be sought and that the net environmental loss will be exceptional and always fully justified.

LOCAL PLAN OBJECTIVES

- 9.8** The Council's objectives for Tourism, to be pursued through the Policies and Proposals contained in this section of the Plan are:
- to take advantage of the economic benefits derived from visitors without adversely affecting the traditional character and environmental quality of the District or the overall commitment of the Plan to the principles of sustainable development;
 - to balance the needs of residents of the District with those of visitors;
 - to improve the range and quality of attractions for visitors;
 - to ensure that visitor attractions are accessible to all modes of travel;
 - to encourage visitors to stay longer in the City of Durham;
 - to encourage the development of sensitively designed and located visitor accommodation.
- 9.9** In formulating its planning policies relating to tourism the Council has recognised the advice given in PPG 21 (Tourism) that they should confine themselves to use of land and, as such, should be aimed at facilitating tourist development, rather than promoting or publicising tourism.

POLICIES

TOURIST FACILITIES AND ATTRACTIONS

Sites for the Development of New Tourist Attractions

~~POLICY V1 A VISITOR CENTRE AND A NEW TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE ARE TO BE PROVIDED WITHIN THE DURHAM MILLENNIUM CITY PROJECT AT NORTH CLAYPATH.~~

~~Justification~~

~~9.10 The City of Durham is the focus for most of the tourist activity within the County. The development of a Visitor Centre and a new Tourist Information Centre within the City Centre would complement this role and has the support of Durham County Structure Plan Review, the County Durham Tourism Partnership 'Tourism Strategy for County Durham 1997-2001' and Northumbria Tourist Board 'Strategy for Tourism in Northumbria 1998-2002'. It would ensure that visitors received not only the best possible presentation of what the District has to offer but also what is available in other parts of the County thereby spreading the benefits of tourism more widely. A site for a Visitor Centre and new Tourist Information Centre has been included within the Durham Millennium City Project at North Claypath. As a City Centre location, the site at North Claypath would be accessible for visitors using all modes to travel. It is also important to ensure that the design of new buildings complies with the criteria set out in Policy E6.~~

POLICY V2 THE FOLLOWING SITES ARE PROPOSED FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF APPROPRIATE NEW ATTRACTIONS:

BEAUREPAIRE	INTERPRETATION OF REMAINS AND PICNICKING
COXHOE HALL AND WOOD	STABILISATION AND INTERPRETATION OF REMAINS, WOODLAND MANAGEMENT, PARKING AND PICNICKING
OLD DURHAM GARDENS	INTERPRETATION, PARKING AND PICNICKING
LUDWORTH TOWER	INTERPRETATION, PARKING AND PICNICKING

BRANDON HILL

INTERPRETATION, PARKING AND PICNICKING

Justification

9.11 The Proposals Map identifies five sites on which the Council considers the development of new attractions would be appropriate. The rural location of these sites, however, means that they are suitable only for the development of small scale attractions which could be based on the interpretation of the history of each site.

- **Beaurepaire Manor House** is the ruined mediaeval home of the Priors of Durham, situated within the Priory's park of Beaurepaire, just north west of Durham City Centre. The site is in the guardianship of the City Council who sponsored excavations and consolidation in 1979-84 to reveal substantial remains of the hall, private apartments and service rooms.
- **Coxhoe Hall Wood** is a young mixed woodland on Magnesian limestone, planted over the remains of the eighteenth century Coxhoe Hall and its walled and woodland gardens. The City Council as owner has established a woodland management plan and permitted partial public access to the restored hall, lawns and woodland walks. The hall was the birthplace of the poet, Elizabeth Barrett Browning.
- **Old Durham Gardens** are the seventeenth and eighteenth century terraced gardens of the former mansion belonging to the Heath and Tempest Family. The gardens have been conserved and restored by the City Council with a contemporary planting layout to recreate the gardens during the 1635-1740 period. There are fine views of the Cathedral from the terrace and gazebo.
- **Ludworth Tower** is a ruined fifteenth century tower, once part of a larger mediaeval manor house. The Magnesian limestone ruin lies within a larger site that includes the manorial complex, all now open to public access. The City Council consolidated the ruins about 15 years ago and after acquiring guardianship are now owners of the monument.
- **Brandon Hill** is a ridgeline of historical importance with panoramic views overlooking the City. Although in private ownership, the area has potential for the provision of lay-bys, picnic sites and interpretation material in order that the historical and visual importance of Brandon Hill can be appreciated by both residents and visitors.

Development of Tourist Attractions

POLICY V3

PLANNING PERMISSION WILL BE GRANTED FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW, OR THE EXTENSION OF EXISTING, TOURIST ATTRACTIONS WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OF SETTLEMENTS PROVIDED THAT THE PROPOSAL:

1. DOES NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE CHARACTER OF THE AREA IN WHICH IT IS LOCATED; AND
2. IS ACCESSIBLE TO ALL TYPES OF VISITORS, INCLUDING THE ELDERLY, DISABLED AND THOSE WITH CHILDREN; AND
3. IS ADEQUATELY SERVED BY THE EXISTING ROAD NETWORK; AND
4. IS ACCESSIBLE TO PEDESTRIANS, CYCLISTS AND USERS OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT; AND
5. DOES NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE AMENITY OF NEIGHBOURING OCCUPIERS OF LAND OR PROPERTY.

POLICY V4

PLANNING PERMISSION WILL BE GRANTED FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW, OR EXTENSION TO EXISTING, TOURIST ATTRACTIONS OUTSIDE THE BOUNDARIES OF SETTLEMENTS PROVIDED THAT THE PROPOSAL:

1. WILL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE OPENNESS OF THE GREEN BELT; AND
2. WILL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE NATURAL OR PHYSICAL CHARACTER OF THE AREA IN WHICH THEY ARE LOCATED; AND
3. WILL NOT CONFLICT WITH THE INTERESTS OF NATURE CONSERVATION AS SET OUT IN POLICIES E16-E20 OF THE PLAN; AND
4. IS ADEQUATELY SERVICED BY THE EXISTING ROAD NETWORK; AND, EXCEPT WHERE THE LOCATION OF THE ATTRACTION IS DEPENDANT UPON THE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS OR PHYSICAL NATURE OF THE SITE, IS ACCESSIBLE BY A CHOICE OF TRANSPORT MODES; AND
5. DOES NOT MATERIALLY ADVERSELY AFFECT THE AMENITY OF NEIGHBOURING OCCUPIERS OF LAND OR PROPERTY OR THE OPERATION OF EXISTING NEARBY USES; AND
6. WILL NOT CONFLICT WITH POLICY E9.

Justification

- 9.12** Although the Council wishes to continue to promote Durham as a tourist destination, it recognises that such a course of action can jeopardise the intrinsic quality, which attracts visitors in the first instance. This is of particular relevance to areas within the City Centre such as the peninsula, where access limitations restrict its capacity to absorb additional tourist facilities.
- 9.13** Whilst the Visitor Management Plan referred to in paragraph 9.5 will help to address this conflict of interest within the City Centre, it is important that new tourist attractions respect the existing character of the area in which it is located. In order to safeguard this fundamental requirement, the Council will assess any new proposal against the criteria set out in Policies V3 and V4. The Millennium Scheme referred to in detail in Chapter 11 affords the Council a unique opportunity to enhance facilities for visitors in manner, which is compatible with the Policy V3.
- 9.14** Proposals for tourist, recreational or leisure developments in the countryside will be assessed according to other Policies of the Plan, particularly those in the Chapters relating the Environment (E1, E8, E9 and E16-E20) and Recreation (R10). As a general guide, they must not result in damage to the intrinsic character of the area in which they are located.
- 9.15** Wherever possible, new tourist attractions outside the boundaries of settlements should be capable of being served by public transport, footpaths and cycle paths.

VISITOR ACCOMMODATION

~~Hotel Development at Framwelgate Waterside~~

~~POLICY V5 PLANNING PERMISSION WILL BE GRANTED FOR HOTEL DEVELOPMENT ON LAND AT FRAMWELGATE WATERSIDE.~~

~~Justification~~

- ~~**9.16** The strategic planning policies contained in both the Durham County Structure Plan Review and County Durham Tourism Partnership's Tourism Strategy for County Durham identify Durham City as a suitable location for additional high quality hotel development. The City Centre Masterplan which was adopted by the City Council in 1998 addresses this issue by recommending the site of the former Electricity and Gas Depots at Framwelgate Waterside should be reserved for the development of a high quality hotel (see Policy CG2a). Policy V5 of the Local Plan, therefore, allocates this site for that purpose. Due to its environmental sensitive location fronting the River Wear, any hotel development will need to be of a scale and design that will enable it to be satisfactorily assimilated into its immediate surroundings in accordance with Policy V6. It is also important to ensure that the design of the new hotel complies with the criteria set out in Policy E6.~~

Within Settlement Boundaries

POLICY V6 **PLANNING PERMISSION WILL BE GRANTED FOR NEW VISITOR ACCOMMODATION OR EXTENSIONS TO EXISTING VISITOR ACCOMMODATION WITHIN THE BOUNDARY OF SETTLEMENTS PROVIDED THAT THE DEVELOPMENT IS APPROPRIATE TO THE SCALE AND CHARACTER OF THE AREA AND SUCH A PROPOSAL DOES NOT CONFLICT WITH OTHER POLICIES CONTAINED WITHIN THE PLAN.**

Justification

- 9.17** Durham's dual role as a tourist and business centre assists in the provision of visitor accommodation within the District and ensures a high level of occupancy throughout the year. It appeals to both the leisure market with an interest in historic cities, and the business market attracted by its conference facilities and its proximity to the commercial and industrial centres of Tyneside, Wearside and Teesside. In general terms, business visitors generate a stable year-round demand for accommodation particularly during the week, and leisure visitors fill the gaps at weekends and school holidays. This creates a welcome stability, which is not often shared by larger cities, with their bias towards the business market or seaside resorts with their very seasonal leisure market.
- 9.18** In addition to the usual range of accommodation (hotels, motels, guesthouses, bed and breakfast and self-catering), the City has the capacity to provide approximately 4,000 bed spaces in the Colleges of Durham University. The level of occupancy achieved by the University for this accommodation, which is restricted to vacation periods, is much higher than the national average, indicating the success that Durham has in satisfying the demand for this sector of the visitor market.
- 9.19** The Council recognises the need for a broad range of accommodation to be made available for visitors to the District in order to encourage them to stay longer. Extensions to Ramside Hall Hotel and the development of Travel Lodges at Bowburn and Pity Me together with the new hotel site at Framwelgate Waterside allocated in Policy V5 indicate the Council's commitment to support proposals, which seek to fulfil this objective.
- 9.20** The Council does, however, recognise that the provision of visitor accommodation can create amenity problems for the occupiers of neighbouring properties through vehicular and other activities associated with these developments. It must also ensure that it is of a scale which will have no detrimental affect on the intrinsic character of the area in which it is located. Policy V6 seeks to ensure that any proposal for additional visitor accommodation will only be approved if these problems are resolved to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

In the Countryside

POLICY V7 **PLANNING PERMISSION FOR NEW VISITOR ACCOMMODATION IN THE COUNTRYSIDE WILL BE GRANTED IF:**

1. IT IS AN EXTENSION TO AN EXISTING ESTABLISHMENT CATERING FOR VISITORS; OR
2. IT INVOLVES THE CONVERSION OF AN EXISTING BUILDING ACCEPTABLE UNDER THE CRITERIA SET OUT IN POLICY E8; OR
3. IT WOULD NOT BE CONTRARY TO POLICIES E1, E8, E9, E10 AND E24 OF THE PLAN.

WHERE PLANNING PERMISSION IS GRANTED FOR NEW VISITOR ACCOMMODATION IN THE COUNTRYSIDE, SUCH APPROVAL MAY BE SUBJECT TO A PLANNING CONDITION OR AGREEMENT WILL BE SOUGHT WITH THE APPLICANT TO ENTER INTO A PLANNING OBLIGATION LIMITING THE OCCUPATION BY ONE OR MORE PERSONS TO NOT MORE THAN 12 WEEKS IN ANY ONE CALENDAR YEAR.

Justification

9.21 It is anticipated that most new visitor accommodation will be provided within the built-up areas of the District. Such development is rarely acceptable in the countryside because of its impact on the landscape and distance from other amenities. The Council accepts, however, that there are exceptional circumstances when consideration might be given to approving such development. For example, if the development in the countryside represented an extension to an existing establishment catering for visitors as has previously occurred at The Ramside Hall Hotel.

9.22 The conversion of existing buildings in the countryside to provide visitor accommodation may also be acceptable as long as the proposal complies with the criteria set out in Policy E8. In order to prevent the permanent occupation or use of visitor accommodation within the countryside by one or more persons, and therefore the effective creation of new residential property, approvals for such developments will only be acceptable if they include a restrictive occupancy condition or a planning obligation to that effect.

Camping, Caravan and Chalets

POLICY V8 PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW OR EXTENSIONS TO EXISTING SITES FOR CAMPING, CARAVANNING (BOTH TOURING AND STATIC) AND CHALETS WILL NOT BE GRANTED IN THE DURHAM CITY GREEN BELT UNLESS THEY COULD BE DEMONSTRATED TO PRESERVE THE OPENNESS OF THE GREEN BELT AND NOT TO CONFLICT WITH THE PURPOSES OF INCLUDING LAND WITHIN IT. ELSEWHERE PLANNING PERMISSION WILL BE GRANTED PROVIDED THAT:

1. **THE SITE IS NOT PROMINENT, IS ADEQUATELY SCREENED AND PITCHES ARE LAID OUT IN A MANNER WHICH WOULD NOT ADVERSELY EFFECT THE CHARACTER OF THE AREA; AND**
2. **THE PROPOSAL WOULD NOT ADVERSELY EFFECT THE AMENITIES OF NEIGHBOURING OCCUPIERS OF LAND OR PROPERTY; AND**
3. **THERE IS A SATISFACTORY MEANS OF ACCESS TO THE SITE WHICH DOES NOT RESULT IN CONGESTION OF THE LOCAL ROAD NETWORK; AND**
4. **THE SITE IS SERVED BY ADEQUATE INFRA-STRUCTURE; AND**
5. **THE SITE IS NOT LOCATED WITHIN AN AREA WHICH IS SUBJECT TO FLOODING; AND**
6. **THE SITE IS ADEQUATELY SERVED BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT, FOOTPATHS AND CYCLEPATHS; AND**
7. **THE PROPOSAL WILL NOT CONFLICT WITH POLICIES E9 AND E16-E20.**

SITES FOR STATIC CARAVANS AND CHALETS WILL IN ADDITION BE REQUIRED TO BE ADEQUATELY SCREENED ALL THE YEAR ROUND. THE DESIGN, MATERIALS AND COLOUR OF STATIC CARAVANS AND CHALETS SHOULD BE CHOSEN TO MERGE WITH THE SURROUNDINGS OF THE SITE.

Justification

- 9.23** Whilst the Council does not wish to preclude the needs of visitors with caravan or camping equipment, it is important that sites for their occupation should be carefully located and landscaped in order to minimise their impact upon the local environment. This is of particular relevance to the Durham City Green Belt where the most important attribute is the retention of its openness. The development of caravan sites will only be considered where the layout has been comprehensively planned, the caravans can be adequately screened throughout the year, they are not located within the Durham City Green Belt and the scale of the development would not adversely affect the character of the area in which it is to be located. Any proposal for new holiday touring and/or static caravan and/or camping site or extension to an existing facility within the District will, therefore, be assessed against the criteria set out in Policy V8.

- 9.24** Sites for static caravans and chalets will not only be assessed against the criteria set out in Policy V8 but must, in addition, be able to provide screening that is effective throughout the year. They should also be of a material and colour which can be easily assimilated into the surrounding area.

Occupancy

POLICY V9 PLANNING PERMISSION FOR STATIC HOLIDAY CARAVANS AND CHALETS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE WILL ONLY BE GRANTED IF OCCUPATION BY ANY ONE PERSON OR GROUPS OF PERSONS IS LIMITED TO NOT MORE THAN 26 WEEKS IN ANY ONE CALENDAR YEAR.

Justification

- 9.25** Static holiday caravans and chalets which are used for visitor accommodation are not normally designed, built or located for permanent residential use. In order to ensure that visitor accommodation is prevented from becoming a permanent dwelling within the countryside the Council will impose a planning condition on all new sites which are approved limiting occupation by one person or groups of persons to not more than twenty six weeks in any one calendar year.
- 9.26** The occupation of static caravans for permanent residential use is not considered appropriate unless they are located within an established static caravan park specifically developed for that purpose.

10 COMMUNITY FACILITIES

INTRODUCTION

- 10.1** This Chapter deals with those community services, which have land use implications during the Plan period. It contains Policies on land and buildings for the health service, education and general community use.

GENERAL BACKGROUND

Health

- 10.2** The City of Durham benefits from a broad range of services catering for the health and well being of its residents. These include three hospitals (Dryburn, Earls House and The County), 15 doctor's practices and 14 dental practices. Following the redevelopment of Dryburn by the North Durham Acute Hospitals Trust to create a new District General Hospital, it is not envisaged that there will be any new major health facility provided in the District during the Plan period. Both Earls House Hospital and The County Hospital will continue to provide care and rehabilitation for patients suffering from mental illnesses. In June 1997 outline planning approval was granted for the erection of a 39 bed mental health facility at Earls House Hospital.
- 10.3** In recent years there has been a growth in the number of residential care (both low and high dependency) and nursing homes in the City. It is anticipated that demand for these type of facilities will continue through the Plan period.

Education

- 10.4** There are many educational establishments within Durham which cater for a wide range of needs. These include four nursery schools, seventeen primary schools, four comprehensive schools, one Roman Catholic comprehensive school, one Sixth Form Centre, four private schools, one higher and two further educational establishments (Durham University, New College Durham and Houghall Agricultural College). There are also special educational needs centres at Aykley Heads and Trout Lane. Finchale Training College provides for the rehabilitation and training of adults with disabilities and special needs.
- 10.5** Durham County Council, in its capacity as Education Authority, has indicated that during the Plan period it hopes to rationalise certain educational facilities within the City, including the establishment of Durham Johnston Comprehensive School on a single site at Crossgate Moor. It has also confirmed its intention to dispose of land which has become surplus to requirements and Policy R4 of the Plan seeks to address this issue.
- 10.6** The Council recognises the problem of overcrowding in schools and would seek to encourage the County Council to address this issue by providing permanent structures to meet the long-term requirements of the particular educational establishment. The continued use of temporary, demountable portable buildings

as classrooms beyond their life expectancy is unsatisfactory and new permissions should, unless unavoidable be strictly temporary.

- 10.7** The special contribution of the University of Durham to the vitality of the City and its local economy is recognised by the Council and reference has been made to this in the Employment Chapter. At the start of the academic year 1998/99 there were 8,964 full-time and 1,368 part-time students in attendance at the University. During the early 1990's the University completed major extensions to a number of its colleges including Collingwood, St Aidan's and St Mary's. It has also commenced the development of a new 600 bed college at Howlands Farm. Phase 1 of that development was completed in autumn of 1998 providing a Graduate facility containing 192 study bedrooms.
- 10.8** New College Durham, which at the start of the academic year 1998/99 had 2,000 full-time and 8,000 part-time students in attendance, currently seeks to consolidate its two sites at Nevilles Cross and Framwellgate Moor into one campus based at Framwellgate Moor. It is not envisaged that there will be any substantial increase in the number of students attending the college during the Plan period.
- 10.9** Houghall Agricultural College, which at the start of academic year 1998/99 had 316 full-time and 351 part-time students in attendance has recently merged to become East Durham and Houghall Community College in order to safeguard its future as a small specialist institution. It is set within the Area of High Landscape Value and the Green Belt adjacent to the A177 on one of the main approaches to the City. It is currently undertaking an appraisal of its existing resources (college campus, horticultural unit and Houghall Farm) in order to formulate a development strategy over and beyond the Local Plan period. It is not envisaged that there will be any substantial increase in the number of students attending the college during the Plan period.
- 10.10** Finchale Training Centre which is located in the Green Belt north of Brasside currently has a total of 500 full-time and part-time students attending a variety of specialist rehabilitation and related training courses. It is not envisaged that there will be any substantial increase in the number of students attending the college during the Plan period.

Community Centres

- 10.11** Community centres are an important focus for neighbourhoods and villages throughout the District by providing a local meeting place and offering facilities for individuals, clubs and societies. There are 20 Community Centres in Durham ranging in scale from former miners welfare buildings (eg. Bearpark, Brandon and Bowburn) to modern small purpose built centres (eg. Ludworth and Quarrington Hill).

Local Centres

- 10.12** Reference has already been made in the Shopping Chapter to the fact that the local centres identified in Policy S4 contain services and facilities other than shops, which help to make them focal points for the local community. Existing medical and social facilities are often associated with local centres and it is important that

these non-retail uses and functions are protected from being displaced by new shopping development.

LOCAL PLAN OBJECTIVES

10.13 The Council's objectives for community facilities, to be pursued through the Policies and Proposals contained in this Chapter of the Plan, are:

- to encourage and promote the provision of a range of the highest quality health, educational, social and general community facilities to meet the needs of the residents of the City of Durham;
- to retain and improve existing social and community facilities within the City of Durham;
- to facilitate the redevelopment of Dryburn as a new District General Hospital;
- to support the development needs of Durham University and the other centres of higher and further education in a manner which respects the character and environmental sensitivity of that part of the District in which they are located.

POLICIES

HEALTH

Redevelopment of Dryburn Hospital

POLICY C1 DEVELOPMENT OF THE DRYBURN HOSPITAL SITE, ON THE THREE SPECIFIC AREAS SHOWN ON THE PROPOSALS MAP, WILL BE PERMITTED AS FOLLOWS:-

AREA (A) NEW HOSPITAL SITE:

- (i) **EXTENSIONS TO THE NEW HOSPITAL WILL BE OF A SCALE AND MATERIALS THAT COMPLIMENTS THE EXISTING BUILDINGS, AND;**
- (ii) **ANY LOSS OF ON-SITE PARKING FACILITIES RESULTING FROM NEW BUILDINGS WILL BE REPLACED BY APPROPRIATE ON-SITE PROVISION AND ADDITIONAL PROVISION, IN ACCORD WITH POLICY T10.**

AREAS (B) & (C) LAND SOUTH OF NEW HOSPITAL (5 HECTARE SITE):

- (i) **DEVELOPMENT FOR OFFICE (CLASS B1), HOTEL, LEISURE, HOSPITAL AND HEALTH RELATED FACILITIES (INCLUDING DOCTORS AND NURSES**

ACCOMMODATION), AND COLLEGE/STUDENT ACCOMMODATION, OR AN APPROPRIATE MIXTURE OF THESE USES.

AREA (C) SOUTHERN PART OF LAND SOUTH OF NEW HOSPITAL (2.6 HECTARE SITE):

- (i) **IN ADDITION TO THE USES DEFINED IN (B) & (C)(i), ABOVE, HOUSING DEVELOPMENT WILL ALSO BE PERMITTED ON ALL OR PART OF THIS SITE.**

IN ALL CASES PROPOSALS SHOULD NOT HAVE A DETRIMENTAL IMPACT ON THE SETTING OF THE WORLD HERITAGE SITE, IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY E3; SHOULD NOT GENERATE TRAFFIC WHICH WOULD HAVE A DETRIMENTAL IMPACT ON THE EXISTING ROAD NETWORK AND HIGHWAY SAFETY; SHOULD NOT HAVE A DETRIMENTAL IMPACT ON THE AMENITIES OF OCCUPIERS OF NEARBY OR ADJOINING LAND OR PROPERTY; AND SHOULD PROTECT EXISTING LANDSCAPE FEATURES AND INCORPORATE A HIGH STANDARD OF NEW LANDSCAPING IN THE OVERALL DESIGN AND LAYOUT IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY Q5.

Justification

- 10.14** The North Durham Health Care NHS Trust is completing the replacement of Dryburn Hospital on land to the north of the existing buildings, but within the same overall site, to create a new District General Hospital (DGH) to serve North Durham. The southern part of the existing site, occupied by various wards, the A&E Unit, and a temporary car park, has been declared surplus to requirements by the Trust once the new DGH is completed.
- 10.15** The Trust has formally indicated the combination of the new DGH (with potential to expand) and the other sites in its ownership will provide sufficient flexibility to accommodate its needs for the foreseeable future. The County Durham and Darlington Priority Service NHS Trust has also confirmed that in the context of future capital developments in Durham, it does not need any land on the Dryburn site, since there are no clinically relevant services which would require to locate there. As such, there is no specific justification to reserve the site for other health related or high dependency care facilities.
- 10.16** In assessing any development proposals for the site, the Council will take into account the impact upon the setting of the World Heritage Site, upon the existing road network and highway safety, upon the amenity of occupiers of adjoining land and property, and, upon existing landscape features. Proposals that have a significant adverse impact on any of these will be resisted.

10.17 For the purpose of land uses, the whole of the former Dryburn Hospital site is divided into three specific areas. Detailed issues relating to these are set out below.

10.18 Road/junction improvements in the vicinity of the sites may be required in accordance with Department for Transport Policy as set out in Appendix 7 of the Plan.

Area (a) : the Site of the New Hospital

10.18A In the area being developed for the new hospital any future expansion should be designed to retain the unity of design of the existing building. Any loss of on-site parking, resulting from new buildings, should be replaced to the requirements of the Highway Authority. This could be achieved by putting any additional parking areas on the site of buildings remaining from the old hospital (but not including the Grade II Listed Dryburn House which must be retained), uses within these buildings then being transferred into the extension to the new hospital.

Areas (b) & (c): site of former hospital and site of temporary car park

10.18B These two sites cover about 5 ha and represent a major development site, comprising previously developed land, in a location well related to public transport routes and the railway station. Part of area (c) has previously been the subject of a proposal for a hotel (although the planning application was withdrawn). Such a use, would still be an appropriate option on these sites. The sites also offer opportunities for B1 office development, thereby enhancing and reflecting the employment opportunities that exist in this part of Durham City. Notwithstanding the comments above regarding the lack of need for health service related uses, they need not be ruled out. As such, hospital and health related uses (including, for example, Doctors and Nurses accommodation) would be an appropriate land use. The possible future needs of the University are unclear. The size of the site is such that it has the potential to accommodate University/College related uses, for example, student residential units or other college related facilities, and these would also be appropriate.

Area (c) : Site of Temporary Car Park

10.18C This area, for the most part to the south of a tree belt running across the site, comprises the temporary car park and covers about 2.6 ha. The site is within walking distance of the railway station, town centre and employment opportunities in the area. It is adjacent to good public transport provision and community facilities. As such, and in addition to the uses set out for both sites (b) and (c), Site (c) is an appropriate location for residential development. Any detailed proposal for housing on the site should seek to minimise any possible conflict with potential and existing neighbouring uses, and should seek to create a form of development to complement the good quality residential areas nearby. The inclusion of residential development as an option on Site (c) reflects the positive approach to help to create mixed use areas, as advocated in Planning Policy Guidance Note 3, Housing.

Health Centres, Surgeries and Clinics

POLICY C2 **PLANNING PERMISSION WILL BE GRANTED FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF HEALTH CENTRES, DOCTORS AND DENTAL SURGERIES AND OTHER CLINICS WITHIN SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES PROVIDED THAT SUCH A PROPOSAL:**

- 1. IS WELL RELATED TO RESIDENTIAL AREAS; AND**
- 2. WOULD NOT HAVE A DETRIMENTAL AFFECT UPON THE AMENITY OF OCCUPIERS OF NEARBY AND ADJOINING PROPERTIES OR ON HIGHWAY SAFETY; AND**
- 3. IS LOCATED CLOSE TO PUBLIC TRANSPORT ROUTES AND IS ACCESSIBLE BY A CHOICE OF MEANS OF TRANSPORT; AND**
- 4. ALLOWS LEVEL ACCESS FOR PEDESTRIANS AND THOSE WITH DISABILITIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY Q1.**

Justification

- 10.19** Health centres, surgeries and clinics need to be located where they are accessible to the whole community and in general should be concentrated within Durham City and the larger villages identified in Policy H3. The Council however, recognises the need to ensure that adequate health provision is readily available to all communities including, wherever possible, those which currently lack such facilities. Health centres, surgeries and clinics should be situated in close proximity to residential areas, district and local centres, main bus routes and have on-site parking facilities in order to avoid causing congestion on the public highway. Access to the building should preferably be level to facilitate the needs of those with disabilities or parents with young children.
- 10.20** Residential accommodation is often suitable for conversion to clinics or surgeries for medical, dental or veterinary practitioners. In recognition of this, the Council would support such a conversion provided it would not have a detrimental effect upon the amenity of nearby and adjoining properties. New nursing homes and care homes will be approved within the District provided they comply with the criteria set out in Policy H16.
- 10.21** Health Centres, surgeries and clinics play an essential community role which is important to retain. The need to protect these facilities from development for other uses is considered under Policy C9.

EDUCATION

University of Durham

POLICY C3: THE CITY COUNCIL WILL SUPPORT DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS BY THE UNIVERSITY OF DURHAM WHICH SEEK TO:

- 1. STRENGTHEN ITS ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH PRESENCE IN THE CITY OF DURHAM.**
- 2. STRENGTHEN ITS CONTRIBUTION TO THE LOCAL ECONOMY AND CULTURAL LIFE OF THE CITY OF DURHAM.**
- 3. DEVELOP ITS ROLE AS A MAJOR SOCIAL, SPORTS AND RECREATIONAL ASSET TO THE CITY OF DURHAM.**
- 4. ENHANCE THE REPUTATION OF THE CITY OF DURHAM AS A CONFERENCE AND TOURIST CENTRE.**
- 5. ASSIST IN THE PROVISION OF ADEQUATE STUDENT ACCOMMODATION AND ASSOCIATED FACILITIES.**

IN BRINGING FORWARD A DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL THE UNIVERSITY WILL BE EXPECTED TO ENSURE THAT:

- a) IT IS WELL RELATED TO EXISTING UNIVERSITY ACTIVITIES; AND**
- b) IT WILL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE AMENITY OF NEIGHBOURING OCCUPIERS OF LAND OR PROPERTY.**

Justification

10.22 The University of Durham was founded in 1832 and is the third oldest University in England. The collegiate nature of the University is one of its principle features. There are a total of nine 'Council' Colleges (ie funded by the Council of the University), two University Societies providing non collegiate facilities and three independent colleges within the University. The University is in the process of developing a new 600 bed residential facility at Howlands Farm. Phase 1 consisting of a 192 bed graduate centre has been completed. The University has a reputation of academic excellence, which attracts students of the highest calibre. In December 1998 a total of 10,332 students attended the University of which 8,964 were full-time Undergraduates and Postgraduates (see Table 1).

- 10.23** As has already been referred to in the Employment, Housing, Transport and Tourism Chapters of the Plan, the University of Durham is a major employer and makes important, academic, economic, social, recreational and cultural contributions to both the City of Durham and the County as a whole. By only accommodating 70% of the undergraduate students within its colleges, the University also has a major influence on the local housing market, particularly in the private rented sector.
- 10.24** The University is a major landowner and is responsible for several important buildings and sites within the District. Many of these buildings, which include Durham Castle (part of the World Heritage Site) form an integral part of the townscape of Durham City and are protected by Policies E3, E6, E21, E22 and E23 of the Plan. The science site and individual colleges located south of the City Centre between Stockton Road and Mount Oswald make an equal contribution to the overall character of Durham City being set within wooded slopes and of a scale which has been successfully assimilated within an area of high landscape quality. It is vital that this balance between the built and natural environment is maintained and Policy C3 seeks to establish parameters which will achieve this in a manner which allows for development by the University within the overall principle of environmental sustainability.

Table 2

FULL-TIME UNDERGRADUATE AND POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS ATTENDING THE UNIVERSITY OF DURHAM (DECEMBER 1998)			
College	Undergraduates	Postgraduates	Total
St Aidan's College	686	26	712
St Chad's College	257	23	280
Collingwood College	897	22	919
St Cuthbert's Society	894	28	922
Graduate Society	1	926	957
Grey College	682	32	714
Hatfield College	608	32	640
College of St Hild and St Bede	1014	76	1090
St John's College	335	24	359
St Mary's College	477	31	508
Trevelyan College	529	21	550
University College	577	34	611
Ushaw College	1	0	1
Van Mildert College	676	25	701

10.25 In the past the University has grown in size to maximise its contribution to education and research in areas of local, national and international importance. The University will continue to do this within the Policies set out in this Plan. Where appropriate, the University will use its existing and other land - sometimes in partnership with other bodies - to achieve this. The University's growth will be linked to the Regional Economic Development Strategy. It aims to continue to be a major player in the Regions development.

10.26 The University has aspirations to undertake development projects aimed at redressing its existing infrastructure deficiencies particularly with regard to engineering and science research facilities. It is likely that some of the following projects, which are all located within the existing science site south of Stockton Road, with the benefit of outline planning approval will be implemented in the Plan period:

- An extension to the chemistry building to provide a centre for materials evaluation;
- A new building for environmental research;
- An extension to the physics building to provide an institute for advanced computation in physical science and an optics application laboratory;
- An extension to the biological science building for cellular microanalysis;
- Extensions to the engineering building to provide an integrated engineering laboratory for advanced manufacturing technology, fluid mechanics and applied electronics;
- An extension to the west building to accommodate a graduate centre for geography;
- A further extension to the library;
- The provision of a large new lecture theatre (500 seats) and support facilities to meet existing needs for student teaching and for conference use in association with the South Road colleges.

~~**New College Durham - Framwellgate Moor Site**~~

~~**POLICY C4 THE CITY COUNCIL WILL SUPPORT DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS BY NEW COLLEGE DURHAM ON THE CAMPUS AT FRAMWELLGATE MOOR ALLOCATED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP PROVIDED THAT:**~~

- ~~**1. THEY ARE OF A DESIGN, SCALE AND QUALITY WHICH RESPECTS ITS LOCAL ENVIRONMENT; AND**~~

2. ~~THEY WOULD NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE AMENITY OF OCCUPIERS OF NEARBY AND ADJOINING LAND OR PROPERTY; AND~~
3. ~~THEY ARE ACCESSIBLE BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT, CYCLISTS AND PEDESTRIANS IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY Q2; AND~~
4. ~~THEY WOULD NOT GENERATE TRAFFIC THAT WOULD HAVE A DETRIMENTAL IMPACT ON THE EXISTING ROAD NETWORK AND HIGHWAY SAFETY; AND~~
5. ~~THEY WILL INCORPORATE, WHERE APPROPRIATE, A HIGH STANDARD OF LANDSCAPING IN ITS OVERALL DESIGN AND LAYOUT IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY Q5; AND~~
6. ~~THE PROPOSAL DOES NOT CONFLICT WITH POLICIES R3 AND R4.~~

~~Justification~~

~~10.27~~ New College Durham is currently undergoing a major programme of rationalisation with the intention of consolidating its operation on the site at Framwellgate Moor and disposing of the site at Nevilles Cross for development purposes (see Policy C5). Outline Planning Approval, incorporating an indicative layout, has been granted for the redevelopment of the Framwellgate Moor Campus. Policy C4, therefore, is intended to provide guidance when detailed proposals are forthcoming. In the event that proposals are not forthcoming or detailed proposals put forward are considered inappropriate, the Council will provide more detailed guidance through the preparation of a Development Brief for the site. Road/junction improvements in the vicinity of the site may be required in accordance with the Department for Transport Policy as set out in Appendix 7 of the Plan.

~~10.28~~ The Council recognises the importance of New College Durham to the educational, cultural and economic wellbeing of the County. The area allocated at Framwellgate Moor under Policy C4 will allow the college to complete its rationalisation and development programme during the Plan period.

New College Durham – Nevilles Cross Site

POLICY C5 **PLANNING PERMISSION WILL BE GRANTED FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT OF THE NEVILLES CROSS SITE OF NEW COLLEGE DURHAM, AS SHOWN ON THE PROPOSALS MAP, FOR EITHER RESIDENTIAL, OFFICES, LEISURE OR INSTITUTIONAL USE PROVIDED THAT:**

1. THE PROPOSAL SEEKS TO RETAIN NEVILLE HOUSE AND SHERATON HOUSE; AND
2. THE PROPOSAL WOULD NOT RESULT IN THE LOSS OF OPEN SPACE WHICH IS UNLIKELY TO BE NEEDED FOR EDUCATIONAL OR COMMUNITY PURPOSES IN THE FUTURE UNLESS AN ALTERNATIVE AREA OF AT LEAST EQUIVALENT COMMUNITY BENEFIT WILL BE PROVIDED LOCALLY IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICIES R3 AND R4; AND
3. THE PROPOSAL WOULD NOT GENERATE TRAFFIC WHICH WOULD HAVE A DETRIMENTAL IMPACT ON THE EXISTING ROAD NETWORK AND HIGHWAY SAFETY; AND
4. THE PROPOSAL WOULD NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE AMENITY OF OCCUPIERS OF NEARBY AND ADJOINING LAND OR PROPERTY; AND
5. THE PROPOSAL INCORPORATES ADEQUATE PROTECTION FOR THE LANDSCAPE AND AMENITY SPACES WHICH FULFIL AN IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION TO THE CHARACTER OF THE LOCALITY IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY E5A; AND
6. IT IS ACCESSIBLE BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT, CYCLISTS AND PEDESTRIANS IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY Q2.

Justification

- 10.29** The creation of a single site New College Durham at Framwellgate Moor during the Plan period would render the Nevilles Cross site surplus to requirements and thus available for alternative uses. Policy C5 of the Plan provides a set of criteria against which any redevelopment proposal would be assessed.
- 10.30** The development of the Nevilles Cross site should be guided by Policy C5 above. The main buildings (Neville House and Sheraton House) are landmark features and although not listed, their retention should form the centrepiece of any redevelopment proposals. The site has the following recreational facilities; rugby pitch, all weather hockey pitch and tennis courts. Any requirement for these areas to be retained in whole or in part, or for alternative provision, shall be assessed in accordance with Plan policies R3 and R4 and in accordance with PPG17 and the Playing Pitch Direction (Circular 9.98).
- 10.30A** That part of the site comprising the rugby pitch and surrounds (north of but not including the former netball courts) contributes to the landscape setting of the

Durham Bowl and should remain open, being protected by Plan Policy E5. This area has the potential to contribute to the formal and informal recreational and amenity space requirements of both new residential development, arising from the redevelopment of the rest of the College site, and of the local community.

- 10.31** Access to the site, which is on the north side of the A167, is poor and any redevelopment proposal must seek to avoid intensifying traffic use which would further increase congestion in the area and be potentially prejudicial to highway safety.
- 10.32** Any proposals for the redevelopment of the site would need to respect the amenity of occupiers of adjoining property which is primarily residential in character and comply with the design policies of the Local Plan. The Council considers that the only suitable options for the redevelopment of the Nevilles Cross site would be either residential, offices, leisure or some form of institutional use.

Durham Johnston Comprehensive School : Crossgate Moor Site

POLICY C6 LAND IS SAFEGUARDED AT THE EXISTING CROSSGATE MOOR SITE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF DURHAM JOHNSTON AS A SINGLE SITE COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL.

Justification

- 10.33** The Council supports the County Council in its aim of establishing Durham Johnston Comprehensive School on a single site at Crossgate Moor. The school currently operates on split site at Whinney Hill and Crossgate Moor. The existing site at Crossgate Moor is considered by the County Council large enough to accommodate a single site school. It will, therefore, be protected from any non educational development. Any new development proposals relating to the expansion of the school would be the subject of a detailed design brief which would need to satisfy the environmental constraints set out in Policy E3 relating to protecting the setting of the World Heritage Site as well as ensuring that the integrity of the site of the Battle of Nevilles Cross is not adversely affected in accordance with Policy E25. In addition, road/junction improvements in the vicinity of the site may be required in accordance with the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions' Policy as set out in Appendix 7 of the Plan.

Durham Johnston Comprehensive School : Whinney Hill Site

POLICY C7 PLANNING PERMISSION WILL BE GRANTED FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT OF THE WHINNEY HILL SITE OF THE DURHAM JOHNSTON COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL, AS SHOWN ON THE PROPOSALS MAP, FOR EITHER RESIDENTIAL, OFFICES OR INSTITUTIONAL USES PROVIDED THAT:

- 1. THE PROPOSAL WOULD NOT HAVE A DETRIMENTAL IMPACT ON THE CHARACTER OF**

THE DURHAM (CITY CENTRE) CONSERVATION AREA IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY E6; AND

- 2. THE PROPOSAL WOULD NOT HAVE A DETRIMENTAL IMPACT ON THE AMENITIES OF OCCUPIERS OF NEARBY OR ADJOINING PROPERTY; AND**
- 3. THE PROPOSAL WOULD NOT GENERATE TRAFFIC WHICH WILL HAVE A DETRIMENTAL IMPACT UPON BOTH THE EXISTING ROAD NETWORK AND HIGHWAY SAFETY; AND**
- 4. THE PROPOSAL WOULD NOT HAVE A DETRIMENTAL IMPACT ON THE SETTING OF THE WORLD HERITAGE SITE IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY E3.**

Justification

- 10.34** The site of Whinney Hill School lies within the Durham (City Centre) Conservation Area in a very environmentally sensitive part of the City close to the World Heritage Site. Any redevelopment proposals would need to be of a scale, which would respect the integrity of this site on the urban edge of Durham City adjacent to the Area High Landscape Value and Durham City Green Belt.
- 10.35** The site is accessed by via a narrow residential street and therefore, traffic generation, highway safety and amenity of local residents are fundamental issues, which need to be addressed by redevelopment proposals.
- 10.36** The Council considers that the most suitable options for the redevelopment of the Whinney Hill school site would be for either residential, offices or some form of institutional use.

COMMUNITY

Provision of New Community Facilities

POLICY C8 **PLANNING PERMISSION WILL BE GRANTED FOR THE PROVISION OF NEW COMMUNITY FACILITIES (E.G. COMMUNITY CENTRES, YOUTH CENTRES, VILLAGE HALLS, LIBRARIES, POST OFFICES, PUBLIC HOUSES AND PLACES OF WORSHIP) OR FOR EXTENSIONS TO EXISTING FACILITIES PROVIDED THAT SUCH A PROPOSAL:**

- 1. IS LOCATED WITHIN AN EXISTING SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY AND IS WELL RELATED TO RESIDENTIAL AREAS AND LOCAL FACILITIES; AND**

2. IS, WHEREVER POSSIBLE, OF A FLEXIBLE DESIGN WHICH COULD SERVE MORE THAN ONE USE; AND
3. WOULD NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE AMENITY OF OCCUPIERS OF NEARBY OR ADJOINING LAND OR PROPERTY; AND
4. ALLOWS ACCESS TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY Q1; AND
5. DOES NOT CREATE OR CONTRIBUTE TO A TRAFFIC HAZARD; AND
6. IS ACCESSIBLE TO USERS OF ALL MODES OF TRAVEL INCLUDING PUBLIC TRANSPORT, CYCLING AND WALKING IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY Q2.

Justification

10.37 Community centres, youth centres, village halls, post offices, public houses, libraries and places of worship are a valuable resource within the District. They are places where the young and the elderly can meet and community activities and social interaction can take place. The value of such buildings can be enhanced if they are flexibly designed so that they can be used by different groups for a variety of purposes. It is important that they are located and designed so as to be readily accessible to all sections of the local community including those with disabilities.

10.38 The varied nature of these community facilities means that they may function outside normally accepted times. For example, the use of religious buildings depends upon the religion and its customs to determine the days and hours of use. Similarly the need for parking may occur outside peak times for a particular community activity. Any new community facility must be located where these varying requirements can be accommodated without detrimental impact on the amenity of local residents.

Loss of an Existing Community Facility

POLICY C9 PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A PROPOSAL WHICH WOULD RESULT IN THE LOSS OF AN EXISTING COMMUNITY FACILITY IDENTIFIED IN POLICIES C2 AND C8 WILL NOT BE GRANTED UNLESS IT CAN BE DEMONSTRATED THAT:

1. THE FACILITY IS NO LONGER FINANCIALLY VIABLE; OR
2. THERE IS NO SIGNIFICANT DEMAND FOR THE FACILITY WITHIN THAT LOCALITY; OR

3. AN EQUIVALENT ALTERNATIVE FACILITY IS AVAILABLE TO SATISFY THE NEEDS OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY NEARBY.

THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK THE RETENTION OF THE LAST REMAINING VILLAGE SHOP. IN ADDITION PARTICULAR REGARD WILL ALSO BE GIVEN TO THE RETENTION OF THE COMMUNITY FACILITIES IN THE VILLAGES IDENTIFIED IN POLICY H3 OF THE PLAN.

Justification

10.39 Durham City is primarily urban in character and, therefore, its residents have easy access to a full range of the community facilities identified in Policies C2 and C8. However, community centres, youth centres, village halls, post offices, public houses and places of worship within the villages identified in Policy H3 in the remainder of the District play a vital commercial, social and community role and are central to the continued vitality of these settlements. The loss of these community facilities would not only undermine these communities but would be contrary to the principle of sustainable development and Government Policy set out in PPGs 7 and 13 in that it would have the combined effect of disadvantaging those without access to a car whilst conversely encouraging more trips by car by those with access to one.

10.39A As paragraph 7.17 of the plan notes “Existing village shops fulfil an important social function and play a part in reducing the need to travel”. These village shops are vitally important to sustaining rural communities as they can offer an additional social focus for the community. The loss of a village shop may mean young families are reluctant to move into a rural community and the least mobile to move out with possible severe consequences for other local facilities and the vitality of the community. Once a village shop closes and is used for other non-commercial uses, it is virtually impossible for the property to revert back to a shop. The Council will seek the retention of the last remaining village shop by ensuring that any change of use resulting in the loss of that facility will only be allowed after the applicant has demonstrated that one of the circumstances set out in Policy C9 apply.

10.40 Whilst it is not the role of the planning system to stifle change or prevent competition, it is important that unnecessary loss of community facilities particularly in the District's villages is avoided. It is important, therefore, that all options for the retention of such facilities should be explored for it may not follow that just because one party has not been able to make a facility successful, others may not be able or willing to do so or willing to try.

10.41 The Council will, therefore, only allow the redevelopment or change of use which would lead to the loss of a community facility identified in Policy C2 and C8 unless it can be satisfactorily demonstrated by the applicant that one of the following circumstances apply:

- (i) The facility is no longer financially viable. In such circumstances the applicant will be requested to provide evidence that the property or business has been advertised for a reasonable period and that no reasonable offer which would allow for the retention of the facility has been refused. This would normally involve the facility being advertised over a 12 month period with the valuation attributed to it reflecting its existing use.
- (ii) There is no longer a significant need for the facility in the locality. The views of local people and the Parish Council will be of particular relevance in assessing this.
- (iii) An alternative facility is also available or would be made available nearby to satisfy the needs of the local community.

10.42 Although Policy C9 is applicable to the whole of the District, it is of particular importance to the villages identified in Policy H3 and the City Council will seek to implement it accordingly.

11 CITY CENTRE

INTRODUCTION

- 11.1** The City Centre has been included as a separate Chapter in the Plan because of its combined strategic role as a focal point in the sub-region, its status as an historic city and the value of its environmental quality together with its importance and pivotal role in the economic, social and cultural life of the District. The format of this Chapter is different from others in the Plan in that it is area rather than topic based. It includes a historic and environmental appraisal of the City Centre, a land use and functional profile of the area, and an identification of the issues which affect it. The Chapter contains Policies which focus upon the need to consolidate and enhance the City Centre's viability, vitality and environmental quality. These Policies complement, and in many cases reinforce, those included in the other Chapters.
- 11.2** The City Centre has been defined according to the inter-action of land uses and functions. The resultant area is very compact covering barely one square kilometre extending from the County Hospital in the west to the Prison in the east and from Framwelgate Waterside in the north to the southern extremity of the Peninsula. It has an unique character and great environmental sensitivity in terms of architectural quality and townscape. It is included within the Durham (City Centre) Conservation Area which was designated in 1968 and enlarged in 1980.
- 11.3** The Council commissioned specialist consultants (Donaldsons) to carry out a comprehensive retail study of the City Centre. It was published in April 1997 and reference has already been made to it in the Shopping Chapter. This was followed in 1998 by the publication of a Development Framework for the Heart of Durham which identified a number of development options on targeted sites as part of an overall regeneration strategy for the City Centre over a period of 15-20 years. The Policies and Proposals contained in this and other Chapters of the Local Plan reflect these Studies and their findings.
- 11.4** Government Policy contained in Planning Policy Guidance Note 6 (PPG6) has the key aim of sustaining and enhancing the vitality and viability of town centres. One way advocated by PPG6 of achieving this is by ensuring that town centres provide a wide range of uses, facilities and services to which people have easy access by a choice of means of transport. Another means advocated by PPG6 is to apply the 'sequential approach' to the location of new development, discussed in detail in the Shopping Chapter of the Plan, to all those town centre uses (not just retail developments) which attract a lot of people such as commercial and public offices, entertainment and leisure developments.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

- 11.5** Since the earliest records the River Wear served as a moat around the Peninsula and only across its narrow neck were man-made fortifications essential. On such a site the Community of St. Cuthbert moved in 995 to establish a church around the body of their saint, all within the Peninsula fortifications. To the north of the

settlement a market may well have developed between fordable stretches of the river.

- 11.6** These elements of church, castle and market were reinforced with the coming of the Normans in the 1070's. In the century that followed major building works to the castle and castle walls were carried out and the great cathedral church constructed 1093-1133 with its new Benedictine priory laid out to the south, all within the walls of the Peninsula citadel. A small town developed around the market place linked in the early and late 12th century by new bridges to contemporary, and possibly earlier, settlements to the east and west. That to the west centred around the early north-south route flanking the Peninsula (South Street-Millburngate-Framwelgate) and the streets of Crossgate and Allergate to the west. On the eastern side was the early settlement of Elvet extending south to Church Street and Hallgarth Street. North from the Market Place lay Claypath, curving along its ridge to Gilesgate, originally probably a detached settlement set around the hospital of St. Giles, later moved to Kepier.
- 11.7** The mediaeval town was organised as a group of quasi independent boroughs under the control of the Peninsula overloads, the Bishop and the Priory, together with the Master of Kepier. Each borough had its own parish church, court, mill and bakehouse and the houses bordering the streets were laid out within long narrow strips of land or burgage plots, end on to the street. As the houses built up across the street frontages narrow alleys, or vennels were established to serve rear yards and stables, usually one for each pair of burgage plots.
- 11.8** Population decline in the late mediaeval period (14th and 15th centuries) caused a shrinkage in the town and the abandonment of some of its burgage plots particularly in the outlying streets. When growth returned many plots were re-inhabited but some streets such as Sidegate remained undeveloped for centuries. Growth was accommodated in enlarged dwellings and, after the Reformation, back plot or tandem development occurred off the common vennel - a practice resisted by the mediaeval bishops and prior. In the late 17th century, a period of confidence and prosperity in the City, brick buildings appeared and there was extensive redevelopment of outmoded mediaeval fabric.
- 11.9** Durham's role as a frontier town, a bulwark against the Scots, had changed following unification in 1603, and it became one of United Kingdom's mid-shires. The town developed modestly, with only slight extension of its outer streets. Major industrial development in the 18th and 19th century took place elsewhere in the region, though Durham lay at the centre of its important coalfield. By the mid 19th century Durham had scarcely developed beyond its mediaeval plan established seven hundred years before. The improved north-south road communication being developed west of the City, coupled with the arrival of the railways led to urban development along the road network on the western side of the City, a trend consolidated with larger estate development earlier this century.
- 11.10** The recent growth of the City has been to the north and east but recent planning policy has successfully protected the woodland, countryside and open space within and around Durham so preserving its fragmented urban form - a crab-like development noted as early as the 17th Century, and still a very important and distinctive characteristic of the City Centre today.

ENVIRONMENTAL APPRAISAL

11.11 The peninsula monuments of the Castle and Cathedral are of sufficiently high architectural quality to be of major European significance, at the very least. What raises their status to that of a World Heritage Site beyond question is the spectacular setting in which they are placed - high on the plateau above the wooded backs of the Wear, visible from several panoramas that circle the City Centre. Therefore, in considering the urban environment of Durham, the critically important relationship to its topographical setting must be taken into account.

Topographical Setting

11.12 Before the Ice Age, where Durham now stands, the River Wear ran roughly north-south along a broad valley. Impeded by glacial deposits as the ice flow receded north, the river was forced to cut a new channel through the solid sandstone so forming the narrow steep-sided gorge around the Durham peninsula. In the older river valley the river continues to meander across a wide flood plain, with gently rising slopes beside it.

11.13 This geological formation provided the foundation of the City Centre and acted as a strong determinant of its urban form. The 'crab-like' growth of the town, focused on the peninsula, avoiding its steep banks, spread to the surrounding areas but avoided the flood plain, much of the wooded higher ground and the subsidiary valleys and water courses on the west of the City Centre.

11.14 The level plateau of the peninsula stands at 64m OD, whereas the surrounding circle of land rises higher to 80m OD at Pelaw Woods and at, clockwise round the City Centre, Old Durham (47m), Whinney Hill (82m), Mountjoy (85m), Mountjoy Reservoir (105m), Windmill Hill (100m), Observatory Hill (101m), Nevilles Cross (98m) and Wharton Park/Windy Hill (90m). These panoramas afford spectacular views of the Peninsula across the wide bowl of land that surrounds the City Centre, emphasising the importance of foreground and background areas in the 'great views' of Durham Cathedral and Castle. Policies contained in the Environment Chapter seek to safeguard the setting of the World Heritage Site.

11.15 The urban core of Durham is small and compact, but its outward development is controlled by the intrusion of flood plain, gorge and secondary steep sided valleys - which all succeed in fragmenting the pattern of urban growth. These 'green fringes' of undeveloped countryside - eg Pelaw Woods, Flass Vale, Observatory Hill etc. play a vital role in preventing urban coalescence and providing visually rich contrasts within the City Centre. The Riverbanks around the peninsula provide precisely the same experience, though their natural appearance belies their man-made origins.

11.16 These hills which surround Durham, when approached from the River Valley, effectively screen the City Centre, creating a natural wooded 'wall' - nowhere more successfully than at Great High Wood when approaching Durham from Shincliffe.

The Peninsula

- 11.17** The heart of the City Centre is the Peninsula dominated by the major monuments of Castle and Cathedral, enclosing a succession of open spaces, each of differing character and form. Movement between these spaces, though the Cathedral and its claustral buildings is a rich contrast of enclosure and exposure: Palace Green (public and formal) - The Cloisters (private and formal) - The College (private and informal). The Bailey is the spine road that serves the Peninsula, now a largely collegiate and university street, lively and narrow at its northern end near the town, quieter and more diverse spatially at the southern tip of the Peninsula. The finest and oldest of the City's buildings are found here, with sandstone used for the grander buildings, brick and render elsewhere with Welsh slate roofs predominating now over the older indigenous pantile and stone slate.
- 11.18** The Riverbanks are not visible from within the Peninsula, only by narrow incisions in the built fabric (Windy Gap, Dark Entry, Bow Lane) can the expansive views and visual contrasts be appreciated. The landform and woodland of the banks are the result of centuries of modification from industrial quarry and defensive moat, to the creation of a planned Romantic landscape to complement the setting of the Cathedral and Castle.

Market Place - Claypath

- 11.19** North of the Castle the mediaeval town has developed around the Market Place and spread via Framwelgate and Elvet Bridge onto the adjacent banks. This has long been the commercial centre of Durham - the break between Saddler Street and North Bailey, where the Northgate stood - being a land use division established and maintained for over eight hundred and seventy years. The townscape here is set on a more varied topography with narrow streets composed of equally narrow frontage buildings. The survival of the public vennels, down to the river (Drury Lane) or up to the base of the Castle mound (Moatside Lane) provides a network of quiet and interesting pedestrian routes. The initiative to open private vennels to create Saddler Yard is a trend to be welcomed. The focus of the commercial centre is the Market Place dominated by St Nicholas Church, Town Hall and Guildhall at its lower end and impressive bank buildings on higher ground to the south.
- 11.20** The severed link to Claypath, of comparatively recent origin, has been aggravated by the vacant sites created by the construction of the Through Road at North and South Claypath, and the former carpet factory site below on Walkergate. In contrast to the urban areas to the south the lack of pedestrian penetration into the large Freemans Place - Providence Row - Claypath area has long been a serious deficiency which the development initiatives will hopefully begin to redress. The architectural quality of this area, and the adjacent site of the former Ice Rink is extremely varied, but collectively it contains some of the most inappropriate and insensitive buildings in the City. Claypath continues its rise to the north east to the village green of Gilesgate, a route interrupted by the major road network in a neatly landscaped, if non-urban, fashion.

Millburngate - North Road - Crossgate - South Street

- 11.21** Across Framwelgate Bridge, the old town developed along South Street - Millburngate to Framwelgate, now a temporary open surface car park awaiting redevelopment and some form of re-uniting with the old streets. Opposite the National Savings Building, a large and ugly 1960's complex, occupies much of the river frontage segregating the old street of Sidegate and Crook Hall from its links with the old town.
- 11.22** Commercial development is concentrated in the award winning Millburngate Centre a skilful, impressive, if dated, example of major urban redevelopment. North Road, wider and more recent than most City Centre streets, continues to look cramped and cluttered with parked cars and passing buses. Though not a major shopping street nor any kind of tourist attraction, it is potentially a spacious and handsome street containing many worthy buildings, deserving a better setting and improved/restored facades. The newly renovated former Miners Hall, Classic Cinema and North Road Methodist Chapel are a few of the street's landmark buildings.
- 11.23** The junction of North Road with Crossgate, Millburngate and Framwelgate Bridge should be a place of vitality and urban vigour. Much has been lost although a mid 1990's redevelopment of the former Archibald's store, is a benchmark for the redevelopment of vacant sites that will restore the townscape including the bottom of South Street. Crossgate, Allergate and South Street all rise from here, and are primarily residential streets. Allergate is marred by car parking, whilst South Street has a splendid position on the crest of the river bank opposite the peninsula. Between those streets the large St Margaret's Cemetery provides invaluable open space in an informal and diverse manner, embracing allotment, formal cemetery and rolling grassland.

Elvet

- 11.24** Elvet Bridge on the east side of the peninsula leads to the generously spacious Old Elvet, so wide that its capacity to accommodate cars detracts from its grandeur. Five eighteenth century buildings line the street with the dramatic introduction of Old Shire Hall on its south side. At the top of the street, the partially concealed forecourt of the Crown Court offers a fine open space in need of restoration and tree thinning to enable the impressive Court facade to be better appreciated. Beyond, the Prison buildings rise to the south. New Elvet has lost much of its former mediaeval cohesiveness except at its northern end. Orchard House has restored a little of that feeling though earlier university development has ignored the street line and offers little that is distinguished. The exception is Dunelm House, a powerful brutalist building that, together with its neighbour Kingsgate Bridge, provides an exhilarating pedestrian route between buildings, out into open space over the river gorge and squeezing back onto the peninsula via the narrow Bow Lane.
- 11.25** South of New Elvet, Hallgarth Street and Church Street re-establish the residential character until the University South Road development is reached.

South of the Peninsula

- 11.26** Between the southern ends of South Street and Hallgarth Street the outer bank of the peninsula gives way to rising land with good woodland. Formerly small suburban villas and parkland, the area has been gradually developed, first in the nineteenth century by the re-established Durham School and more recently by major expansion of Durham University. The latter's South Road Science Buildings are occasionally distinguished, but more often not, while further south and spreading out into the parkland, the new colleges are generally well planned and generously landscaped.

EXISTING PROFILE

- 11.27** The City Centre contains a multiplicity of land uses and functions reflecting its status as both an administrative and commercial sub-regional centre and a nationally recognised ecclesiastical, tourist and educational centre.

Religion and Education

- 11.28** The Cathedral and University continue to dominate the southern part of the City Centre, both physically and in land use terms. The Cathedral and its associated monastic buildings provide a commanding presence on the Peninsula and, although recent University expansion has taken place elsewhere, its administrative headquarters and many of the older colleges and departments are still located within the Peninsula and Old Elvet.
- 11.29** These ecclesiastical and academic uses are well suited to the Peninsula for not only do the Cathedral Chapter and the University take a responsible attitude to the conservation of the historic area but their presence injects a complementary life and vitality into the complex of narrow streets, vennels and open spaces. There is, however, very limited scope for further building on the Peninsula. Most of the remaining spaces are very attractive and an integral part of its character, quite apart from the additional traffic and parking problems which would result from further development in this area.

Shopping

- 11.30** The City Centre shopping area referred to in Policy S1 encompasses North Road, Millburngate, Silver Street, the Market Place, Saddler Street, the new High Street and Elvet Bridge, of which Silver Street, High Street and the Market Place are the prime retail areas. The Prince Bishops Centre and the Millburngate Centre, which is located east of Framwelgate Bridge, are purpose-built and managed shopping centres. Traditional retailing in the City Centre is supplemented by the indoor market, which is located next to the Town Hall in the Market Place and is open six days a week.
- 11.31** Whilst the City Centre is attractive to shoppers and displays considerable vitality there is potential for enhancement and improvement based upon its attributes and the nature of its catchment. Townscape quality and topography constrain development opportunities, whilst the existence of alternative competing centres

within easy travelling distance (i.e. Metro Centre and Newcastle City Centre) and out of town developments increase the vulnerability of the City Centre.

Offices

- 11.32** Office development within the City Centre, ranges in size from major Government Departments, University administrative headquarters and local Government establishments to small individual office suites occupied by private firms and individuals. Whilst there is not a specific business district office development tends to be concentrated within the Elvet, Claypath, Framwelgate Waterside and Green Lane areas. The upper floors of premises within the City Centre Shopping Area also provide a limited amount of small office accommodation.

Leisure and Culture

- 11.33** The range of outdoor recreational activities available to the public in the City Centre relates primarily to boating and fishing with indoor activities restricted to swimming, snooker, ten pin bowling and health fitness.
- 11.34** The compactness of the City Centre, furthermore, ensures that it is most readily appreciated on foot. This is borne out by the thousands of residents and visitors who enjoy a variety of walks and guided tours along the riverbanks and through the historic streets and vennels.
- 11.35** Whilst the City Centre contains a range of pubs, restaurants, night clubs and a cinema it has hitherto lacked a diversity of cultural facilities usually associated with an historic university city such as an adequate theatre, a concert hall, and exhibition/conference or arts centre. The Cathedral is used on a frequent basis throughout the year for cultural events. The Town Hall is also used on a similar basis for antique fairs, concerts and functions. The University facility at Dunelm House is also similarly used for festivals and concerts. The Market Place is a well established venue for outdoor entertainment. The Millennium Project identified in Policy CC3 is expected to address this cultural deficiency by including a purpose-built, multi-purpose hall.

Housing

- 11.36** Housing is widely recognised a means of retaining and enhancing the vitality of the City Centre. New residential developments at Elvet Waterside, New Elvet, Lambton Street and Millburngate have helped to slow the decline in resident population within the area, which has taken place over the last 20 years. Research carried out in 1996 identified a strong demand for residential property within the City Centre from all sectors of the housing market and this trend is expected to continue over the Plan period. Policies H7 and H8 contained in the Housing Chapter seek to encourage further residential development within the City Centre. There is a particular demand for low-cost housing in the City Centre to satisfy the demand for temporary student accommodation without displacing or marginalising the housing needs of other sectors of the population.

Tourism

- 11.37** Durham attracts approximately 1.5 million visitors every year. Their visits are concentrated in the City Centre where the Cathedral, the Castle, the River and the high quality townscape are the main attractions. Although the number of visitors creates a significant economic benefit for the City in terms of both employment and income (particularly in relation to retailing and catering), it has the potential to create a detrimental impact upon the physical fabric of this very sensitive environmental area. Policies contained in the Environment, Transport and Tourism Chapters seek to address these issues.

Traffic and Parking

- 11.38** Traffic is the single most serious problem affecting the City Centre. Motorised transport is a way of life and without reasonable access and parking the area could not survive economically. However, unrestrained vehicular access would have a substantially detrimental impact on the historic environment, which the Council is seeking to protect and enhance. A balance must, therefore, be sought which can satisfactorily resolve these potentially conflicting issues. District Councils including Durham City Council work in partnership with Durham County Council and external organisations to prepare the Local Transport Plan (LTP). The Local Transport Plan is a five year plan which seek to meet social and economic needs, whilst protecting the environment. Chapter 6 (Transport) includes Policies, which seek to achieve this.
- 11.39** There are currently approximately 2,400 public and 2,500 private car parking spaces within the City Centre and its immediate environs. In addition, many of the streets on the periphery of the City Centre are used for parking by commuters and shoppers resulting in localised congestion and considerable disturbance to local residents.
- 11.40** Part of the City Centre (Framwelgate Bridge, Silver Street, the Market Place and Elvet Bridge) was pedestrianised in the mid 1970's. At that time it was one of the most extensive such schemes in the country. Since then various traffic management schemes have been introduced to improve conditions for pedestrians particularly in the Peninsula, North Road and Saddler Street areas. The Prince Bishops Centre has added significantly to the extent of the traffic-free shopping environment. More work is required to further improve pedestrian conditions in these areas. The Millennium Project and Walkergate proposals will provide new pedestrian areas linking Freemans Place with Claypath and the Market Place.

ISSUES

- 11.41** Emerging from the environmental appraisal of the City Centre and its land use/functional profile three key issues can be identified which the Plan needs to address:
- 11.42** The **first** relates to the need to maintain access to the City Centre and safe movement within it so that important functions and activities are sustained and its attractiveness as a place to visit is not unduly compromised. This can be achieved through:

- Ensuring that the area is adequately served by public transport with bus stops providing convenient access to the main shopping area.
- Having conveniently located and secure short-stay public parking as close as possible to the City Centre shopping area.
- Adopting an off-street public parking and pricing policy which gives priority to shoppers and visitors, whilst protecting residential amenity.
- Securing traffic management measures to restrict non-essential traffic from entering the area.
- Providing safe and conveniently located facilities for visitors arriving by coach.
- Maintaining a pleasant and safe environment for pedestrians (including people with impaired mobility, the elderly and those with young children).
- Providing adequate access and servicing for premises in the area.
- Improving facilities for cyclists as a means of encouraging an alternative mode of travel to, from and within the area.
- Improving information/directional signs and lighting.

11.43 The **second** key issue is the need to protect the vitality and viability of the City Centre so that it remains an attractive place to visit and competitive with neighbouring centres. This can be achieved through:

- Encouraging an appropriate balance of retail, commercial, residential and cultural uses in the area.
- Opposition to out of centre retail or commercial leisure development which undermine this key objective.
- Encouraging festivals, street entertainment, outdoor events, seasonal activities and temporary and permanent works of art.
- Exploring measures to provide a diverse and secure evening economy within the area.
- Exploring measures to achieve effective town centre management.
- Promoting greater public access to historic buildings.

11.44 The **third** key issue is the need to safeguard the intrinsic character and environmental quality of the City Centre. This can be achieved through:

- Protecting the World Heritage Site and its setting.

- Protecting Durham (City Centre) Conservation Area.
- Protecting the stock of the historic built environment.
- Ensuring new development is of the highest standard of design.
- Improving unsightly buildings and derelict sites.
- Protecting open spaces which have intrinsic value.
- Continuing to promote anti-litter measures, enforcing high standards of street cleaning and removing graffiti and fly posters.
- Controlling inappropriate outdoor advertising on buildings.
- Securing measures to reduce pollution
- Enabling where possible the appropriate use of vacant buildings and under-utilised property.

VISION

- 11.45** The City Centre is a well-established centre for employment, retailing, tourism, higher education and religion. In 1996, the Council approved a document, which focused attention on what makes the City Centre special and what needs to be done to maintain and build upon its strengths. It identified as its key vision the 'creation of a vibrant City Centre'. The elements identified by the Council for contributing towards this all-embracing vision of the City Centre are its attraction, accessibility, amenity and economic wellbeing.
- 11.46** Attraction identifies those elements of the Centre, which creates its attractiveness (ie its assets and strengths). They include the range and quality of retail establishments and employment opportunities; the historic environment; its overall compactness; the proximity to the River Wear; the availability of non retail services; the range of arts, cultural and leisure facilities; the range of facilities for visitors and the opportunities for residential development within the heart of an historic city.
- 11.47** Accessibility relates to the overall accessibility of the centre to all modes of travel (ie pedestrians, private cars, public transport, cyclists) as well as service vehicles and those with special needs.
- 11.48** Amenity is concerned with the quality of the overall townscape, the diversity of the buildings, the juxtaposition of hard and green spaces, the sense of place and the feeling of wellbeing associated with the general environment.
- 11.49** Economic well-being refers to the need to maintain, enhance and diversify the range of City Centre employment opportunities, strengthen its vitality and ensure sustained investment.

DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK FOR THE HEART OF DURHAM

- 11.50** The Development Framework for the Heart of Durham was prepared by David Lock Associates for the Durham City Partnership (Durham City Council, Durham County Council and English Partnerships) and was approved by the City Council, after public consultation, in September 1998. The Framework interprets the vision for the City Centre over a period of 15-20 years, well beyond the Local Plan period, and examines the kind of place the centre of the City has the potential to become. As such it examines both the urban design framework required to realise the City's potential and the range of development, regeneration proposals which will be created as a result. Because of the timespan of the Framework not all the proposals are immediate but its strength is that it can be implemented opportunistically as sites become available. It is of particular importance as it forms the basis for the City Council's economic and physical regeneration efforts prompted by the Millennium City Project referred to in Policy CC3.
- 11.51** The Local Plan embodies the principles of the Development Framework relating to land use issues but only allocates the sites specifically identified for development in the short and medium term.

LOCAL PLAN OBJECTIVES

- 11.52** The Council's objectives for the City Centre to be pursued through the Policies and Proposals contained in this and other Chapters of the Plan are:
- Improving the vitality and viability of the centre
 - Protecting and enhancing the historic environment
 - Protecting open spaces and areas of tranquillity
 - Improving the quality of life for people using the centre
 - Improving access and conditions for pedestrians, public transport, cyclists, delivery vehicles and private cars; and
 - Maintaining, enhancing and diversifying the range of employment opportunities.

Such objectives are consistent with the long-term Vision for the City Centre and the aims and objectives of the Council set out in its Corporate Plan.

POLICIES

- 11.53** Whilst the Policies in the Plan apply to the whole District, other than where specifically excepted, there are certain ones within the various topic Chapters which have been deliberately included to address a particular City Centre issue. These Policies are shown in Table 3. The Policies contained within this Chapter focus upon those elements of the City Centre relating to vitality, viability and development opportunities.

Table 3

POLICIES SPECIFICALLY RELATING TO THE CITY CENTRE	
ENVIRONMENT	
E3	World Heritage Site – Protection
E5	Protecting Open Spaces within Durham City
E6	Durham (City Centre) Conservation Area
E22	Conservation Areas
E23	Listed Buildings
E25	Nevilles Cross Battlefield
HOUSING	
H7	City Centre Housing
H8	Residential Use of Upper Floors
H16	Residential Institutions/Student Halls of Residence
EMPLOYMENT	
EMP12	Office Development – General
EMP15	Taxi Booking Offices
TRANSPORT	
T2	Road Proposals – Justification
T5	Public Transport
T7	Park and Ride
T8	Traffic Management
T11	City Centre Parking – Overall Strategy
T12	City Centre Parking – Management of Off-Street Car Parks
T13	City Centre Parking – New Sites
T14	City Centre Parking – Public Use of Private Non-Residential Car Parks
T15	Parking in Residential Areas
T16	Coach Parking
T20	Cycling – Provision of Cycle Parking
SHOPPING	
S1	A1 uses within the City Centre Shopping Area
S2A	A2 and A3 uses within the Primary Retail Area
S2B	A2 and A3 uses within the Secondary Retail Area
S3	Elvet Bridge

RECREATION AND LEISURE	
R7	Provision of Recreation Facilities – New Swimming Pool
R12	River Wear
R13	River Wear Walkway
TOURISM	
V1	Visitor Centre
V3	Tourist Facilities and Attractions within Settlement Boundaries
V5	Hotel Development at Framwelgate Waterside
CITY CENTRE	
CC1	Vitality and Viability
CC2	Development Opportunities – Specific Uses
CC3	Development Opportunities – Range of Uses
QUALITY OF DEVELOPMENT	
Q1	General Principles – Designing for People
Q2	General Principles – Designing for Accessibility
Q4	Pedestrian Areas
Q11	Shopfronts – Provision of New
Q12	Shopfronts – Retention of Existing
Q13	Satellite Dishes
Q14	Security Shutters
Q15	Art in Design
Q16	Advertisements – General Criteria

VITALITY AND VIABILITY

POLICY CC1 THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO PROTECT AND ENHANCE THE VITALITY AND VIABILITY OF THE CITY CENTRE BY:

- 1. PROMOTING A MIXTURE OF USES WITHIN THE AREA; AND**
- 2. SUSTAINING THE CITY CENTRE SHOPPING AREA IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICIES S1, S2A, S2B AND S3A; AND**
- 3. PROMOTING NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICIES H7 AND H8; AND**
- 4. INTRODUCING IMPROVEMENTS AS PART OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL**

COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMME OF TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT; AND

- 5. ENHANCING ACCESS TO AND WITHIN THE CITY CENTRE BY MEANS OTHER THAN THE PRIVATE CAR; AND**
- 6. PROMOTING DEVELOPMENT WHICH SEEKS TO ENHANCE THE AREA, BOTH DAY AND NIGHT, IN A MANNER WHICH IS SAFE, ACCESSIBLE AND FRIENDLY FOR ALL USERS.**

PROPOSALS WILL BE EXPECTED TO CONFORM TO THE PROVISIONS OF NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY GUIDANCE WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO THE 'SEQUENTIAL APPROACH'.

Justification

- 11.54** The City Centre is traditionally a location for a mixture of uses, which contribute to its vitality and viability. In recent years there has been a tendency for developers to reject mixed development on the strength of fiscal or legal advice for reasons of risk, liability and lack of flexibility. Particularly important is the range and quality of activities in town centres, and their accessibility to people living and working in the area.
- 11.55** PPG6 emphasises the positive impact a mixture of uses can have on a City Centre. Local authorities are encouraged to promote schemes that will add to vitality and viability by promoting a range of uses. Durham is fortunate that it has several redevelopment sites, which could provide such an opportunity during the Plan period. The 'sequential approach' as set out in PPG6 will be applied to major developments of a retail and leisure nature.
- 11.56** Whilst the City Council acknowledges that licensed premises form part of a socially vibrant City Centre, it recognises that their appropriateness as a land use, having regard to their likely impact upon amenity, highway safety and to some extent crime and disorder needs to be assessed according to material planning considerations. Proposals, therefore, relating specifically to the development of licensed premises within the City Centre Shopping Area, as defined by Inset Map 28, will be expected to conform to any Licensing Strategy approved by the City Council and adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance.
- 11.57** In addition to new development schemes Policy CC1 seeks to encourage the use of vacant and under utilised buildings for acceptable City Centre uses. Both PPG6 and PPG15 recognise that older buildings and the upper floors of shops may be suitable for conversion to residential use. This not only helps the maintenance of the buildings, but also brings residents back to live in the City Centre. Policies H7 and H8 of the Plan have been included to address this issue.
- 11.58** Access to the City Centre is a key issue since so many of the central functions of the City occur there. However, the Council recognises that there is a underlying

conflict between the need to preserve and enhance the historic and commercial character of the City Centre and the potential impact of unrestrained traffic growth. It is for this reason that the transport strategy identified in Chapter 6 will be implemented during the Plan period.

- 11.59** A significant proportion of the population wishing to use the City Centre are people with mobility problems. The Council is very much aware of the difficulties of negotiating standard kerbs, shop entrances and avoiding street furniture. Policies Q1, Q2 and Q4 set out in Chapter 12 (Quality of Development) seek to address these issues, although in a historic environment there will inevitably be a need to reconcile better access with the inflexibility of retained buildings and streetscape.
- 11.60** The importance of conveniently located car parks for shoppers and visitors to the overall wellbeing of the City Centre has already been identified in the Plan. Policies T7, T11 T12 and T13 in Chapter 6 (Transport) seek to pursue a Parking Strategy which gives priority to short stay parking within the core of the City Centre whilst encouraging the investigation into the establishment of Park and Ride facilities on the edge of the urban area to accommodate the needs of commuters and other long stay parking.
- 11.61** The Local Plan affords great weight to the importance of maintaining and enhancing the environmental quality of the City Centre as a means of contributing to its overall well-being. In this context, environmental quality relates not only to buildings and spaces but also to issues such as pollution, public safety and the creation of a pleasant ambience which can be enjoyed and appreciated by residents and visitors. Through its enabling role, the Council will seek to establish a programme of Town Centre Management, the importance of which is emphasised in PPG6. Environmental enhancement will be a major element of this Management and the following areas have been identified as those which should be afforded priority during the Plan period:
- 11.62 North Road** is an area of mixed uses which has suffered from retail decline as a result of the gravitation of the traditional shopping core of the City Centre towards the Market Place accentuated by the opening of the Prince Bishops Centre in October 1998. The Donaldson's Study, published in 1997 noted that retail vacancy levels were disproportionately high in this part of the City Centre. The situation since then has remained unchanged although there has been a tendency for an increasing number of food and drink operators to express interest in becoming established in North Road. This tendency, if continued, will accelerate change to the character of the area reinforcing its role, westwards from the Millburngate Centre, as a secondary retail area. This decline of traditional retailing is compounded by the environmental conditions within North Road which is the only major shopping street in the City Centre still dominated by traffic in general and by buses in particular. There is considerable pedestrian/vehicle conflict resulting from narrow pavements and inadequate pedestrian safety measures as well as traffic congestion. The buses and taxis generate vehicle pollution and loss of air quality. Preliminary action has been initiated to address these problems and create a more pedestrian friendly environment. The area has been targeted for grant assistance through various townscape restoration schemes in partnership with English Heritage and Durham County Council.

11.63 Lower Claypath is that area between Providence Row and the Market Place. It suffers as a result of being separated from the Market Place by the A690 'through road'. It is an area of mixed uses which in recent years has become a popular focus for restaurants and pubs. However, a former cinema (The Palladium), a large and dominant building, has remained empty for a number of years and a vehicle repair garage has a large open area to the rear which is unsightly and under-used and its frontage detracts from the street scene. It is anticipated that the Millennium City Project which is located within this part of the City Centre will act as a catalyst in the revitalisation of the area by introducing a variety of new cultural, civic and community uses and providing new improved pedestrian links with the Market Place.

11.64 Saddler Street and Elvet Bridge are important gateways to the peninsula and the World Heritage Site. They are frequented by tourist and visitors to the City and although Elvet Bridge has been pedestrianised Saddler Street is very narrow and suffers from acute vehicular/pedestrian conflict. Durham County Council and Durham City Council are investigating the feasibility of improving the environmental quality of the area by removing non-essential traffic thus improving pedestrian safety. It is acknowledged, however, that such improvements must be tempered with the need to provide for essential servicing and vehicle access to the various occupiers of property on the Peninsula including the Cathedral Chapter, the University of Durham and the Choristers School.

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

11.65 The sites identified in Policies CC2 and CC3 will, in most cases, be the subject of detailed development briefs providing guidance on such matters as layout, massing, scale, materials, parking and landscaping.

POLICY CC2 THE FOLLOWING SITES IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP ARE ALLOCATED FOR THE USES SPECIFIED BELOW:

- a) **FRAMWELGATE WATERSIDE - HOTEL (~~SEE POLICY V5~~)**
- b) **WALKERGATE - COMMERCIAL LEISURE AND CAR PARK**

Justification

a) Framwelgate Waterside

11.66 This comprises two adjacent sites covering a total of 1.3ha. The smaller site (0.3ha) is owned by British Gas. It is an awkward shape in an elevated position overshadowed by the adjacent Department of National Savings building. The site has recently been decontaminated prior to development. The larger site (0.9ha) is owned by Northern Electric and was used as a sub-regional depot and is now vacant. Whilst it has a good river frontage, its development potential is restricted by the adjacent sub-station which would be extremely costly to relocate.

11.67 These sites at Framwelgate Waterside have been identified in the Development Framework for the Heart of Durham as being suitable for a new hotel (see Policy V5 Detailed planning permission for the development of a four storey hotel and car park of the Framwelgate Waterside site was granted in September 2000. The provision of the new footbridge and cycle link proposed within the Millennium Scheme linking Framwelgate Waterside with Walkergate Riverside redevelopment will create a new direct pedestrian link between this area and the historic core of the City.

b) Walkergate

11.68 This site covers 1.2ha and is owned by the Council. In the late 1990's it was used as a temporary car and coach park for vehicles displaced during the redevelopment of Leazes Bowl by Boots Properties Plc. In accordance with Policies CC2ac and T13 coach parking will be relocated to the Sands Car Park. With pedestrian linkages to the adjoining Millennium site (see Policy CC3a), leisure proposals approved in mid 1999 for Walkergate present an ideal opportunity for new commercial leisure development to complement the range of community and cultural facilities being created in the area. These include a multiplex cinema, health and fitness centre, music venue, restaurants and family entertainment facilities. This would accord with the 'sequential approach' relating to the location of such facilities as set out in Policy S9. A new multi-storey car park will be provided to serve this development and the adjacent Millennium City Project.

11.69 The site is currently used as a surface car park and is located next to the Indoor Bowling Alley (former Durham Ice Rink). The existing car park will be retained, its capacity, however, is likely to be reduced. It is anticipated that this loss will be offset by the comprehensive redevelopment of Framwelgate Waterside, to include hotel and parking facilities. The remainder of the Sands Car Park will be reconfigured in order to incorporate a new coach park facility and to enable substantial landscaping, thereby providing a high quality environmental setting for the development of the adjacent Walkergate and Millennium sites, and improving pedestrian access to the riverside.

POLICY CC3 THE FOLLOWING SITES IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP ARE ALLOCATED FOR THE RANGE OF LAND USES SPECIFIED BELOW:

- a) **PROVIDENCE ROW – FORMER SORTING OFFICE - RESIDENTIAL/OFFICES**
- b) **LOWER CLAYPATH – MIXED USES (CLASS A2, A3, C1 AND C3)**
- c) **SWIMMING BATHS – RESIDENTIAL/ EDUCATIONAL/HEALTH/LEISURE**
- d) **BACK SILVER STREET – BAR/RESTAURANT/ RESIDENTIAL**
- e) **SOUTH STREET LIBRARY - RESIDENTIAL**

Justification

a) Providence Row (Former Sorting Office)

11.70 This prominent north facing site is located at the junction of Providence Row and Walkergate. The Sorting Office was closed in 1995 and relocated to Belmont Industrial Estate. The site has remained vacant and the existing buildings are of no architectural merit. Whilst residential use would be appropriate, the site also has potential for limited office development.

b) Lower Claypath (Millennium Site – Providence Row)

11.71 This is an amalgam of sites and properties located on the northern side of Lower Claypath between the Millennium site and Providence Row, some of which are currently in use and some are vacant. They all have potential for redevelopment as part of the revitalisation of the Claypath area. They have been grouped together under this Policy and include the former Gas Board office and shop, the former Palladium Cinema, the existing Kwik-Fit Garage, and the British Telecom Exchange. Although any redevelopment proposal would need to be the subject of environmental constraints set out in Policy E6 the uses of land and premises in the Claypath area for either offices (Class A2), restaurants (Class A3), hotel (Class C1) or housing (Class C3), or a mixture thereof, is considered appropriate provided that no single use dominates the area.

c) Swimming Baths

11.72 This site contains the only public baths within the District. The replacement of this outdated facility on a new location within the City Centre is a priority of the Council in accordance with Policy R7. The site has an attractive river frontage and is surrounded by University owned car parks. The site's potential redevelopment for either, or a mixture of, residential, educational, health or leisure uses would be acceptable in principle. Its development potential could, however, be enhanced if the adjoining University owned land was included as part of a more comprehensive proposal. The loss of the University Car Park would need to be taken into account in any redevelopment proposal involving this larger area. Until such time as a replacement facility is available or detailed redevelopment proposals are implemented on the site, it is intended that the Durham Swimming Baths remain in its present use.

d) Back Silver Street

11.73 This site has an attractive long river frontage opposite the Millburngate Shopping Centre. It is a visually prominent site which has the potential for development as pub/restaurant (Class A3) or residential (Class C3) use. Such proposals would add to the vitality of this part of the City Centre and will complement the proposals for the nearby Millennium Site (Policy CC3a), Walkergate (Policy CC2b) and the Sands Car Park (Policy CC2c).

e) South Street Library

- 11.75** This site is currently occupied by the City's Central Library, which is to be relocated into larger premises as part of the Centre for Learning within the Millennium City Project on North Claypath. Vehicular access via Crossgate and South Street is restricted. It lies adjacent to an existing residential development completed in the 1980's and has a substantial river frontage. The Development Framework for the Heart of Durham identified the site as being suitable for high quality housing and this is reflected with the allocation set out in Policy CC3.

12 QUALITY OF DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCTION

- 12.1** This Chapter is concerned with the quality of development. It embodies a series of all-embracing design and locational principles which will be applicable to all forms of new development.

GENERAL BACKGROUND

- 12.2** The City of Durham is widely acknowledged for the quality of its natural and built environment. The Council wishes to ensure, therefore, that all new development and re-development is of the highest design standard in order that the overall character and setting of the City and its environs are maintained.
- 12.3** Significant views and elements of the skyline surrounding the City Centre should be protected as these are fundamental to the character of Durham. Development should have regard to the overall principles of sustainability with new buildings designed to be functional, attractive and durable. Development must have regard to the requirements of its users over its lifetime and it should also be designed for successful assimilation into the local environment in a manner which does not have a significant detrimental effect on the amenity of the occupiers of adjoining or nearby property.
- 12.4** New development should incorporate energy conservation features. Energy efficiency should be an integral aspect of all new development; vital to help reduce the demand on non-renewable fossil fuels and create a lifestyle which is self-sustaining.
- 12.5** In order to reduce the dependence upon car use and subsequently reduce the levels of carbon dioxide emission which contribute towards global warming, new development should be capable of being served by public transport routes thus ensuring that they are accessible to all sections of the community. Provision should also be made, for safe and direct access for pedestrians and cyclists to facilitate other sustainable modes of transport. It is, however, recognised that travelling by private car is likely to remain a significant element of modern life and, therefore, adequate vehicular access will be required in association with most development.
- 12.6** The built environment can influence criminal behaviour and environmental design and planning can play an important part in crime prevention. The Council will therefore consult with the Police Architectural Liaison Officer on certain applications, especially those involving large numbers of people or properties, where there is potential to eliminate or reduce criminal activity through the adoption of appropriate measures at the design stage.
- 12.7** New developments should, wherever possible, include areas of amenity open space and landscaping to create a pleasant environment. Where development is located on the edge of built up areas, potential trespass problems should be

minimised by ensuring that it is planned to prevent any easy access onto land by good design and the provision of buffer zones. In accordance with advice from English Heritage, the City Council will seek to ensure that, wherever possible, new development takes note of and is informed by, historic settlement patterns and development of the District.

LOCAL PLAN OBJECTIVES

12.8 The Council's objectives for quality to be pursued through the Plan's Policies are to ensure that new development:

- Has due regard to the principles of sustainability and energy conservation.
- Is designed to a high standard.
- Can be readily assimilated within the local environment.
- Provides for the varied need of different groups of users.
- Does not adversely affect the amenities of the occupants of nearby properties.
- Makes adequate provision for accessibility by all modes of travel.
- Has regard to crime prevention.

12.9 Developers will be expected to take into account the design principles embodied within the Policies contained in this Chapter of the Plan when Proposals are brought forward for consideration by the Council.

POLICIES

NEW DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL PRINCIPLES)

POLICY Q1 THE LAYOUT AND DESIGN OF ALL NEW DEVELOPMENT SHOULD TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE REQUIREMENTS OF USERS. IT WILL BE EXPECTED TO INCORPORATE THE FOLLOWING AS APPROPRIATE:

- 1. PERSONAL SAFETY AND CRIME PREVENTION; AND**
- 2. THE ACCESS NEEDS OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES, THE ELDERLY AND THOSE WITH CHILDREN; AND**
- 3. THE PROVISION OF TOILET FACILITIES, PUBLIC SEATING, AND SIGNING WHERE APPROPRIATE.**

Justification

- 12.10** Good design practice in new development, can not only aid in the prevention of crime but can increase personal safety and help reduce the fear of crime. Examples of such measures include the need to ensure that access points should be limited: public spaces should be designed to ensure that they can be surveyed and easily maintained, and wherever possible all areas should be well lit. Care should be taken to avoid sharp bends, dark recesses and restricted views.
- 12.11** New development should be designed to be accessible to all potential users. Particular consideration should be given to the needs of people with different disabilities (e.g. people in wheelchairs or with walking difficulties, people with impaired vision or hearing), the elderly and those with young children in pushchairs. For example, buildings open to the public should have level access or else should incorporate ramps and handrails in their entrance design.
- 12.12** In any major development which is likely to attract large numbers of people (such as the Millennium City Project and the Walkergate Commercial Leisure Development), well-designed and easily accessible public toilet facilities and seating should, wherever possible, be incorporated. Restrained but adequate information signage should also be included so that people can familiarise themselves with the development.

POLICY Q2

THE LAYOUT AND DESIGN OF ALL NEW DEVELOPMENT SHOULD TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE REQUIREMENTS OF USERS. IT WILL BE EXPECTED TO EMBODY THE PRINCIPLE OF SUSTAINABILITY AND TO INCORPORATE THE FOLLOWING AS APPROPRIATE:

- 1. MEASURES TO MINIMISE CONFLICT BETWEEN PEDESTRIANS, CYCLISTS AND MOTOR VEHICLES; AND**
- 2. MEASURES TO MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT SERVICES AND USERS; AND**
- 3. SATISFACTORY MEANS OF ACCESS AND MANUEOVERING FOR VEHICLES SERVICING THE DEVELOPMENT; AND**
- 4. PROVISION OF CAR AND CYCLE PARKING IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY T10; AND**
- 5. PROVISION OF PARKING SPACE FOR VEHICLES USED BY PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES CLOSE TO ENTRANCES OF BUILDINGS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC; AND**
- 6. EFFECTIVE ACCESS AT ALL TIMES FOR EMERGENCY VEHICLES; AND**

7. TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES.

Justification

- 12.13** Policy Q1 has addressed the needs of users in the design and layout of new development. This Policy seeks to ensure that careful consideration is also given to the access requirements of pedestrians, cyclists, public transport, cars and emergency vehicles in the design and layout of new development. In order to ensure that development proposals are able to accommodate long term changes in travel behaviour, in accordance with Policy 44 of the Durham County Structure Plan, Policy Q2 of the Local Plan makes specific reference to the principle of sustainability. Compliance with this principle will address the need to encourage the design and layout of new development to allow for access by less environmentally intrusive forms of transport.
- 12.14** Footpaths and cycle routes incorporated within a development proposal should be designed with personal safety in mind and should be located so as to result in minimum conflict with motor vehicles.
- 12.15** All new development should include appropriate provision for vehicular access together with parking and manoeuvring space that is both safe and adequate for the needs of the particular use of the proposal. New development which is to be serviced by public transport (e.g. the new District General Hospital should be laid out to enable buses to turn without reversing. It is important to ensure that effective access can be maintained at all times for emergency vehicles in the design and layout of new development.
- 12.16** The Council's car and cycle parking standards and recommendations for reserved spaces for disabled parking provision will be set out in Supplementary Planning Guidance. Policy T20 addresses the issues of cycle parking throughout the District.

EXTERNAL PARKING AREAS

POLICY Q3 **EXTERNAL PARKING AREAS PROVIDED AS PART OF A NEW DEVELOPMENT SHOULD BE LANDSCAPED, ADEQUATELY SURFACED, DEMARCATED, LIT AND SIGNED. LARGE SURFACE CAR PARKS SHOULD BE SUB-DIVIDED INTO SMALL UNITS. LARGE EXPOSED AREAS OF SURFACE, STREET AND ROOFTOP PARKING ARE NOT CONSIDERED APPROPRIATE.**

Justification

- 12.17** Car parks can be visually intrusive, particularly if they cover large areas. In order to minimise their environmental impact, the Council will seek to ensure, wherever possible, large areas of open car parking are sub-divided into smaller units and substantial landscaping is incorporated into their design and layout. Large exposed areas of surface, street and rooftop parking are considered inappropriate.

PEDESTRIAN AREAS

POLICY Q4 **PEDESTRIAN AREAS AND PUBLIC SPACES SHOULD BE LAID OUT AND DESIGNED WITH GOOD QUALITY MATERIALS IN A MANNER WHICH:**

- 1. REFLECTS THE CHARACTER OF THE STREETScape; AND**
- 2. SEEKS TO ACHIEVE A CO-ORDINATED APPROACH TO PAVING, STREET LIGHTING, SIGNS, STREET FURNITURE, ROAD CROSSING POINTS AND LANDSCAPING; AND**
- 3. HAS REGARD TO THE GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN SET OUT IN POLICIES Q1 AND Q2.**

Justification

- 12.18** The design of pedestrian areas and public spaces incorporating the principles of public safety and accessibility referred to in Policies Q1 and Q2 enables members of the public to move around in safety and encourages greater use to be made of them.
- 12.19** The use of good quality materials and co-ordinated street furniture enhances the appearance of the City Centre and the district and local centres. They also engender a pride of place and add to the vitality of the area. Careful consideration needs to be given to the location of planters, signposts and seating to ensure that they do not clutter or impact upon the environment and create an obstruction to pedestrian movements.
- 12.20** There are many design features that can assist people with disabilities and those with pushchairs to move around more easily e.g. well designed and located dropped kerbs, tactile paving at pedestrian crossings, and pelican crossings with audio warnings.
- 12.21** The provision of good lighting is essential when considering personal safety and security within pedestrian areas and public spaces.

LANDSCAPING

General

POLICY Q5 **ALL NEW DEVELOPMENT WHICH HAS AN IMPACT ON THE VISUAL AMENITY OF THE AREA IN WHICH IT IS LOCATED WILL BE REQUIRED TO INCORPORATE A HIGH STANDARD OF LANDSCAPING IN ITS OVERALL DESIGN AND LAYOUT.**

Justification

12.22 New developments should include areas of landscaping in order to create a pleasant environment, soften the edge of the development and screen unsightly areas. Landscaping also assists in reducing air pollution and the effect of noise on neighbouring properties. Landscaping schemes must be planned as an integral part of the proposal and should include an appropriate range of indigenous species, reflecting the character of the locality and surrounding development. A high standard of landscaping will be expected particularly around development in the countryside and the periphery of settlements. In some cases an element of structural landscaping in accordance with Policy Q6 may be considered appropriate.

Structural Landscaping

POLICY Q6 **ALL NEW DEVELOPMENT LOCATED ON THE OUTER EDGE OF SETTLEMENTS OR EXPOSED SITES WILL BE REQUIRED TO INCLUDE PERIPHERAL STRUCTURAL LANDSCAPING WITHIN THE SITE IN ORDER TO MINIMISE ANY ADVERSE VISUAL IMPACT OF THE PROPOSAL.**

Justification

12.23 Structural landscaping helps to assimilate new proposals into their immediate locality. In order to be effective it will usually take the form of substantial belts of tree planting and possibly mounding with associated shrub planting of a depth appropriate to the scale of the development and its location. This should be designed to provide an attractive setting to new developments particularly on the fringes of built up areas. Structural landscaping can also enhance existing views from both within and to/from a site, create new wildlife habitats and help to baffle noise alongside major transport routes. Examples where the provision of structural landscaping is considered appropriate include:

- Belmont Prestige Industrial Estate
- Meadowfield Industrial Estate
- Belmont Business Park
- Aykley Heads Business Park
- Durham Science Park
- Mount Oswald
- Dryburn District General Hospital
- Housing development south of Station Road, West Rainton

- The long term prestige industrial/business site south of Bowburn

INDUSTRIAL AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

POLICY Q7 THE SITING, DESIGN AND EXTERNAL APPEARANCE OF ALL NEW INDUSTRIAL AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT WILL BE REQUIRED TO:

- 1. BE OF A STANDARD APPROPRIATE TO THE DESIGNATED AREA WITHIN WHICH IT IS LOCATED; AND**
- 2. HAVE REGARD TO POLICIES Q1 AND Q2.**

Justification

- 12.24** In order to promote an attractive image of the District and thereby stimulate inward investment, it is important that new industrial and business areas are laid out and designed to a standard appropriate for their designation as well as taking account of the safety and amenity of those working and visiting the area and those living nearby. This is of particular relevance to the City of Durham with its concentration of high quality industrial, research, technical and business developments.
- 12.25** Industrial estates, in particular, can generate large numbers of heavy, slow-moving vehicles. Roads must be of an adequate width to allow for lorries turning into and out of the estate. Wherever possible, there should also be room to accommodate pedestrians and cyclists safely and space provided for buses to stop and to turn without reversing. The Council's parking standards for industrial and business premises will be set out in Supplementary Planning Guidance. It is expected that the general principles of design set out in Policies Q1 and Q2 will also be incorporated into new industrial and business development.
- 12.26** The Council will expect the standard of landscaping and the design of new buildings to reflect the designation of the estate as set out in Policy EMP1, especially with regard to Business Parks and Prestige Industrial Sites. Where it is considered appropriate, structural landscaping will be required in accordance with Policy Q6.

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Layout

POLICY Q8 THE LAYOUT OF NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT WILL BE REQUIRED TO:

- 1. HAVE A CLEARLY DEFINED ROAD HIERARCHY WHICH SHOULD BE DESIGNED TO EXCLUDE THROUGH TRAFFIC, EXCLUDING CYCLISTS AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT, AND INCORPORATE APPROPRIATE TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES; AND**

2. **PROVIDE ADEQUATE AMENITY AND PRIVACY FOR EACH DWELLING, AND MINIMISE THE IMPACT OF THE PROPOSAL UPON THE OCCUPANTS OF EXISTING NEARBY AND ADJACENT PROPERTIES; AND**
3. **PROVIDE ADEQUATE AREAS OF SAFE, ACCESSIBLE AND ATTRACTIVE OPEN SPACE IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY R2; AND**
4. **PROVIDE ALL SERVICES UNDERGROUND; AND**
5. **HAVE WELL DESIGNED MEANS OF ENCLOSURE; AND**
6. **TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE NEED TO RETAIN EXISTING FEATURES OF INTEREST WITHIN THE SITE INCLUDING TREES AND HEDGEROWS; AND**
7. **BE APPROPRIATE IN SCALE, FORM, DENSITY AND MATERIALS TO THE CHARACTER OF ITS SURROUNDINGS; AND**
8. **HAVE REGARD TO THE PRINCIPLES OF ENERGY CONSERVATION SET OUT IN POLICY U14; AND**
9. **HAVE REGARD TO POLICIES Q1 AND Q2; AND**
10. **MAKE THE MOST EFFICIENT USE OF THE LAND.**

Justification

- 12.27** The overall aim in designing new housing development should be to provide a safe and pleasant environment in which to live. Housing areas should be designed with the aim of creating neighbourhood communities. Appropriate recognition should be given to the links with existing residential areas, local services and facilities without the necessity for use of private vehicles.
- 12.28** The design of buildings and use of materials in new residential development must respect the general character of its surroundings. This does not necessarily mean it should mimic neighbouring development. The appropriate use of materials can help integrate a development into the existing fabric.
- 12.29** Estate roads should be designed to preclude through traffic and to keep vehicle speeds low, in the interests of highway safety and to reduce pollution from vehicle noise and fumes. In large developments road layouts should be designed to enable new housing to be served by public transport with space provided for buses to stop and to turn without reversing.

- 12.30** The design of paths and open spaces in housing areas should attempt to create a 'sense of place' that can be identified by the residents. This can be achieved by the use of alternative surface materials instead of tarmac and by locating play spaces, amenity areas and garage courts so that they are overlooked by housing. Wherever possible new footpaths should be separated from roads by verges and low shrubbery. Particular attention should be given to pedestrian safety at road junctions and where footpaths and roads meet. Policy Q8 should be applied in conjunction with Policies Q1, Q2, Q3 and Q5 with regard to designing out crime, the needs of disabled residents, accessibility, the layout of parking areas and internal landscaping.
- 12.31** Public open space should be provided within the housing site or nearby in accordance with the Council's minimum standard in order to provide for the recreational and leisure needs of the residents and to provide a high quality environment for the housing development. The Council's open space standard for new developments of over 10 houses are set out in Policy R2. Where appropriate, this can be achieved by means of planning agreements in accordance with Policy R2.
- 12.32** New houses should be laid out and designed to ensure the privacy of the occupants and to prevent overlooking. The main habitable rooms of houses should be capable of a good degree of privacy without resort to temporary curtains, blinds or screens. The required distance standards between buildings are as follows: window to window = 21 metres; window to blank two storey gable = 13 metres and window to blank single storey gable = 6 metres. Main rooms should also receive adequate sunlight and daylight. In designing housing developments a balance will have to be achieved between the needs to maintain privacy and to design for personal safety and security. The orientation of the dwellings, should wherever possible, be placed in order to maximise the principles of energy conservation in Policy U14.
- 12.33** The retention of existing good quality trees and hedgerows helps to give a feeling of maturity to a new housing estate. New trees and landscaping enhance the setting of a new housing area as well as providing shelter and thus helping to conserve energy. Replacement specimens should be provided where the removal of trees, shrubs or hedges is unavoidable. The provision of structural planting belts, as set out in Policy Q6, will be required where the impact of new development on adjacent land uses (or vice versa), or on a settlement boundary requires softening or screening. The use of indigenous deciduous species will be encouraged, with proper protection and maintenance being a condition of approval.
- 12.34** Means of enclosure such as boundary walls or fences should be designed as an integral part of the design of the housing development. Along boundaries that abut the highway, public footpaths or areas of open space, a well designed wall or fence will be required, that also gives adequate privacy.
- 12.35** All new housing should be designed to incorporate a high level of efficiency as regard the conservation of energy. Areas which should be looked at in this respect, include the optimum use of wall and roof insulation, the installation of modern controllable heating systems and double glazing.

- 12.36** In accordance with the guidance set out in paragraphs 54, 57 and 58 of PPG3, published in March 2000, it is important that developers think imaginatively about designs and layouts, which make the most efficient use of land without compromising the quality of the environment.

Alterations and Extensions

POLICY Q9 PROPOSALS FOR ALTERATIONS AND EXTENSIONS TO RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT:

- 1. THE DESIGN, SCALE AND MATERIALS ARE SYMPATHETIC TO THE MAIN DWELLING AND THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE AREA; AND**
- 2. WHEREVER POSSIBLE THE ALTERATION OR EXTENSION INCORPORATES A PITCHED ROOF; AND**
- 3. THE ALTERATION OR EXTENSION RESPECTS THE PRIVACY OF ADJOINING OCCUPIERS OF PROPERTY; AND**
- 4. THE ALTERATION OR EXTENSION WILL NOT CREATE A LEVEL OF MULTIPLE OCCUPATION CONTRARY TO POLICY H9.**

Justification

- 12.37** Many people wish to alter and extend their homes to meet changing domestic needs. Provided such extensions are sympathetically designed, do not detract from the character of the area, either urban or rural, and have no adverse effect on the amenity of neighbours, these will generally be approved. Particular care is needed, however, in the design of front extensions. Large box-style roof extensions are considered inappropriate. Pitched roofs should normally be incorporated into all forms of extension. When considering proposals, the scale of the extension will not be limited to a particular volumetric percentage increase. It will, however, have to remain subordinate to the dwelling.
- 12.38** Where the proposed extension or alteration involves the provision of additional bedroom accommodation, it may be considered appropriate for additional car parking to be required. Each proposal will be assessed on its merits.
- 12.39** It is important to ensure that any increase in the number of residents resulting from an extension to a dwelling does not adversely affect the amenity of nearby residents by creating a level of multiple occupancy contrary to the criteria set out in Policy H9.
- 12.39A** Where the proposed extension or alteration may impact upon the habitats of species of flora and fauna protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and

the Badgers Act 1991, then additionally, the Council will consider proposals under Policy E16.

Dormer Windows

POLICY Q10 PROPOSALS FOR DORMER WINDOWS WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT:

- 1. ROOF SPACES HAVE ADEQUATE EXISTING HEADROOM FOR A HABITABLE ROOM WITHOUT FURTHER EXTENSION; AND**
- 2. WINDOW DESIGN BEARS A RELATIONSHIP TO EXISTING FENESTRATION AND MATERIALS MATCH THE EXISTING PROPERTY; AND**
- 3. IT IS IN PROPORTION WITH THE EXISTING BUILDING AS A WHOLE AND THE ROOF IN PARTICULAR; AND**
- 4. THE DESIGN INCORPORATES A GABLED, HIPPED OR 'CATSLIDE' ROOF AND IS POSITIONED WELL BELOW THE RIDGELINE; AND**
- 5. IT DOES NOT RESULT IN ANY LOSS OF PRIVACY FOR SURROUNDING PROPERTIES.**

Justification

12.40 One means of extending a house within its present limits can be by making use of the roofspace. In older houses with traditional trusses and purlins there is often sufficient headroom to be able to create one or two additional rooms without having to extend the building. Care is needed with the design of dormer extensions to ensure that they do not dominate the roofscape of the dwelling. The use of a flat roofed dormer is rarely acceptable.

12.41 Planning permission is not always required for dormer windows, although in Conservation Areas, on listed buildings or when facing a highway they do require permission. All proposals for dormer windows will, however, be encouraged to meet the criteria set out in Policy Q10.

SHOPFRONTS

POLICY Q11 NEW SHOPFRONTS WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT THEY RESPECT THE SCALE, PROPORTION, MATERIALS AND CHARACTER OF THE BUILDING AND THE AREA IN WHICH THEY ARE LOCATED.

POLICY Q12 EXISTING SHOPFRONTS WHICH HAVE A DISTINCTIVE CHARACTER AND QUALITY AND MAKE A

CONTRIBUTION TO THE STREET SCENE SHOULD BE RETAINED.

Justification

- 12.42** The display of goods through well designed shopfronts which create an attractive environment is an essential element of the commercial activity of the City. Consequently, the pressure to modernise shopfronts is strong and constant. It is important that the design of a new shopfront, its proportion, scale and materials used, relate to both the building of which it is a part and to adjoining buildings. Corporate company styles can clash with the style and character of individual buildings and their surroundings. In particularly sensitive areas, such as the Durham (City Centre) Conservation Area, it is expected that businesses will be prepared to adapt corporate styles to respect the character of the area. The Council acknowledges, however, that there will be circumstances where a modern shopfront may be appropriate and can contribute to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. High quality, imaginative architectural design will be encouraged in such locations.
- 12.43** New shopfronts should be considered as part of the architectural composition of the building and the street, providing visible support to the building above, and generally including provision of an integral fascia sign and stallriser of traditional height. The important consideration is that the shopfront should be designed to respect the character of the building and area into which it is fitted. In modifying an existing shopfront or designing a new one, the needs of disabled and aged customers should be taken into consideration in accordance with Policy Q1.
- 12.44** Well designed sympathetic shopfronts can make a positive contribution to the appearance of the Durham (City Centre) Conservation Area, whilst those that are insensitive or obtrusive can damage it. The promotion of good shopfront design is, therefore, essential to the preservation and enhancement of the intrinsic character of Durham's City Centre.
- 12.45** In many of the District's settlements, as well as in some parts of the City Centre, traditional shopfront design features such as stallrisers, pilasters, mouldings, glazing bars and canopies, as well as original fascias, name-boards and signs still remain and make a valuable contribution to the architectural quality and character of the shopping areas. Wherever traditional shopfronts and features of merit survive, every effort should be made to retain them to enhance the character and attractiveness of these areas.

SATELLITE DISHES

POLICY Q13 PLANNING PERMISSION WILL BE GRANTED FOR SATELLITE DISHES ON RESIDENTIAL AND OTHER BUILDINGS, WHERE IT IS REQUIRED, PROVIDED THAT:

- 1. THERE IS NO ADVERSE VISUAL IMPACT ON THE BUILDING AND EXISTING STREET SCENE;**

2. **THERE IS NO ADVERSE VISUAL IMPACT ON THE CHARACTER OF CONSERVATION AREAS CONTRARY TO POLICIES E6 AND E22;**
3. **THERE IS NO VISUAL IMPACT ON THE SETTING AND APPEARANCE OF A LISTED BUILDING CONTRARY TO POLICY E23;**
4. **THERE IS NO ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE AMENITY OF NEIGHBOURING BUILDINGS;**

SHARED SYSTEMS SHOULD, WHEREVER POSSIBLE, BE INSTALLED ON BUILDINGS CONTAINING MORE THAN ONE DWELLING OR BUSINESS.

Justification

12.46 Most satellite dishes do not require planning permission provided that they comply with the following criteria currently contained in the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995:

- (i) the size of the dish does not exceed 90cm
- (ii) the dish would not project above the highest part of the roof
- (iii) there is only one dish on the property.

It should be noted that this legislation may be subject to change.

12.47 However, dishes which do not meet the criteria, require careful control in order to minimise their visual impact particularly in sensitive locations such as Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings. A proliferation of dishes on blocks of flats, offices or other mixed use buildings or within groups of buildings such as a farm conversion must be avoided.

SECURITY SHUTTERS

POLICY Q14 PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE INSTALLATION OF ROLLER SHUTTERS WILL ONLY BE GRANTED IF THE PROPOSAL DOES NOT HAVE AN ADVERSE IMPACT UPON:

1. **THE APPEARANCE OF THE BUILDING TO WHICH THEY ARE ATTACHED OR;**
2. **THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE AREA IN WHICH THEY ARE LOCATED.**

Justification

- 12.48** There are many cities and towns where the character and appearance of shopping areas has suffered from the installation of security shutters on commercial properties. Until now the impact of such shutters in the District has been fairly limited, but more extensive use could seriously undermine the character and attractiveness of the City Centre as well as many of the villages especially during evenings and weekends.
- 12.49** Some types of security shutter, particularly the solid roller type, can seriously detract from the appearance of a building. If they are adopted by a number of retail units in a street they can have a drastic effect upon the townscape in non-business hours when in the closed position. This is particularly damaging in Conservation Areas and on Listed Buildings. In developments which involve new retail outlets or shopfronts it is important that any necessary security arrangements are provided as part of the initial design proposals. On a new shopfront where the case for a security shutter or grille has been accepted, it will generally be practical to ensure that the roller bar is concealed within the shop or behind the fascia. The shutters themselves should be open grille, punched lath or perforated type.
- 12.50** On existing retail outlets the method of security will depend upon the type of retailer and the character of the area and its buildings. In Conservation Areas, on Listed Buildings and on buildings of high townscape value, the method of security should be as discreet as possible. Many premises have a channel already at the top and bottom of existing shopfronts which could be re-used for security measures. However, when the retailer is of the 'high risk' type such as a jeweller, the increased security requirements need to be acknowledged and balanced with protecting the character of both the building and area.

ART IN DESIGN

POLICY Q15 **THE COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE THE PROVISION OF ARTISTIC ELEMENTS IN THE DESIGN AND LAYOUT OF DEVELOPMENT. DUE REGARD WILL BE MADE IN DETERMINING PLANNING APPLICATIONS TO THE CONTRIBUTION THEY MAKE TO THE APPEARANCE OF THE PROPOSAL AND THE AMENITIES OF THE AREA.**

Justification

- 12.51** The incorporation of artistic elements into the design of buildings, spaces and landscapes can help to enhance design, creating an impression of social and cultural identity. Similarly, public art can also be an integral part of refurbishment and regeneration schemes throughout the District. It can assist in creating a sense of distinctiveness in a development particularly when local people have been involved in the process of design and selection. It can also help support the development of a viable local artistic community.
- 12.52** Artistic elements can take many different forms. It may be purely decorative relating to, for example the design of walls, floors, seats, railings, or other features of development such as carved stonework, stained or etched glass or murals. On

the other hand, it may enhance the setting of a building through imaginative landscaping or compromise independent features such as sculptures or water features. The inclusion of artistic elements is equally important for minor as well as major developments.

- 12.53** The principle of the 'percent for art' approach of encouraging developers to allow a pre-agreed proportion of the capital cost of development to the commission of work by creative artists for inclusion in the scheme is one which the Council will seek to support and adopt during the Plan period. Development proposals will, therefore, be assessed to determine whether there is evidence of added value in their design. The Council will also encourage the inclusion of the artistic community at the earliest possible stage of development planning.

ADVERTISEMENTS

General

POLICY Q16 **ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT WILL BE GRANTED FOR NON-ILLUMINATED AND ILLUMINATED SIGNS PROVIDED THAT THEIR SIZE, DESIGN, MATERIALS, COLOURING, AND IN THE CASE OF ILLUMINATED SIGNS, ON COMMERCIAL PREMISES FOR APPROPRIATE USES AND PARTICULAR OPENING HOURS, THEIR FORM OF ILLUMINATION WOULD NOT BE DETRIMENTAL TO VISUAL AMENITY OR HIGHWAY SAFETY.**

PARTICULAR ATTENTION WILL BE PAID TO THE IMPACT OF ADVERTISEMENTS UPON THE CHARACTER AND SETTING OF LISTED BUILDINGS AND THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF CONSERVATION AREAS IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICIES E6, E22 AND E23.

Justification

- 12.54** The display of advertisements is controlled under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992. These require that a formal application is made to the local authority for certain types of advertising display. The Council recognises the need for advertising by the business community and that many signs do not require consent. Those signs that do require consent from the Local Planning Authority, however, will normally be acceptable provided that they do not detract from the appearance of the premises themselves or from the immediate environment, especially in residential and Conservation Areas or do not impede upon highway safety.
- 12.55** The Council recognises the importance of advertisement design in preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of Conservation Areas. Well-designed appropriate advertisements can make a contribution to the character of such areas. At the same time a proliferation of signs can be unsightly, distracting and damaging to the appearance of the building, shopping street and area.

Advertisements, should be so designed and located to avoid conflict with the character of Conservation Areas and should reflect the advice set out in PPG15 (Planning and the Historic Environment) and PPG19 (Outdoor Advertisement Control).

- 12.56** The City Centre has an Area of Special Advertisement Control within which there are further limits on the location, number and size of advertisement that may be displayed. The Council will ensure that new adverts do not detract from the special character of the area. Legislation requires that such Areas of Special Advertisement Control are reviewed every five years.

Hoardings and Panels

POLICY Q17 ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT WILL ONLY BE GRANTED FOR HOARDINGS AND LARGE ADVERTISING PANELS WHEN THEY ARE NOT LOCATED:

- 1. WITHIN OR ON THE EDGE OF THE OPEN COUNTRYSIDE;**
- 2. WITHIN CONSERVATION AREAS;**
- 3. IN THE VICINITY OF LISTED BUILDINGS;**
- 4. IN PREDOMINANTLY RESIDENTIAL AREAS OR NEAR HOUSING;**
- 5. ON BLANK WALLS ADJACENT TO, OR SITES CLEARLY VISIBLE FROM, THE MAIN RADIAL ROUTES INTO THE CITY AND RAIL CORRIDORS ~~IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY E11;~~**
- 6. ON A SITE WHERE THE ADVERTISING WOULD BE DETRIMENTAL TO VISUAL AMENITY OR HAVE AN ADVERSE EFFECT ON HIGHWAY SAFETY.**

Justification

- 12.57** Large hoardings can in some circumstances serve to screen untidy sites or redevelopment sites for a temporary period. Generally, however, large hoardings and significant advance signing are considered to be detrimental to the character of both the countryside and the built environment within the District. It has been the policy of the Council over many years to remove existing large hoardings within Conservation Areas, from prominent sites and from the main radial routes into Durham by resisting renewals of planning permission. New proposals for large hoardings will be resisted where they are considered to detract from the visual amenity of the area.

13 UTILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

INTRODUCTION

- 13.1** This Chapter of the Local Plan relates to the provision of public utilities and infrastructure works. It covers such matters as telecommunications, transmission lines, pollution prevention, energy conservation and the use of renewable resources.

GENERAL BACKGROUND

- 13.2** The provision of public utilities and infrastructure work is essential to the wellbeing of the community. However, in an environmentally sensitive City such as Durham, the impact of these services needs to be carefully assessed so that their intrusion is minimised, wherever possible. This is of particular importance for proposals in the Green Belt, Areas of High Landscape Value and those which may affect the setting of the World Heritage Site.
- 13.3** The encouragement of energy conservation in the design and layout of development and the use of renewable resources reflects the city Council's commitment to the principle of sustainability as set out in its Environmental Charter.

LOCAL PLAN OBJECTIVES

- 13.4** The Council's objectives for public utilities and infrastructure works to be pursued through the Policies contained in this Chapter of the Plan are:
- to ensure that public utility services and infrastructure are provided to meet the needs of the District's population and that new development is adequately provided for.
 - to minimise the impact of infrastructure provision upon the environment, the landscape and the World Heritage site.
 - to have regard to the principles of sustainability and energy conservation.

POLICIES

PUBLIC UTILITIES

Telecommunications

- POLICY U1** **WHEN CONSIDERING APPLICATIONS FOR TELECOMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT, THE COUNCIL WILL GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION WHERE THE BENEFITS ARISING FROM THE DEVELOPMENT WOULD OUTWEIGH ANY ENVIRONMENTAL DAMAGE. THE**

FOLLOWING FACTORS WILL BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION:

- 1. THE SPECIFIC OPERATIONAL NEEDS AND LOCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS OF THE PROPOSAL; AND**
- 2. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROPOSAL AS PART OF A NATIONAL NETWORK; AND**
- 3. THE OPERATIONAL SUITABILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS OF ALTERNATIVE SITES; AND**
- 4. THE POSSIBILITY OF SHARED USE OF EXISTING SITES AND STRUCTURES; AND**
- 5. ASSOCIATED DEVELOPMENTS INCLUDING ACCESS ROADS AND ANCILLARY BUILDINGS; AND**
- 6. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE DESIGN OF THE EQUIPMENT AND THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS; AND**
- 7. THE ADEQUACY OF SCREENING TO THE GROUND STATION; AND**
- 8. THE EFFECTS ON THE OPENNESS OF THE GREEN BELT; AND**
- 9. THE ADEQUACY OF ARRANGEMENTS TO ENSURE THE REMOVAL OF REDUNDANT EQUIPMENT AND THE RESTORATION OF THE SITE.**

PROPOSALS WITHIN STATUTORY DESIGNATED AREAS WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE THERE ARE NO ALTERNATIVE SUITABLE SITES AVAILABLE AND THERE IS A PROVEN NATIONAL NEED FOR THE DEVELOPMENT.

POLICY U2

THE COUNCIL WILL NOT PERMIT TELECOMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT WHICH WOULD HAVE A DETRIMENTAL VISUAL IMPACT UPON THE SETTING OF THE WORLD HERITAGE SITE IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY E3.

Justification

- 13.5** In line with Government advice contained in PPG8 (Telecommunications), the Council is committed to facilitating the growth of new and existing telecommunications systems, in the light of the changing technologies involved. It recognises, however, that the industry benefits from a considerable level of de-regulation and large telecommunication developments such as new masts and other large structures can have a significant visual impact upon the landscape particularly in areas of such environmental sensitivity as Durham City. Often, due to operational requirements, developments have to be located in elevated positions, thereby exacerbating their impact on the environment. Careful consideration needs to be given to the impact of telecommunication development on the setting and character of the City and in particular to its effect on important views. Proposals which have a visual impact upon of the setting of the World Heritage Site will be resisted.
- 13.6** PPG8 and Durham County Structure Plan (Policy 47) seek to protect statutory designated sites, including Green Belts, Conservation Areas and Sites of Special Scientific Interest, from impact of telecommunications developments, particularly in terms of height, siting and design. The Council will, therefore, only consider telecommunications developments in these sensitive locations when there is no alternative suitable site available and the benefits arising from the development to the local community and the national economy outweigh any environmental damage.
- 13.7** The proximity of telecommunications facilities in relation to residential areas can give rise to localised problems during installation and routine servicing. Considerable public disquiet about potentially harmful health effects arising from the radiation emitted from these facilities is acknowledged. Whilst there is no evidence that precautions are necessary to distance installations from dwellings, schools or other uses, this issue is subject to ongoing monitoring.
- 13.8** The Council will seek to encourage the shared use of existing telecommunications facilities, wherever possible, in order that a proliferation of masts is avoided. Applicants will be expected to provide evidence that they have explored the possibility of alternative sites including the erection of antennae on existing buildings, masts or structures, although there may be occasions where the degree of prominence which would result, renders these locations inappropriate.
- 13.9** The Council will encourage early consultation with operators to enable the requirements of telecommunication networks and the routing and phasing of network development to be taken into account.

Transmission Lines

POLICY U3 PROPOSALS FOR OVERHEAD POWER LINES SHOULD HAVE PARTICULAR REGARD TO THE EFFECT ON:

- 1. THE CONTRIBUTION WHICH LAND IN THE GREEN BELT MAKES TO THE SETTING AND SPECIAL CHARACTER OF DURHAM CITY; OR**

2. AREA OF HIGH LANDSCAPE VALUE; OR
3. THE WORLD HERITAGE SITE; OR
4. CONSERVATION AREAS OR SITES OR BUILDINGS OF PARTICULAR HISTORIC, ARCHAEOLOGICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST; OR
5. DESIGNATED SITES OF NATURE CONSERVATION; OR
6. EXISTING OR ALLOCATED RESIDENTIAL AREAS; OR
7. AREAS OF FORMAL RECREATION, PARKS AND PUBLIC OPEN SPACES.

IN FORMULATING PROPOSALS THE ELECTRICITY PROVIDER SHALL DO WHAT IT REASONABLY CAN TO MITIGATE ANY EFFECT ON THESE AREAS.

IN PARTICULARLY SENSITIVE LOCATIONS, THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK THE UNDER-GROUNDING OF LOW VOLTAGE (132 kV AND BELOW) POWER LINES.

Justification

13.10 Although the Council is only a statutory consultee under the powers of the Electricity Act 1989, it recognises that overhead power lines can be visually prominent and damaging to the landscape especially within the Green Belt, Conservation Areas and Areas of High Landscape Value. It also recognises that the impact of power lines upon the amenity of local residents living close to them make it desirable to route them away from residential areas. In view of the substantial practical, technical and cost disadvantages involved, the undergrounding of high voltage power lines (275 kV and above) will only be sought in exceptional circumstances. In particularly sensitive locations, however, the Council will seek the undergrounding of low voltage (132 kV and below) power lines.

13.11 The Council recognise that sensitive nature conservation sites could be adversely affected by the undergrounding of power lines. Criteria 5 of Policy U3 seeks to protect the nature conservation interests of these areas in compliance with Policies E16-20 of the Plan, except where such undergrounding will affect nature conservation sites, or areas of high archaeological or historic interest.

Underground Services

POLICY U4 THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK THE PROVISION OF ADEQUATE UNDERGROUND DUCTING IN NEW

DEVELOPMENT, TO ENABLE ALL FUTURE SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED UNDERGROUND.

Justification

- 13.12** Most services are routed underground and cause no visual disturbance. However overhead electricity supply lines and telephone lines and associated poles and pylons can adversely affect the visual environment. In all new developments, therefore, the Council will expect these services to be sited beneath the ground. Where it is considered appropriate, the Council will encourage Statutory Undertakers to place existing overhead services underground.

POLLUTION PREVENTION

General

POLICY U5 PLANNING PERMISSION FOR DEVELOPMENT THAT MAY GENERATE POLLUTION WILL NOT BE GRANTED IF THE PROPOSAL:

- 1. WILL HAVE AN UNACCEPTABLE ADVERSE IMPACT UPON THE QUALITY OF THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT.**
- 2. WILL HAVE AN UNACCEPTABLE ADVERSE IMPACT UPON THE AMENITY OF NEARBY AND ADJOINING LAND AND PROPERTY.**
- 3. WILL UNNECESSARILY CONSTRAIN THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEIGHBOURING LAND.**

Justification

- 13.13** Development that may, for example, generate pollution of water, air, soil, noise, vibration, light, heat or radiation include certain industrial uses, intensive livestock units and outdoor leisure activities such as motorsports and shooting. They should be located away from sensitive uses such as housing, schools, hospitals and residential and nursing homes.

- 13.14** Where appropriate, conditions will be applied to control the level of emissions from these uses by controlling the hours of operation, the nature of the activities carried out, and the number and type of vehicles used. Other measures such as mounding and baffle fencing may be required, where necessary, to ensure that the level of emission does not exceed acceptable levels and does not result in a reduction of the quality of the local environment, including the air, soil, ground water, rivers and streams.

POLICY U6 DEVELOPMENTS AIMED AT PREVENTING POLLUTION FROM AN EXISTING OR PROPOSED SOURCE WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT THE PROPOSAL:

1. **WILL NOT HAVE AN UNACCEPTABLE ADVERSE IMPACT UPON THE QUALITY OF THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT; AND**
2. **WILL NOT HAVE AN UNACCEPTABLE ADVERSE IMPACT UPON THE AMENITY OF NEARBY AND ADJOINING LAND AND PROPERTY.**

Justification

13.15 This Policy is aimed at encouraging the construction of anti pollution measures and it of special significance to farmers who may need to provide storage facilities to comply with Control of Pollution Regulations (1991). Such facilities may include structures such as slurry stores and silage effluent tanks.

POLICY U7 DEVELOPMENTS WHICH ARE SENSITIVE TO POLLUTION WILL NOT BE PERMITTED ON LAND WHICH IS SUBJECT TO UNACCEPTABLE LEVELS OF CONTAMINATION, POLLUTION, NOISE OR VIBRATION.

Justification

13.16 Developments, which are sensitive to pollution of water, air, soil, noise, vibration, light, heat or radiation are those whose location close to sources of pollution would be harmful or especially disruptive to the quality of life of the occupiers or users of the building. They include places where people live, are educated, receive health care or meet together. These developments should be sited away from land, which is contaminated to an unacceptable degree or manner, uses that generate levels or noise, vibration or other pollutants above recognised acceptable limits.

Sewage Treatment Works and Sewerage Systems

POLICY U8 THE COUNCIL WILL PERMIT OR IF CONSULTED WILL RESPOND FAVOURABLY TO DEVELOPMENT WHICH WILL ENABLE WATER AND SEWAGE UNDERTAKERS TO MEET THEIR STATUTORY OBLIGATIONS PROVIDED THAT THE DEVELOPMENT:

1. **IS SUITABLY LOCATED IN RELATION TO THE DRAINAGE SYSTEM.**
2. **DOES NOT HAVE AN UNACCEPTABLE ADVERSE IMPACT UPON THE AMENITY OF NEIGHBOURING OCCUPIERS FROM SMALL INCREASES IN NOISE, SMELL, TRAFFIC AND GENERAL DISTURBANCE.**
3. **DOES NOT HAVE AN UNACCEPTABLE ADVERSE IMPACT UPON LANDSCAPE QUALITY OF THE AREA OR AREAS OF NATURE CONSERVATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICIES E10 AND E18.**

Justification

- 13.17** There are 32 sewage treatment facilities within the District ranging in size from septic tanks and soakaway systems dealing with a handful of properties and discharging to groundwater to sizeable sewage treatment works. Much of the sewerage system within Durham deals with combined foul and surface water flows resulting in the need for combined sewer overflows (CSOs) to relieve the system during period of high rainfall in order to prevent surcharging of manhole and localised flooding. A number of overflows have been identified as unsatisfactory regarding their nature or excessive operation or being situated in sensitive locations. Water Company Investment is agreed in advanced on a five year rolling basis and entitled Asset Management Plan (AMP). The current AMP3 covering investment from the year 2000-2005 has been agreed. Sewage works investment shall enable compliance with statutory drivers such as the EC Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (UWWT) (91/271/EEC) and non-statutory achievement of river quality objective improvements. Over 20 unsatisfactory CSOs have been highlighted for investment as part of the UWWT Directive Schedule.
- 13.18** The siting of new sewage works or extensions to existing works to meet appropriate standards of treatment will largely be influence by the current drainage system and the need to avoid adversely affecting the amenities of neighbouring occupiers or the area as a whole. The location of these facilities in or on the edge of open countryside requires both sensitive siting, respect for the local environment and a major investment in landscaping works.

POLICY U8A DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS WILL ONLY BE APPROVED IF THEY INCLUDE SATISFACTORY ARRANGEMENTS FOR DISPOSING FOUL AND SURFACE WATER DISCHARGES. WHERE SATISFACTORY ARRANGEMENTS ARE NOT AVAILABLE, THEN PROPOSALS MAY BE APPROVED SUBJECT TO THE SUBMISSION OF A SATISFACTORY SCHEME AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION BEFORE THE DEVELOPMENT IS BROUGHT INTO USE. ALL SCHEMES RESULTING FROM THIS REQUIREMENT SHOULD COMPLY WITH POLICY U8.

Justification

- 13.20** All development should include adequate foul and surface water drainage arrangements. Where existing sewage infrastructure is insufficient to accommodate the proposed development, then that development will only be permitted submitted to submission of a scheme of works for disposing of foul and surface water discharge, and the implementation of such a scheme, before the development is brought into use.

Sewage Treatment Works in the Green Belt

POLICY U8B THE COUNCIL WILL PERMIT OR IF CONSULTED WILL RESPOND FAVOURABLY TO DEVELOPMENT BY

STATUTORY WATER AND SEWAGE UNDERTAKERS IN THE DURHAM CITY GREEN BELT PROVIDED THAT:

- 1. NEW DEVELOPMENT OR THE IMPROVEMENT OR MAINTENANCE OF EXISTING ASSETS IS REQUIRED TO ENSURE COMPLIANCE WITH QUALITY STANDARDS IN NATIONAL AND EUROPEAN LAW; AND**
- 2. THE PROPOSAL WILL NOT HAVE AN UNACCEPTABLE IMPACT ON THE OPENNESS OF THE GREEN BELT; AND**
- 3. THE PROPOSAL WILL NOT PREJUDICE THE PURPOSES FOR INCLUDING LAND IN THE GREEN BELT.**

Justification

13.20A Twelve sewage treatment works and two reservoir are located in the Durham City Green Belt. The works affected are those at Aldin Grange, Bakers Haugh, Belmont, Brasside, Browney, Leamside, Pity Me, Sherburn House, Stonebridge, Sunderland Bridge, Witton Gilbert and University together with the reservoirs at Auton Stile and Mountjoy. The Council recognises the need to make provision throughout the plan period for essential development by the water and sewage undertakers to meet their statutory duties.

13.20B National and European Law will require significant improvements to most if not all of the works over the plan period. New or additional capacity may be required to meet the demands of new development and other factors. Auton Stile Reservoir may need to be rebuilt or supplemented by an additional reservoir over the plan period. None of these facilities can easily be economically relocate elsewhere.

13.20C The provision of essential facilities for uses which preserve the openness of the Green Belt and which do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it, is not necessarily inappropriate development. The Council will permit such proposals provided the statutory water and sewage undertakers can demonstrate that the development is necessary to meet National and European quality standards.

13.20D Where the statutory water and sewage undertakers propose development, which is necessary, but would not preserve the openness of the Green Belt or would conflict with the purposes of including land in it, then it will be considered inappropriate development. Inappropriate development is by definition harmful and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. It will be for the applicant to show that any harm to the Green Belt is clearly outweighed by other considerations an permission should, therefore, be granted. Such inappropriate development would be referred to the Secretary of State under the Town and Country Planning (Development Plans and Consultation) Directions 1999.

- 13.20E** In some cases it will be appropriate for a proposal to be subject to environmental assessment (EA) and for the water company to submit an Environmental Statement, as set out in Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 1999, before planning permission can be granted.

Water Courses

POLICY U9 DEVELOPMENTS WHICH MAY DIRECTLY AFFECT WATERCOURSES WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT:

- 1. THEY DO NOT RESULT IN FLOODING OR INCREASE FLOOD RISK ELSEWHERE;**
- 2. THEY DO NOT RESULT IN THE POLLUTION OF THE WATERCOURSE;**
- 3. THEY DO NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT NATURE CONSERVATION INTERESTS;**
- 4. THEY DO NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE VISUAL APPEARANCE OF THE LANDSCAPE;**
- 5. THEIR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT IS PROPERLY ASSESSED.**

Justification

- 13.21** Development works in the vicinity of watercourses may lead to problems both directly through an increased risk of flooding, erosion of the beds and banks of watercourse and restricted access for maintenance and indirectly through alterations to drainage patterns and the quality of surface water run-off. Proper assessment of the environmental impact of a development on a watercourse should be undertaken. Mitigating measures required to balance any adverse impacts will need to be designed and carried out in accordance with the requirements of the Environment Agency.
- 13.22** Culverting of watercourses will not normally be permitted since it results in a break in the continuity of the river corridor and may also have serious implications for safety, maintenance and flooding, as well as nature conservation interests. Culverts will only be approved if there is not reasonably practical alternatives or if the detrimental effects would be so minor that they would not justify a more costly alternative.
- 13.23** Rivers and streams are important resources offering conservation, landscape, amenity and recreational value. They are important linear features which can form the basis for wildlife corridors and promoting ecological diversity. They form a continuum of habitats from the flowing main channel to aquatic, semi-aquatic and terrestrial environment. Such features often support a large number of species

identified as globally threatened or declining and which will also be identified in the U.K. Bio-diversity Action Plan

Development in Flood Risk Areas

POLICY U10 **PROPOSALS FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT SHALL NOT BE PERMITTED IN FLOOD RISK AREAS OR WHERE DEVELOPMENT MAY INCREASE THE RISK OF FLOODING ELSEWHERE UNLESS IT CAN BE DEMONSTRATED BY MEANS OF A FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT AND SEQUENTIAL TEST THAT:**

- 1. THERE IS NO ALTERNATIVE OPTION AVAILABLE AT NO RISK OR AT A LOWER RISK OF FLOODING;**
- 2. THERE WILL BE NO UNACCEPTABLE RISK OF FLOODING;**
- 3. THERE WILL BE NO UNACCEPTABLE INCREASE IN RISK OF FLOODING ELSEWHERE, AS A RESULT OF THE DEVELOPMENT; AND**
- 4. APPROPRIATE MITIGATION MEASURES CAN BE PUT IN PLACE TO MINIMISE THE RISK OF FLOODING AND THESE MEASURES CAN BE CONTROLLED BY APPROPRIATE PLANNING CONDITIONS OR A SECTION 106 AGREEMENT CAN BE SECURED.**

Justification

13.24 New development, redevelopment and land raising can have significant implications for flood risk. Within river flood plains, new development may increase the risk of flooding elsewhere by reducing the storage capacity of the flood plain and impeding flood flow. An indicative flood plain of the River Wear which identifies potential flood risk areas has been produced by the Environment Agency.

13.24A PPG25 requires that a risk-based approach be adopted for proposals for development in or affecting flood-risk areas or where the development may increase flood risk elsewhere. It is the responsibility of the parties promoting particular developments to carry out a flood risk assessment (FRA) prior to the determination of planning applications. The Council will be minded to refuse planning permission until a satisfactory FRA has been submitted. The level of detail required for a FRA may vary depending on the size, scale and location of development but all FRA's should be in accordance with Appendix F of PPG25.

CONTAMINATED LAND

Development on Contaminated Land

POLICY U11 DEVELOPMENT ON SITES WHICH ARE KNOWN TO BE, OR SUSPECTED OF BEING CONTAMINATED WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT:

- 1. THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF CONTAMINATION IS FIRST ESTABLISHED;**
- 2. THE DEVELOPMENT WILL NOT ADD TO THE LEVEL OF CONTAMINATION;**
- 3. PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT INCLUDE REMEDIAL MEASURES WHICH ADDRESS THE ACTUAL OR POTENTIAL HAZARD OF CONTAMINANCE IDENTIFIED;**
- 4. THERE IS NO DETRIMENTAL AFFECT ON THE ENVIRONMENT AS A RESULT OF THE DISTURBANCE OF CONTAMINATES DURING AND AFTER DEVELOPMENT.**

Justification

13.25 Contamination may result from land previously used by industries employing hazardous substances. Alternatively contaminated land may include completed domestic and industrial landfill sites where combustion might be induced, settlement is occurring, leachates are being generated or gas emissions are happening. The hazard to which this may give rise can put at risk people working on the site, the occupiers and users of buildings and land, the buildings themselves and water services. Unless precautions are taken, contaminants may escape to cause air and water pollution, while emissions of landfill gases may lead to concentrations in which explosions or asphyxiation may occur.

13.26 Within the context of securing sustainable development by the full and effective use of land within settlements the redevelopment of contaminated sites may generally be desirable. The former Cape Universal site at Bowburn is a prime example.

13.27 Before development takes place on such sites, however, it is important that the nature and extent of contamination is fully understood. As a result measures must be incorporated into any proposals to ensure the protection of buildings, services and other infrastructure against possible harmful effects of the substances involved, and to prevent the exposure of personnel to materials which may be prejudicial to their health or safety.

Development near Contaminated Land

POLICY U12 DEVELOPMENT WILL ONLY PERMITTED ADJACENT TO, OR IN THE VICINITY OF, CONTAMINATED SITES WHERE IT CAN BE SHOWN THAT:

- 1. MEASURES CAN BE UNDERTAKEN ON THE PERIPHERY OR WITHIN THE SITE OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD BE SUFFICIENT TO STOP CONTAMINANTS, LEACHATE OR GASES PENETRATING THE SITE AND ACCUMULATING IN BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES IN QUANTITIES WHICH COULD PROVE HARMFUL; OR**
- 2. GROUND CONDITIONS AROUND THE CONTAMINATED SITE ARE SUCH AS TO PREVENT GASES MIGRATING INTO SURROUNDING LAND.**

Justification

13.28 The threat from contaminants may not be confined to the site itself. Landfill gases and leachates have the ability to migrate over wide distances depending upon ground conditions. If the floor of a landfill site has not been properly sealed with an impermeable layer or the sub-soil and ground conditions are of friable or fractured materials, the potential exists for gases to spread underground away from the site until such time as an obstruction is met or a way to the surface reached. The foundations of a building, drains and pipelines may provide such an escape route.

13.29 In order that considerable areas around such sites are not needlessly sterilised against development, the Council will expect potential developers of sites nearby to demonstrate that ground conditions and topography are such that underground migration of contaminates to their site will not occur. Where this cannot be shown, it will be open to developers to introduce measures which protect their sites against penetration by gas.

Development on Unstable Land

POLICY U13 DEVELOPMENT ON UNSTABLE LAND WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED IF IT IS PROVED THAT THERE IS NO RISK TO THE DEVELOPMENT OR ITS INTENDED OCCUPIERS OR USERS FROM SUCH INSTABILITY OR THAT SATISFACTORY REMEDIAL MEASURES CAN BE UNDERTAKEN.

Justification

13.30 The effects of ground instability vary in their nature, scale and extent. At their most extreme, they may threaten life and health or cause damage to buildings and structures. Whilst such risks are small there is a need to ensure that development

is suitable and that the physical constraints on the land are taken into account at all stages of planning.

- 13.31** Instability may be caused through the effects of underground activities, unstable slopes or ground compression. Where instability is known or suspected the developer will be required to provide a specialist investigation and to propose adequate remedial measures, where appropriate, as part of a planning application.

ENERGY CONSERVATION

General

POLICY U14 THE COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE THE EFFECTIVE USE OF PASSIVE SOLAR ENERGY AND THE REDUCTION OF WIND-CHILL IN THE LAYOUT, DESIGN AND ORIENTATION OF BUILDINGS, AND THE USE OF ENERGY EFFICIENT MATERIALS AND CONSTRUCTION TECHNIQUES.

Justification

- 13.32** A significant proportion of the energy used in the United Kingdom is associated with buildings, and the burning of fossil fuels to produce this energy has a significant effect on global warming through the "greenhouse effect". Local action to conserve energy by the maximum use of solar radiation and minimising the cooling effects of the wind can play its part in ameliorating this global issue. The orientation and inter-relationship of buildings, their detailed design and the materials used in their construction (e.g. more glazing and photo voltaic roofing) can reduce energy needs.

Renewable Resources

POLICY U15 PROPOSALS FOR THE GENERATION OF ENERGY FROM RENEWABLE RESOURCES WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT THERE IS NO UNACCEPTABLE ADVERSE IMPACT ON:

- 1. THE VISUAL APPEARANCE OF THE LANDSCAPE AND THE OPENNESS OF THE GREEN BELT;**
- 2. FLORA AND FAUNA AND OTHER NATURE CONSERVATION INTERESTS;**
- 3. THE AMENITY, HEALTH AND SAFETY OF LOCAL RESIDENTS;**
- 4. NOISE AND VIBRATION LEVELS, INCLUDING ELECTROMAGNETIC INTERFERENCE;**
- 5. AREAS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL, ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC INTEREST.**

PROPOSALS SHOULD INCLUDE A SATISFACTORY SCHEME TO RESTORE THE SITE TO ITS ORIGINAL CONDITION ONCE OPERATIONS HAVE CEASED.

Justification

- 13.33** Renewable energy systems differ from fossil fuel and nuclear energy systems in their relationship to land use and the environment. They tend to be of lower energy output for an equivalent area of land and a variety of factors have to be taken into account when assessing planning applications for renewable energy systems.
- 13.34** The use of energy generated from renewable resources, is expected to increase during the Plan period. Developments such as those associated with solar power and hydro power have little impact on amenity. However others such as wind farms (i.e. groups of two or more turbines) can only operate efficiently in certain localities which have relatively high annual mean wind speeds and are normally exposed areas of open countryside often in upland regions. Examples of such locations within the District include the Magnesian Limestone ridge to the east and the uplands in the west bordering Wear Valley District Council. Whilst the Council supports the concept of renewable energy, wind farms may, as well as being visually prominent, be a source of noise, shadow flicker, electromagnetic interference and can affect the safety and ecology of the area. In order to minimise these potential impacts, applications will be judged against the criteria outlined in the Policy.
- 13.35** In line with Government Guidance set out in PPG2 (Green Belt) and PPG22 (Renewable Resources) and Policy E1 of the Plan, the development of wind farms, incorporating two or more turbines, will not be permitted in the Green Belt because of their detrimental visual impact on the openness of this designated area.

RECYCLING

POLICY U17

SITES FOR USE BY THE PUBLIC FOR THE COLLECTION OF RECYCLABLE CONSUMER WASTE PRODUCTS WILL BE PERMITTED THROUGHOUT THE DISTRICT PROVIDED THEY ARE CONVENIENT AND ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC AND WILL NOT HAVE A DETRIMENTAL IMPACT UPON LOCAL AMENITY OR HIGHWAY SAFETY.

Justification

- 13.36** The Council is committed to promoting the conservation and sustainable use of material resources through its Environmental Charter and support for Local Agenda 21. The recycling of consumer waste products is an important element of this and 19 sites have been established throughout the District for the collection of items such as glass bottles and jars, foods and drink cans, newspapers and magazines and unwanted clothing and textiles. Further sites will be provided during the Plan period at locations which are convenient and accessible and will not have a detrimental impact upon local amenity.

14. IMPLEMENTATION AND RESOURCES

INTRODUCTION

14.1 There are 179 Policies and Proposals contained in the City of Durham Local Plan. They must be realistic and capable of being implemented within the Plan period to 2006. Table 2 summarises the individual Policies and indicates the principal agencies responsible for their implementation. It illustrates the fact that successful implementation of the Policies and proposals contained within the Plan is dependent upon a large number of agencies which will often need to co-operate closely with each other.

14.1A It is the Council's intention that planning applications should be considered on their individual merits having due regard to all relevant policies of the Local Plan.

IMPLEMENTATION BY THE CITY COUNCIL

14.2 Most of the Policies and proposals contained in the Plan will be implemented through the City Council's development control powers in its capacity as Local Planning Authority.

14.3 Whilst some of the Policies and proposals in the Local Plan will have no direct financial implications for the City Council, some will, in particular those relating to environmental enhancement and for the provision of recreational, leisure, community and cultural facilities. City Council expenditure can be divided into two types, Capital and Revenue, both of which will be required to implement the Plan. The availability of City Council finance, often catalytic, will be a major consideration if the Plan is to be successfully implemented.

14.4 Grants may also be available to assist in the implementation process from such bodies as Sport England, The National Foundation for Sport and Art, the Countryside Agency, English Partnerships, One North East, the European Commission, the Millennium Commission and the National Lottery.

IMPLEMENTATION BY THE COUNTY COUNCIL

14.5 The provision of new schools and libraries is primarily the responsibility of Durham County Council. The Authority is committed to relocating Whinney Hill School on the site of Durham Johnston at Crossgate Moor in accordance with Policy C6 and in re-locating the central library as part of the Millennium Project.

14.6 Durham County Council as Highway Authority is also primarily responsible for implementing the major road schemes identified in Policy T3 and many of the traffic management schemes included in the Plan. Some of the traffic management measures, however, will be carried out by the City Council as agent for the Highway Authority subject to the availability of resources from Durham County Council. The Parking Strategy for the City Centre will be implemented jointly by Durham County Council and Durham City Council.

- 14.7** Durham County Council and Durham City Council are jointly creating a series of cycle ways throughout the District in accordance with the approved City of Durham Cycling Strategy. The implementation of this Strategy will continue during the Plan period as resources permit.

IMPLEMENTATION BY THE PRIVATE SECTOR

- 14.8** It is expected that most of the development resulting from the Policies and Proposals contained in the Plan will be initiated by the Private Sector, particularly those relating to employment, housing and retail. In addition, some of the road schemes identified in Policy T3 may be funded, at least in part, by private developers.
- 14.9** In order to ensure that there are benefits to the community associated with new residential developments, in respect of the provision of open space, play areas, and other recreational facilities, the City Council may require that legal agreements are entered into with prospective applicants in accordance with Policy R2.
- 14.10** Private sector investment in economic development can be encouraged by various financial incentives offered by the City Council and other public bodies. Many forms of incentive are available to encourage this type of development and thereby improve employment opportunities in the area. Both the City Council and Durham County Council have made finance available from their own resources in order to further this objective.

IMPLEMENTATION BY OTHER BODIES

- 14.11** Housing Associations and Joint Venture Companies are increasingly likely to develop some of the housing sites identified in the Plan. Parish Councils, Community Associations and Voluntary Organisations will play an important part in implementing many of the Plan's proposals, particularly in the field of community services and environmental improvements. Organisations such as Groundwork Trust will also play an increasing role in undertaking environmental improvements within the District. Other bodies such as the University of Durham, New College Durham, English Partnerships, Durham Rural Community Council, One North East, the Countryside Agency and the Environment Agency will also be actively involved in the implementation process.

KEY			
CITY	Durham City Council	DCC	Durham County Council
PS	Private Sector	EH	English Heritage
EN	English Nature	EA	Environment Agency
WT	Wildlife Trust	GT	Groundwork Trust
UD	University of Durham	NDNHST	North Durham National Health
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food	Service Trust	

TABLE 4 : IMPLEMENTATION

ENVIRONMENT			
Ref:	Policy/Proposal	Dev. Control	Principal Agency Responsible for Implementation
E1	Durham City Green Belt	*	
E2	Major Developed Sites in Green Belt – Infilling	*	
E2A	Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt – Redevelopment	*	
E3	World Heritage Site – Protection	*	CITY,DCC,EH,ICOMOS
E4	World Heritage Site – Extension	*	CITY,DCC,EH,ICOMOS
E5	Protecting Open Spaces within Durham City	*	
E5A	Open Spaces within Settlement Boundaries	*	
E6	Durham (City Centre) Conservation Area	*	CITY,DCC,EH
E7	Development Outside Settlement Boundaries	*	
E8	Change of Use of Buildings in the Countryside	*	
E9	Protection of Agricultural Land	*	
E10	Areas of Landscape Value	*	
E11	Environmental Improvements – Transport Corridors	*	CITY,DCC,PS
E12	Environmental Improvements – Derelict/Unused Land and Buildings	*	CITY,DCC,PS,GT
E14	Protection of Existing Trees and Hedgerows	*	
E15	Provision of New Trees and Hedgerows	*	
E16	Protection and Promotion of Nature Conservation	*	CITY,DCC,EN,WT
E17	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	*	CITY,DCC,EN,WT
E18	Sites of Nature Conservation Importance	*	CITY,DCC,EN,WT
E19	Wildlife Corridors	*	
E20	Local Nature Reserves	*	CITY,DCC
E21	Conservation and Enhancement of the Historic Environment	*	
E22	Conservation Areas	*	CITY
E23	Listed Buildings	*	CITY,PS
E24	Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Remains	*	
E25	Nevilles Cross Battlefield	*	CITY,PS,EH
E26	Historic Parks and Gardens	*	CITY,PS,EH

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HOUSING			
Ref:	Policy/Proposal	Dev. Control	Principal Agency Responsible for Implementation
H1	New Housing Development – Allocated Sites	*	PS
H2	New Housing Development within Durham City	*	PS
H3	New Housing Development within the Villages	*	PS
H4	Ribbon/Sporadic Development and Villages with no Settlement Boundary	*	
H5	New Housing in the Countryside	*	
H6	Replacement Dwellings outside Settlement Boundaries	*	
H7	City Centre Housing	*	
H8	Residential Use of Upper Floors	*	
H9	Multiple Occupation	*	PS,UD
H10	Backland and Tandem Development	*	
H11	Mobility/Access	*	
H12	Affordable Housing	*	CITY,PS
H12A	Type and Size of Housing	*	
H13	Residential Areas – Impact upon Character and Amenity	*	
H14	Residential Areas – Improvements to Housing Stock and Environment	*	CITY,PS
H15	Sites for Travellers	*	
H16	Residential Institutions/Student Halls of Residence	*	PD,UD
H17	Renewal of Planning Permission for Housing	*	

EMPLOYMENT			
Ref:	Policy/Proposal	Dev. Control	Principal Agency Responsible for Implementation
EMP2	Durham Science Park	*	UD,PS
EMP3	Mount Oswald	*	PS
EMP4	Business Parks	*	DCC,PS
EMP5	Prestige Industrial Sites – General	*	CITY,DCC
EMP6	Prestige Industrial Development at Belmont	*	DCC,PS
EMP7	Prestige Industrial Development/Rail Freight Terminal, Tursdale	*	
EMP8	General Industrial Sites	*	CITY,DCC
EMP9	Local Industrial Sites	*	
EMP10	Bad Neighbour Activities	*	
EMP11	Employment Outside Designated Sites	*	
EMP12	Office Development – General	*	CITY
EMP13	Office Development – Sites outside City Centre	*	
EMP14	Office Development – Outside Designated Areas	*	
EMP15	Taxi Booking Offices	*	
EMP16	Employment in the Countryside	*	
EMP17	Farm Diversification	*	
EMP17A	Agriculture and Forestry Development	*	
EMP18	Home Based Business	*	
EMP19	Notifiable Installations – New Proposals	*	
EMP20	Notifiable Installations – Development in Close Proximity Thereto	*	

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TRANSPORT			
Ref:	Policy/Proposal	Dev. Control	Principal Agency Responsible for Implementation
T1	Traffic Generation – General	*	
T2	Road Proposals – Justification		DCC
T3	Road Proposals – Corridors of Interest	*	DCC
T4	Road Proposals – Design and Route		DCC
T5	Public Transport		DCC
T6	Transport Interchange at Carrville	*	DCC,CITY
T7	Park and Ride		
T8	Traffic Management		DCC,CITY
T9	Movement of Freight	*	
T10	Parking – General Provision	*	CITY
T11	City Centre Parking – Overall Strategy		CITY,DCC
T12	City Centre Parking – Management of Off-Street Car Parks		CITY
T13	City Centre Parking – New Sites	*	
T14	City Centre Parking – Public Use of Private Non-Residential Car Parks		
T15	Parking in Residential Areas		CITY,DCC
T16	Coach Parking	*	
T17	Storage of Caravans	*	
T18	Taxi Ranks		CITY,DCC
T19	Cycling – Development of Cycle Routes		CITY
T20	Cycling – Provision of Cycle Parking	*	CITY,UD
T21	Safeguarding the Needs of Walkers		CITY,DCC

SHOPPING			
Ref:	Policy/Proposal	Dev. Control	Principal Agency Responsible for Implementation
S1A	Retail Hierarchy		
S1	A1 uses within the City Centre Shopping Area	*	CITY
S2A	A2 and A3 uses within the Primary Retail Area	*	PS
S2B	A2 and A3 uses within the Secondary Retail Area	*	PS
S3	Elvet Bridge	*	PS
S4	Sherburn Road/Dragon Lane District Centre	*	CITY,PS
S5	Local Centres	*	
S6	Village Shops	*	
S7	Individual Shops	*	
S8	Retail Warehouse Outlets	*	PS
S9A	Arnison/Mercia District Centre	*	PS
S9B	Major Out of Centre Proposals	*	PS
S10	Food and Drink	*	
S11	Miscellaneous Sales	*	
S12	Occasional Markets	*	
S13	Factory and Farm Shops	*	
S14	Amusement Centres	*	PS
S15	Garden Centres	*	PS
S16	Petrol Filling Stations	*	PS

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RECREATION AND LEISURE			
Ref:	Policy/Proposal	Dev. Control	Principal Agency Responsible for Implementation
R1	Provision of Open Space – Overall Standards	*	CITY
R2	Provision of Open Space – New Residential Development	*	CITY,PS,DCC
R3	Protection of Outdoor Recreation Facilities	*	
R4	Land Surplus to Education Requirements	*	
R5	Protection of Allotments	*	
R6	Provision of Recreation Facilities – Leisure Centres	*	CITY
R7	Provision of Recreation Facilities – New Swimming Pool	*	CITY
R8	New Recreation Facilities	*	PS
R9	Public Parks and Recreation Grounds	*	CITY
R10	Recreation and Leisure in the Countryside	*	
R11	Public Rights of Way	*	DCC
R12	River Wear	*	
R13	River Wear Walkway	*	CITY,EA
R14	The Browney Valley	*	CITY,WP,EA
R15	Picnic Sites	*	CITY,DCC
R16	Equestrian Centres	*	PS
R17	Stables	*	
R18	Golf Courses and Driving Ranges	*	PS
R19	Off Road Motorsports	*	PS

TOURISM			
Ref:	Policy/Proposal	Dev. Control	Principal Agency Responsible for Implementation
V1	Visitor Centre	*	CITY
V2	Specific Sites for the Development of new Tourist Attractions	*	CITY
V3	Tourist Facilities and Attractions within Settlement Boundaries	*	
V4	Tourist Facilities and Attractions outside Settlement Boundaries	*	
V5	Hotel Development at Framwelgate Waterside	*	PS
V6	Visitor Accommodation within Settlement Boundaries	*	PS
V7	Visitor Accommodation outside Settlement Boundaries	*	PS
V8	Caravans, Camping and Chalets	*	
V9	Occupation of Static Caravans and Chalets	*	CITY

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COMMUNITY SERVICES			
Ref:	Policy/Proposal	Dev. Control	Principal Agency Responsible for Implementation
C1	Redevelopment of Dryburn Hospital	*	NDNHST
C2	Health Centres, Surgeries and Clinics	*	
C3	University of Durham	*	UD
C4	New College Durham – Framwellgate Moor Site	*	
C5	New College Durham – Nevilles Cross Site	*	
C6	Durham Johnston Comprehensive School – Crossgate Moor Site	*	DCC
C7	Durham Johnston Comprehensive School – Whinney Hill Site	*	
C8	Community Facilities – Provision of New	*	
C9	Community Facilities – Protection of Existing	*	

THE CITY CENTRE			
Ref:	Policy/Proposal	Dev. Control	Principal Agency Responsible for Implementation
CC1	Vitality and Viability	*	CITY
CC2	Development Opportunities – Specific Uses	*	PS
CC3	Development Opportunities – Range of Uses	*	PS

QUALITY OF DEVELOPMENT			
Ref:	Policy/Proposal	Dev. Control	Principal Agency Responsible for Implementation
Q1	General Principles – Designing for People	*	CITY
Q2	General Principles – Designing for Accessibility	*	CITY
Q3	External Parking Areas	*	CITY
Q4	Pedestrian Areas	*	CITY
Q5	Landscaping – General Provision	*	CITY,PS
Q6	Landscaping – Structural Landscaping	*	CITY,PS
Q7	Layout and Design – Industrial and Business Development	*	CITY,PS
Q8	Layout and Design – Residential Development	*	CITY,PS
Q9	Alterations and Extensions to Residential Property	*	
Q10	Dormer Windows	*	
Q11	Shopfronts – Provision of New	*	
Q12	Shopfronts – Retention of Existing	*	
Q13	Satellite Dishes	*	
Q14	Security Shutters	*	
Q15	Art in Design	*	CITY,PS
Q16	Advertisements – General Criteria	*	
Q17	Advertisements – Hoardings and Panels	*	

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UTILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE			
Ref:	Policy/Proposal	Dev. Control	Principal Agency Responsible for Implementation
U1	Telecommunications – General	*	PS
U2	Telecommunications – Impact on the World Heritage Site	*	CITY,PS
U3	Transmission Lines		
U4	Undergrounding of Services	*	PS
U5	Pollution Prevention – General	*	
U6	Pollution Prevention – Anti-Pollution Development	*	
U7	Pollution Prevention – Development Sensitive to Pollution	*	
U8	Sewage Treatment Works	*	PS
U8A	Disposal of Foul and Surface Water	*	PS
U8B	Sewage Treatment Works in the Green Belt		
U9	Watercourses	*	EA
U10	Natural Flood Plains	*	EA
U11	Development on Contaminated Land	*	
U12	Development near Contaminated Land	*	
U13	Development on Unstable Land	*	
U14	Energy Conservation – General	*	
U15	Energy Conservation – Renewable Resources	*	
U17	Recycling	*	CITY

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

City of Durham:	The whole administrative area of the District.
Durham City:	The main urban area of the District as well as Belmont, Carrville, Framwellgate Moor, Newton Hall and Pity Me.
Settlement Boundaries:	Settlement Boundaries mark the delineation between built up areas and rural areas. They form established limits within which most new development will be located in order to consolidate the existing settlement framework and avoid extension into the open countryside. They do not define settlements in an historical or community sense but are a planning tool. It should not be assumed that if an area of open land exists within a settlement boundary, planning permission will be granted for its development.
Affordable Housing:	Housing designed for those whose incomes generally deny them the opportunity to purchase or rent houses on the open market as a result of the local relationship between income and price.
Agenda 21:	The programme for achieving sustainable development world wide, as set out by the United Nations Earth Summit in 1992.
Ancient Woodland:	Woodland that has had continuous tree cover since at least 1600 AD and which now bears stands of native trees which were either not obviously planted (ancient semi-natural woodland) or were replanted (ancient replanted woodland).
Area of High Landscape Value (AHLV):	Area designated in the Durham County Structure Plan and included in the Local Plan because of its distinctive and attractive landscape character, considered in a Countywide context to give added weight to its protection from inappropriate development.
Area of Special Advertisement Control:	An area designated by an order made by the local planning authority and approved by the Secretary of State, within which special controls over the display of advertisements apply, including the prohibition of certain classes of advertisement.
Article 4 Direction:	A direction, made under the Town and Country Planning General Development Order, which enables the withdrawal of permitted development rights.
Assisted Area Status:	A tool of Government economic policy to encourage new investment in particular regions and areas which are in need of economic support, principally through the provision of grant aid or other forms of assistance to industry.

Backland Development:	Development to the rear of existing houses, usually in large back gardens or open areas.
Bridleways:	Rights of way over which the public have a right to pass on foot or on horseback. Cycling is also permitted providing cyclists give way to riders and pedestrians.
Built Environment:	All parts of the physical environment which are dominated by built features and hard surfaces, including buildings, roads, car parks and engineering structures, and which are not part of the green or natural environment (see below).
Census:	Census of population and household characteristics normally undertaken every ten years by the Office of Population, Census and Surveys.
Community Facilities:	Including health centres, creches, day centres, schools and colleges, art galleries and museums, public libraries, public halls and places of worship.
Commuted Payment:	A payment made by a developer to the Council to enable it to provide or maintain facilities required or provided as part of a development. It normally applies to car parking.
Comparison Goods:	Generally non-food goods which are purchased on an occasional basis. So called because shoppers may visit a number of shops to make comparisons of price and quality. They include electrical goods, furniture and clothes.
Conservation Area:	An area considered to be of special architectural or historical interest, the character of appearance of which it is desirable to preserve and enhance, designated under, and afforded special protection, by the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
Contaminated Land:	Land which represents an actual or potential hazard to health or the environment as a result of current or previous use.
Convenience Goods:	Goods which are purchased on a regular basis for immediate consumption. They include food products, alcohol, newspapers and tobacco products.
Countryside Agency:	National body, funded by the Government, which is responsible for conserving and enhancing the countryside, promoting social equity and economic opportunity for the public who live there and public enjoyment of it. It was formed on 1st April, 1999 from the merger of the Rural Development Commission and the Countryside Commission.

County Geological Site:	An area considered to be of County-wide geological importance, designated on a non-statutory basis by Durham County Council.
County Wildlife Site:	An area considered to be of County-wide nature conservation importance, designated on a non-statutory basis by Durham County Council.
Derelict Land:	Land so damaged by industrial or other development that is incapable of beneficial use without treatment.
Development:	The carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operations in, on, over or under the land, or the making of any material change in the use of any buildings or land (Section 55 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990).
Development Brief:	A document prepared by the Local Authority to guide the development of a particular site. It gives details of site characteristics and constraints, suitable land use(s) and any relevant policy considerations.
Dual Use (of school):	Use of school facilities by the community and community groups as well as by pupils.
Durham Wildlife Trust:	Charitable organisation promoting nature conservation in County Durham, Darlington, Gateshead, South Tyneside and Sunderland.
Durham Biodiversity Action Plan:	Document containing action plans for the maintenance, enhancement and re-establishment of species and habitat that are of conservation importance in County Durham.
Durham T.E.C.	Durham Training and Enterprise Council.
English Heritage:	National body, funded by the Government, which manages some ancient monuments and provides specialist advice on conservation of the built environment.
English Nature:	Statutory advisor to the Government on nature conservation in England and promotes the conservation of England's wildlife and natural features.
Environment Agency:	Government appointed body charged with protection and enhancement of the environment and the promotion of sustainable development.

Environmental Assessment:	A study of the effect of a new development on its immediate and wider environment. It can include issues such as traffic impact, air/noise quality, effects on natural areas, habitats and ecosystems. E.A's are a statutory requirement for certain developments.
Essential Minor Recreation Facilities:	Essential minor and recreational facilities include; small changing rooms, unobtrusive spectator accommodation for outdoor sport, or small stables.
Farm Diversification:	The process of broadening the economic base of industrial farm businesses, within the overall structural changes in agriculture brought about by reform of the European Community's Common Agricultural Policy, through the development of tourism, crafts and small-scale business enterprises on farms.
Floodplain:	Periodically inundated part of a river valley floor.
General Development Order:	The Town and Country Planning (General Development) Orders.
Green Belt:	Area of land designated in Structure Plans and defined in detail in Local Plans which seeks to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. It helps to protect the countryside from encroachment and can be used as a means of preserving the setting and special character of historic towns.
Health and Safety Executive:	Statutory agency exercising the functions of the Health and Safety Commission to enforce health and safety legislation.
Hectare:	Metric measure of land area, 100 metres x 100 metres, equivalent to 2.47 acres.
Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Pollution:	Statutory agency co-ordinating controls over industrial emissions and discharges into air, water and on land and advising local pollution authorities on the discharge of their statutory responsibilities.
Highway Authority:	The authority with statutory responsibility for the maintenance and improvement of the highways network, including public rights of way. In the area covered by this Plan, Durham County Council is the Highway Authority.
Historic Parkland:	A landscape which is the product of a preconceived design and which is of local importance in visual and topographical terms.

House in Multiple Occupation: Household:	A house occupied by persons who do not form a single household. One person living alone or a group of people living or staying at the same address and sharing living expenses.
Housing Association:	An independent, non-profit making organisation whose purpose is to build, improve or manage subsidised housing for sale or rent.
Housing Investment Programme:	Annual statement by the Council of the extent of housing need and the strategy by which it hopes to deal with it, forming part of a request for capital allocation from the Government.
ICOMOS:	International Council on Monuments and Sites.
Infill:	Small scale developments incorporated into the existing pattern of development in a built-up area.
Informal Recreation:	Recreational activities which are not organised by a club or public organisation. Such activities are non-competitive.
Infrastructure:	Services which need to be in place to serve development e.g. roads and footpaths, electricity, water and sewerage.
Landscaping:	Works to enhance or protect the amenities of a site, or area in which a site is situated.
Large Food Stores:	Single level, self-service stores selling mainly food, or food and non-food goods, with at least 1,000 m ² gross retail floorspace and often with their own car park. Includes larger supermarkets (up to 2,500 m ²) and superstores (over 2,500 m ²)
Listed Building:	A structure considered by the Secretary of State for National Heritage to be of special architectural or historic interest and given legal protection by the Government under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Listed Building Consent must be obtained from the Local Planning Authority before it can be altered, extended or demolished.
Local Nature Reserve (LNR):	Habitats of local significance established to assist with nature conservation in terms of the management of habitat but also public access to it and education about local wildlife. They may be established by local authorities under Section 21 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949.

Local Transport Plan:	Document produced by Local Highway Authorities which form the basis for resource allocation and local transport capital expenditure. LTPs cover all forms of transport provision and set out proposals for implementing the integrated approach towards transport over a five year period.
Mixed Use:	A 'mixed use' site is one where a mixture of uses (e.g. offices, housing, recreation and shopping) and deemed acceptable or desirable.
Multiple Occupation:	The occupation of a non-self contained accommodation in a flat or house by persons who do not form a single household.
National Nature Reserve (NNR):	A site of national and sometimes international importance which is owned or leased by English Nature or bodies approved by it, or is managed in accordance with Nature Reserve Agreements with landowners and occupiers. The essential characteristics of an NNR is that it is primarily used for nature conservation.
National Playing Field Association:	National voluntary body which campaigns for the provision of playing fields, public open space and playgrounds.
Natural Environment:	All those parts of the physical environment dominated by organic material and natural process. It includes geological and landform features.
Northumbrian Tourist Board:	Agency promoting tourism and tourism enterprises in the Northern Region.
Notifiable Installations:	Installations defined by the Health and Safety Executive which handle or store hazardous substances.
Occasional Markets:	The use of land for the holding of a market for not more than 14 days in total in any calendar year.
Park and Ride:	A scheme to enable private vehicle users to travel to a convenient location (usually on the edge of a main urban area) where they may park and transfer to public transport to complete their journey into the town or city centre. The objectives are to reduce congestion, improve the efficiency of the transport network and to enhance the environmental qualities of the main centres.

Permitted Development:	Certain forms of development, set out in the Town and Country Planning General Development Order, which are permitted without the need to obtain express planning permission under Sections 58-61 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. In some circumstances, the permission given is subject to extensive qualification and restrictions.
Plan Period:	The length of time that is covered for by the Plan. The City of Durham Local Plan covers the period to 2006.
Planning Policy Guidance notes (PPG's):	Notes issued periodically by the Secretary of State for the Environment to determine the broad framework within which local planning authorities should decide policy on planning matters. (See Appendix 1).
Public Open Space:	A wide range of recreational land from playing fields to small play areas.
Reclamation:	The process of rendering derelict or contaminated land fit for beneficial use.
Regional Planning Guidance:	Regional Planning Guidance for the North East of England (RPG1) was published in November, 2002.
Regionally Important Geological/ Geomorphological Site (RIGS):	Earth Science Site of regional importance designated on a non-statutory basis.
Residential Institutions:	Residential accommodation where care is given to residents in need for care, e.g. a nursing home or residential school, college or training college.
Retail Floorspace:	'Gross' retail floorspace is the total internal floor area occupied by a retail unit, including storage, offices, staff rooms and circulation space. 'Net' floorspace is the sales area alone.
Retail Warehouses:	Large single-level stores specialising in the sale of bulky household goods (such as carpets, furniture, electrical goods and bulky DIY items), catering mainly for car-borne customers and often in out-of-centre locations.
Retail Park:	A grouping of three or more retail warehouses.
Rights of Way:	Routes over which the public have a right to pass.
Rural Development Area:	Those parts of rural England suffering a concentration of economic and social needs, where rural regeneration activities are focused.

Safeguarding Corridor (Corridor of Interest):	Land identified as being required for the construction or improvement of roads or other infrastructure, and safeguarded for that purpose from other forms of development.
Section 106 Agreement:	A voluntary legal agreement between a Local Planning Authority and a developer, intended to regulate the development or use of land in a way that cannot be controlled by planning conditions.
Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI):	Sites designated in the Plan as being of local nature conservation importance, and including County Wildlife Sites, County Geological Sites, Ancient Woodlands and sites identified locally by the Council in consultation with local experts.
Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI):	Sites so designated because of their flora, fauna, or geological or physiographical features by the English Nature under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 and the Countryside Act 1968. Certain measures are afforded by this and subsequent legislation to conserve these sites.
Sites and Ancient Monument Record:	Database developed by Durham County Council identifying archaeological sites of all types, which are known or thought to exist in the District.
Stallriser:	The vertical panel between ground level and the underside of the display window in a traditional shop front.
Statutory Undertaker:	Provider of an essential service such as water, gas, electricity or telecommunications.
Structure Plan:	Strategic land use Plan produced by County Councils. The County Durham Structure Plan was adopted in March 1999 and will last until 2006.
Sustainable Development:	Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs; development which can be accommodated without resulting in unrecoverable environmental damage.
Tandem Development:	Tandem development consists of one house immediately behind another and sharing the same access. It is a generally unacceptable form of development.
Temporary Accommodation:	For the purpose of Policy H5, temporary accommodation can include residential caravans or portable wooden structures (which can be better suited than a caravan to family accommodation and adverse weather conditions).

Tree Preservation Order:	Order made by the Council under Section 198 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, to prevent the felling or pruning of trees of high amenity value without its consent.
Traffic Calming:	Methods of slowing down traffic, usually in residential areas, by means of 'road humps', narrowing the width of roads and other measures.
Traffic Management:	The promotion of the most efficient use of existing road capacity for all users, particularly pedestrians, cyclists and public transport. It usually involves rearranging traffic flows, controlling flows at inter-sections and regulating the times and places for on-street parking.
Travel to Work Area:	Geographic area defined by the Department of Employment having regard to travel to work patterns and used for employment data publication purposes (e.g. unemployment rates).
Traveller:	A person of nomadic lifestyle, whatever their race or origin. It does not include members of an organised ground of travelling showmen, or persons engaged in travelling circuses.
Use Class/Use Class Order:	The Town and Country (Use Classes) Order 1987, places uses of Classes Order land and buildings into a number of categories, or Classes, planning permission is generally required for changes of use between classes, but not within a class. (Refer to Appendix 2).
Visitor Accommodation:	Any permanent building or structure designed to provide accommodation for visitors e.g. hotels, travel lodges, guest houses, bed and breakfast accommodation, University accommodation (outside term time) and youth hostels.
Wildlife Corridors:	Linear areas of countryside or linear landscape features such as woods or rivers or, within built-up areas, corridors of open spaces. They provide important resources for wildlife and links that allow movement of wildlife between town and county.
Windfall Housing Site:	A site not identified in the Local Plan which may become available for development during the Plan period. It comprises a previously developed site or a site currently in another use which unexpectedly becomes available.
World Heritage Site:	A cultural or natural site of outstanding universal value whose protection should be a matter of concern to mankind as a whole. These sites are nominated by individual governments and there are currently 14 in England including Durham Cathedral and Castle.

APPENDIX 1

GOVERNMENT PLANNING POLICY GUIDANCE NOTES

PPG1	(1997)	General Policies and Principles
PPG2	(1995)	Green Belts
PPG3	(2000)	Housing
PPG4	(1992)	Industrial and Commercial Development and Small Firms
PPG5	(1992)	Simplified Planning Zones
PPG6	(1996)	Town Centres and Retail Development
PPG7	(1997)	The Countryside – Environmental Quality and Economic and Social Development
PPG8	(2001)	Telecommunications
PPG9	(1994)	Nature Conservation
PPG10	(1994)	Planning and Waste Management
PPG11	(2000)	Regional Planning
PPG12	(1999)	Development Plans
PPG13	(2001)	Transport
PPG14	(1990)	Development on Unstable Land
PPG15	(1994)	Planning and the Historic Environment
PPG16	(1990)	Archaeology and Planning
PPG17	(2002)	Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation
PPG18	(1991)	Enforcing Planning Control
PPG19	(1992)	Outdoor Advertisement Control
PPG20	(1992)	Coastal Planning
PPG21	(1992)	Tourism
PPG22	(1993)	Renewable Energy
PPG23	(1994)	Planning and Pollution Control
PPG24	(1994)	Planning and Noise
PPG25	(2001)	Development and Flood Risk

APPENDIX 2

SUMMARY OF TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (USE CLASSES) ORDER 1987

Reference Guide:

Class A1:	Shops
Class A2:	Financial and Professional Services
Class A3:	Food and Drink
Class B1:	Business Use
	(a) Offices
	(b) Research and Development
	(c) Light Industry
Class B2:	General Industrial
Class B8:	Storage and Distribution
Class C1:	Hotels, Boarding Houses and Guest Houses
Class C2:	Residential Institutions
Class C3:	Dwelling Houses
Class D1:	Non-Residential Institutions
Class D2:	Assembly and Leisure
Sui Generis:	Uses which do not fall within any Class

Use Classes Order Definitions:

Set out in this Appendix is a guide to the definitions of Use Classes referred to in this Plan. The Town and Country Planning (Uses Classes) Order 1987 is a statutory order of land use defining separate classes of development.

1. The following is a summary of the use classes defined in the order:-

Class A1: **SHOPS** of all types including superstores and retail warehouses; also includes hairdressers, dry cleaners, sandwich bars, travel agents, showrooms, except car showrooms.

- Class A2: **FINANCIAL AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES** to visiting members of the public, including banks, building societies, estate agents, betting offices.
- Class A3: **FOOD AND DRINK** including restaurants, pubs, wine bars and hot food takeaway.
- Class B1: **BUSINESS USE**
- (a) offices (other than those falling in Class A2)
 - (b) research and development, studios, laboratories, high tech developments
 - (c) any industrial process provided the use could be carried out in any residential area without detriment to amenity by reason of noise, vibration, smell, fumes, smoke, soot, ash, dust or grit.
- Class B2: **GENERAL INDUSTRIAL** - any industrial use not falling within Class B1.
- Class B8: **STORAGE AND DISTRIBUTION** warehouses including wholesale cash and carry.
- Class C1: **HOTELS BOARDING AND GUEST HOUSES**
- Class C2: **RESIDENTIAL INSTITUTIONS** including hospitals, nursing homes, residential schools and colleges.
- Class C3: **DWELLING HOUSES** occupied by a single person or family or by not more than six persons living together as a single household.
- Class D1: **NON-RESIDENTIAL INSTITUTIONS** including religious buildings, public halls, museums, medical services and educational establishments.
- Sui Generis: Many uses do not fall within any Class, and are therefore described as sui generis - a class of their own. For example, theatres, launderettes, amusement centres, car showrooms, petrol filling stations and car hire offices are among uses which are specifically excluded from any of the defined Classes.

APPENDIX 3

PROVISION OF OPEN SPACE IN NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OF 10 OR MORE DWELLINGS

Calculation of Standard Set out in Policy R2

Informal Play Spaces (0.4ha per 1,000 population)

$$\begin{aligned} 0.4 \text{ ha} &= 1.0 \text{ acre} \\ &= 4840 \text{ sq yds} \\ &= 4000 \text{ sq metres} \end{aligned}$$

Average household size 2.47

$$\begin{aligned} \cdot 10 \text{ dwellings} &= 24.7 \text{ people} \\ \cdot 1,000 \text{ population} &= \frac{1000}{24.7} = 405 \text{ dwellings} \end{aligned}$$

$$\text{If 405 dwellings} = 4000 \text{ sq metres}$$

$$\text{then 10 dwellings} = \frac{4000}{405} \times 10 = \mathbf{98.8 \text{ sq metres}}$$

Rounded up to 100 sq metres

Amenity Spaces (0.8ha per 1,000 population)

$$\begin{aligned} 0.8 \text{ ha} &= 2.0 \text{ acres} \\ &= 9680 \text{ sq yds} \\ &= 8000 \text{ sq metres} \end{aligned}$$

Average household size 2.47

$$\begin{aligned} \cdot 10 \text{ dwellings} &= 24.7 \text{ people} \\ \cdot 1,000 \text{ population} &= \frac{1000}{24.7} = 405 \text{ dwellings} \end{aligned}$$

$$\text{If 405 dwellings} = 8000 \text{ sq metres}$$

$$\text{then 10 dwellings} = \frac{8000}{405} \times 10 = 197.5 \text{ sq metres}$$

Rounded up to 200 sq metres

APPENDIX 4

HOUSING SITES (OF 10 OR MORE DWELLINGS) WITH PLANNING PERMISSION AT 1ST APRIL, 2002 (INCLUDING SITES WITH LESS THAN 10 DWELLINGS REMAINING AND SITES AT GILESGATE & USHAW MOOR (FORMER ALLOCATION SITES IN REVISED DEPOSIT DRAFT PLAN, NOW WITH PERMISSION))

	Dwellings Remaining
College View, Bearpark (Cussins Homes)	20
Neville Court (Farnley Mount)	12
Bowburn Hall Hotel, Bowburn	9
Ladysmith Terrace, Ushaw Moor	50
Framwelgate Peth (Bryant)	60
West of Waterhouses	18
Former Assessment Centre (Brandon)	5
Lawson Road, Bowburn	20
Former Council Depot	30
Langley Moor, Byers Garth, Sherburn House	12
51-83 New Elvet, Durham	35
Former Car showroom, Nevilles Cross	40
South of High View, Ushaw Moor	149
R/O 77 & 82/84 Gilesgate	55
Total	515
 Sites with planning permission at 1st April 2002 but considered unlikely to be developed:	
Blue House Pharmacy, Carrville	14
East of Fairfalls Terrace, New Brancepeth	20
Broom Lane, Ushaw Moor	6
SW of Station Road, West Rainton	193
Former School, Rock Terrace, New Brancepeth	14
Total	247

APPENDIX 5

ASSESSMENT OF RETAIL AND NON-RETAIL FRONTAGES - POLICIES S2 AND S3

The following are INCLUDED within the total frontage length:

- i) All retail and commercial frontages (A1, A2, A3, B1), including any display windows, doors or blank walls forming part of the unit.
- ii) Non retail frontages which are clearly part of the overall street frontage, rather than being set back from it.
- iii) Entrances to basements, upper floors or the rear of premises.
- iv) Outstanding planning consents are included when calculating frontages in particular uses.
- v) Both sides of the street are included when the overall frontage is calculated.

The following are EXCLUDED from the total frontage length:

- i) Access points to side streets, alley ways or service yards.
- ii) Buildings set back from or behind the street frontage (e.g. Saddlers Yard, properties to the rear of 19-21 Elvet Bridge).
- iii) Shop front vennels down side streets or alley ways.
- iv) Covered market and its entrances.
- v) Vacant sites without planning permission (but not vacant buildings).
- vi) Elvet and Framwelgate Bridges, where they cross the River Wear.

APPENDIX 6

CONVERSION OF TRADITIONAL FARM BUILDINGS

INTRODUCTION

The City of Durham includes a large rural area containing over three hundred farms, mostly situated in open countryside. Changing patterns in rural land use, farm management and countryside recreation have combined to leave many of these farms either redundant or marginally economic, and consequently open to new forms of rural diversification. The successful conversion of traditional farms will preserve the local heritage, make good use of sound buildings and stimulate the rural economy.

This Appendix sets down the Council's standards on achieving a good quality of design in traditional farm conversions to ensure that such buildings are conserved without loss of their visual importance, architectural or historic value through inappropriate alterations to either the farm's fabric or its rural setting.

A traditional Farm Building is defined as a building, usually in a farmland setting. The construction of which is typical of vernacular buildings with an agricultural purpose.

This guidance should be read in conjunction with Policy E8.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The conversion of traditional farm buildings requires planning permission for change of use. Where proposals require alterations to the external appearance of the buildings the Council will require the submission of the following information.

Farm Statement Although it is not now necessary for the Council to be satisfied that a building is redundant, it is important that the consequences of the proposed conversion are fully set out in a farm statement. How will the land be farmed after conversion? Will there be a need for new, compensatory farm buildings for the displaced agricultural use? Is the conversion part of a wider farm amalgamation scheme? In particular, the applicant will need to consider whether residential accommodation is needed for farm workers in the future farm strategy. The option of retaining such accommodation in the event of the disposal of the converted buildings must be carefully considered, as future new houses would be resisted outside settlement boundaries.

Structural Condition Survey Applications must be accompanied by a report from a qualified structural engineer demonstrating that the building is capable of adaptation with little or no rebuilding of the existing structure. Areas of poor structure should be repaired in situ rather than rebuilt. Extensive rebuilding would constitute new building, which is contrary to policy. Further demolition/rebuilding proposals over and above any limited areas agreed as part of the planning approval may change a repaired building into a rebuilt one and not be acceptable.

Architectural Survey of Traditional Farm Buildings Conversion of farm buildings to a new use inevitably means the loss of the agricultural function, the purpose for which they were designed and built. It is important that this loss of historical tradition is preserved by an adequate drawn, written and photographic record of the farm whilst still in agricultural use. Existing survey drawings are an essential part of all planning applications and the requirement here is no more than that provided by the most competent architects and plan drawers. Full survey plans, sections and elevations to at least 1:100 scale identifying all internal and external architectural and agriculture features, roof truss position etc. is needed. The original agricultural purpose of the buildings should be identified, supported where possible by the evidence of existing or previous farmers. A comprehensive internal and external photographic survey should be deposited covering the farm group. Supplementary historical or archival information should be supplied if this is readily available. This material is required as part of the architectural assessment that needs to be made, and also informs the applicant and the Council when considering the changes to the building to accommodate the new use.

LISTED BUILDINGS

The most important of the City's traditional agricultural buildings are listed and any proposals to convert them will require listed building consent in addition to planning permission for change of use. Their listing often reflects their quality as a good example of a particular agricultural use eg barn, cow byre, gin-gan (horse engine house). Clearly if a proposed new use destroys essential features of the building its listed character will suffer and the proposal could not be supported. The subdivision of a large internal space such as a barn, into floors and rooms may critically damage its character and would be unacceptable.

The problems of residential conversion can be particularly severe. In the case of Grade I and II* buildings standards must be especially high and the Council will liaise closely with English Heritage on such proposals. It is unlikely that any form of residential conversion would be acceptable for such buildings.

Grade II buildings are often listed because they are relatively unaltered examples of a particular building type. Care is therefore needed so that their special interest is not ruined.

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The character of traditional farm buildings is derived from their original functions as working agricultural buildings. Every effort must be made to retain the original simplicity of scale and form, and to alter the buildings as little as possible, externally and internally.

A basic principle central to the successful conversion is that the interior layout is dictated by the position of the building's existing door and window openings, allowing a more imaginative interior layout and retaining more of the building's character and historic integrity.

Features of architectural and historic interest such as large door openings, hay loft doors, ventilation slits, external stone steps, gin-gans, threshing floors, pigeon lofts etc. should be retained and incorporated within the design proposals.

DESIGN DETAILS

Roofs

Conversion requires a structurally sound building and existing roof structures will in most cases be retained. Proposals for wholesale replacement will be resisted. Older roof structures or intrinsic historic interest will require particularly careful conservation.

Replacement of **roof coverings** may well be necessary and the use of stone slate, Westmoreland or Welsh slate or traditional sized clay pantile will depend upon an examination of the current or original roof covering. Uniformity of roof covering throughout a farm group is not a desirable aim if the evidence of the individual buildings points to a mixture of traditional materials. Artificial slates, concrete tile and modern sheet materials are not appropriate.

Roof pitches on farm buildings are generally unbroken and dormer windows are alien and damaging to farm groups. Rooflights, where used to reduce new wall openings, must be very limited in size and number, and preferably set flush with the roof.

Roof space ventilation must be achieved by concealed methods, such as at the eaves, rather than by the use of visible proprietary methods.

Rainwater goods should be cast iron, or timber where extant, set on traditional spiked gutters, without fascia boards, and painted black or to match the background material eg stone (O8 B 21).

Existing stone ridges should be reused and split pantile ridges, bedded in lime-based mortar should be replicated where present, in preference to an overlarge clay ridge tile on a pantile roof. Gables should be generally finished with a cement fillet where no parapet is present.

Chimney stacks are not a traditional feature of farm buildings, as opposed to the farmhouse where they are, of course, a common feature. Consequently their introduction can have a domesticating effect and should be avoided in preference to a simple metal flue or low ridge vent (when appropriate). Conversion seeks to retain the agricultural, non-residential character of the building, not achieve a replication of the farmhouse or cottage.

Walls

Walling materials vary throughout the District, their distribution being generally more localised than roofing material. Careful examination of the existing buildings is essential so that any new or repaired work can reflect the traditional materials and details. Generally carboniferous sandstone in the west and central parts of the District gives way to magnesian limestone in the east, with a belt of brick farm buildings within the clay-lined valley of the River Wear. The material for dressings around openings and corner stones may vary, particularly where magnesian limestone is the main walling material, and brick or dressed sandstone was imported to strengthen the construction.

Existing stone coursing must be respected in any repair or rebuilding work and, generally speaking, a 1:2:9 cement/lime/sharp sand mortar, flush pointed just behind the face of the stone and stiff brushed after partial setting is recommended. Sample pointing will usually be a condition of any planning approval.

Rendering is not usual on farm buildings but where traditional, disguising poor walling material, may be reinstated with an appropriate wood floated, lime based render.

Walling features such as ventilation slits, lamp recesses, pigeon boxes and owl holes should be retained where possible.

Openings

The provision of window and door openings is often the most critical aspect of the conversion of traditional farm buildings, particularly where residential conversion is proposed. Farm buildings rarely have many windows and such doors and windows as they do have are usually located on the inward looking elevations of farm ranges, particularly around the central courtyard. This reflects their function and also an awareness of the need to limit openings that look outward to the wind and weather particularly from the west and north. Thus achieving light in a conversion scheme, and often views out across the open countryside in residential schemes, without introducing new openings in blank walls, poses a real problem. For this reason alone residential conversion is often not an appropriate option for reusing a traditional farm building.

Window openings should ideally be limited to existing windows, or the reopening of blocked doors or windows. Where limited new windows are unavoidable, particularly on previously blank elevations, they should be kept to a minimum and of a scale, position and type compatible with the character of the building. The introduction of symmetrically arranged regular window openings must be avoided as it imposes a wholly domestic character on the building.

Window surrounds will usually be constructed from the main walling material (see above) though the best guidance is to examine the existing building's traditional detail and reflect this in any new opening.

Window types and glazing depend upon the overall design of the conversion and a range of solutions may be appropriate. Examination of existing openings may influence the design of any new windows. As a general rule traditional domestic joinery such as sash windows will not be present in a simple cow byre and new windows should not become over-sophisticated for the buildings they are to go in.

Consequently multi-paned sashes may be appropriate for the farmhouse but not for its farm buildings, where simpler proportioned openings (square or vertical) may be better. In many instances a single glazed sheet may be appropriate. Upper floor hay loft doors may be adapted for glazing but the door should be retained or rehung in keeping with the building's character.

Similarly ground floor door openings or arched cart sheds may be adapted for glazing of a simple design but doors where present should be retained and may serve a valuable security measure when the building is temporarily unoccupied.

Window frames should reflect the existing frame positions, which are usually set back 75-100mm from the face of the wall, often deeper in the case of hay lofts. In ventilation slits the glazing should be deeply recessed so that the frame is not visible.

Door openings on farm buildings may be pedestrian or vehicular in scale though Durham has few large barn doors. The retention of good traditional doors is desirable and new doors of a simple plank (ledged, braced and battened) type is appropriate. Georgian style panelled doors, fanlights, UPVC doors and other elaborately moulded doors are not appropriate and should be avoided. Only limited glazing should be incorporated into a door.

Dark painted timber frames should be used for all openings. White painted or UPVC window frames will not generally be considered appropriate for use in conversion schemes. Stained timber frames may be acceptable.

Interiors

The design of the interior of any building directly affects its external appearance. In the case of farm conversion the design process must be a combination of developing the internal spaces within a largely pre-determined external envelope of existing openings.

In the hands of a creative designer, this process can create exciting and imaginative solutions, particularly those that develop the opportunities inherent in open plan/open roofed buildings.

Detailed interior design is only relevant to the local planning authority with regard to listed buildings (see above) but experience indicates that conversion schemes based on a standardised solution, that ignore the existing external envelope, will not be supported.

EXTENSIONS AND GARAGES

New uses should be capable of accommodation within traditional farm buildings without the need for enlargement. In the case of residential conversions this accommodation should extend to garaging and, where demand is likely, the provision of stabling. Over development of existing buildings with the consequent need for new ancillary garages/stores etc. will be resisted.

Porches will not be favourably considered and should be avoided in preference to the provision of internal lobbies.

Extensions will only be considered in exceptional cases where essential to the satisfactory conversion of the building and where acceptable must be designed in a traditional manner.

SETTING AND EXTERNAL SPACES

The sensitive conversion of farm buildings can be ruined by inappropriate treatment to surrounding spaces and boundaries. All planning applications for conversions must be accompanied by details of all external spaces including boundary walls and fences, layout and surfacing of all drives etc., soft and hard landscaping. All existing trees must be accurately plotted.

Boundary Walls where extant and traditionally constructed should be kept wherever possible, and new walls built to match in a manner that respects the farm layout. Larchlap type fencing is usually inappropriate on conversion schemes and examination of the farm's traditional boundaries (post and wire, hedges, dry-stone walls) will usually point to the most appropriate material. The introduction of formal gate piers with fussy ball finials is invariably wrong on farm conversions.

Landscaping should be kept simple and robust. Soft planting that suburbanises or domesticates the character, such as coniferous hedges and trees, will be resisted. Block paving similarly may be too urban for farm yards and courts, where tarmac with a fully rolled aggregate surface, or compacted dolomite may be more successful.

Shelter Belts are a traditional sight on most farm groups, comprising a copse of trees, usually to the west of the buildings to break up the prevailing winds. These are important landscape features and their conservation, under-planting, or full restoration may be sought as an essential part of any conversion proposal.

WILDLIFE

Derelict buildings in the countryside can, on occasions, have visual appeal and more often have value as a wildlife habitat. Attention is drawn to the provisions of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 with reference to the protection of owls, bats and bat roosts which may occupy redundant farm buildings. Where remedial timber treatment or some other building work is proposed at a site where bats are present, English Nature and Durham Bat Group must be consulted.

APPENDIX 7

DfT POLICY IN RELATION TO DEVELOPMENT NEAR MOTORWAYS AND TRUNK ROADS

1 Motorways

The Highways Agency has a strict policy of not allowing direct access from private development to motorways or motorway slip roads unless development relates to motorway service areas, motorway maintenance compounds, or, exceptionally, other inter modal transport infrastructure. The Secretary of state will direct Local Planning Authorities to refuse planning applications for development whose access arrangements breach this policy.

2 Trunk Road

On trunk roads it is clearly necessary in general to restrict the formation of new accesses to them if they are to continue to perform their function as routes for the safe and expeditious movement of long distance through traffic. A particularly strict policy is appropriate to fast stretched of rural trunk road and to trunk roads of near motorway standard, inside and outside urban area.

Where a development is likely to generate a material increase in traffic (as defined in PPG13), either via an existing direct access or via an otherwise acceptable new access to a trunk road, which would result in the access becoming overloaded, the Secretary of State would advise (but if necessary direct) the Local Planning Authority to refuse the planning application. More likely, if improvements to the existing or proposed new access could be designed consistent with the Secretary of State's 15 year design horizon, normally applied to those schemes he initiates himself, to provide the additional capacity, the Secretary of State could advise (or again, if necessary, direct), the Local Planning Authority to impose conditions on any planning permission that the development should not occur unless and until those improvements have been carried out.

The Highways Agency would thus not expect to object to developments consistent with the proposals in the Local Plan subject to the completion of any highway works which if considered necessary and acceptable in relation to the trunk road access such that the traffic generated by the development, together with all other traffic, could be accommodated forward to the design year (normally 15 years from first opening of the development).

Where a development is likely to generate a material increase in traffic on the main link of a trunk road, the Agency would not normally object, subject to the completion of any necessary and acceptable highway works, which leave the trunk road no worse off than had the development not proceeded. In other words, where a developer agrees to fund an improvement to the highway which, taken together with the impact of the development, would leave expected conditions on the trunk road much the same as those anticipated without the development, then such a solution would in general be acceptable to the Agency.

