

# *Local Development Framework*

## Local Development Scheme

(DRAFT)



WEAR  
VALLEY  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

**February 2005**

# Contents

	Page No.
1. Introduction – A New Approach to Preparing Development Plans	1-2
2. The Wear Valley District Local Development Scheme	3-4
3. Ownership of the Local Development Framework – Stakeholder and Community Involvement	5
4. Proposed Transitional Arrangements	6
5. Annual Monitoring Report	7
6. Local Development Document Profiles:	8
<i>Statement of Community Involvement</i>	9
<i>Core Strategy</i>	10
<i>Development Control DPD</i>	11
<i>Housing DPD</i>	12
<i>South &amp; East Bishop Auckland Area Action Plan DPD</i>	13
<i>Proposals Map</i>	14
7. Supporting Statement	15-20
<i>Appendix 1 - Content of Local Development Framework</i>	
<i>Appendix 2 - Relationship of Local Development Documents</i>	
<i>Appendix 3 - Local Development Framework Time Line</i>	
<i>Appendix 4 - Schedule of Saved Local Plan Policies</i>	
<i>Appendix 5 - Evidence base</i>	
<i>Appendix 6 - Glossary</i>	
<i>Appendix 7 – Map of DPDP Coverage</i>	

# 1. Introduction – A New Approach To Preparing Development Plans

- 1.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires the Council to prepare and maintain a scheme, the *Local Development Scheme* (LDS,) setting out the documents to be produced by the Council that will form the future planning policy framework for Wear Valley District. The latter, known as the *Local Development Framework*, will provide the basis for all planning decisions under this new legislation, and will comprise statutory planning documents having the same weight as the old style District Local Plan that they will supersede.
- 1.2 *The Local Development Framework*, replacing the District Local Plan which prior to the introduction of the new system was due to expire in March 2006, will constitute a portfolio of documents together making up the development strategy and spatial vision for the whole of Wear Valley District. These documents will include;
  - *Development Plan Documents (DPDs)* which will initially comprise of a *Core Strategy*, a Development Control DPD, a Housing DPD, one, *Action Area Plan (AAP)* and a proposals map
  - *Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)* supporting policies within *DPDs*
  - *Local Development Scheme (LDS)* detailing each local development Document to be produced and timescales involved.
  - *Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)* specifying how the authority intends to involve communities and stakeholders in the process
  - *Annual monitoring report (AMR)*
- 1.3 Collectively these documents will allocate sites for development, indicate the criteria for determining planning applications and show how the Community Plan and other strategies for the District will be implemented through the land-use planning system.
- 1.4 The *Development Plan Documents* will constitute statutory planning documents, and all planning permissions must accord with these unless other material considerations are so compelling as to prevail. *DPDs* will be subject to independent examination by a Planning Inspector who will take into account representations made and may recommend changes, which the Council must accept before documents can be formally adopted.
- 1.5 *Supplementary Planning Documents* are not statutory planning documents as such but are intended to give guidance and information on

how to comply with the policies set out in the *DPDs*. They will also be subject to full public consultation and representations will be carefully considered. However, because *SPDs* contain only additional guidance and not actual policies, they will not be subject to independent examination by a Planning Inspector.

- 1.6 The *Development Plan Documents* and *Supplementary Planning Documents* will be known collectively as *Local Development Documents (LDDs)*.
- 1.7 This document, the *Local Development Scheme* has been prepared to show the documents that the Council will be initially producing, what they will include, and the programme for their preparation. This new system is not a static process. In the interests of effective management and clarity the *LDS* will be reviewed, updated annually in response to annual monitoring findings and performance and a revised scheme published if applicable. Stakeholders will be kept informed of progress and any change. This process will ensure that the timetable for work and documents proposed remain relevant and attainable. It will also give scope for new *Local Development Documents* to be identified and incorporated into the work programme. It is important to note that this new system is a continuous process and provides flexibility to delete or add to the initial portfolio of *Local Development Documents* proposed according to future circumstances.
- 1.8 The *Local Development Framework*, together with the Regional Spatial Strategy prepared by the Regional Planning Body (RPB) will comprise the statutory development plan. As this *Local Development Scheme* illustrates, the *DPDs* will progressively replace the current, adopted District Local Plan, whilst the *Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS)* will replace existing Regional Planning Guidance and the County Durham Structure Plan. Minerals and Waste Development Frameworks to be prepared by Durham County Council will in turn supersede the County Durham Minerals and Waste Local Plans.
- 1.9 The current planning documents that will remain valid until superseded are:-
  - Wear Valley District Local Plan, adopted 1997
  - Regional Planning Guidance for the North East 2002
  - Durham County Structure Plan
  - County Durham Minerals and Waste Local Plan
  - Planning Policy Guidance Notes and Statements
- 1.10 In order to make the best use of available resources in the carrying out of work and the production of documents, it is the intention to co-operate closely with the other six Durham districts and Durham County Council, where appropriate, to institute joint working arrangements.

## 2. The Local Development Scheme

- 2.1 This Local Development Scheme is a public statement identifying which *Local Development Documents* will initially be produced, in what order and when. It is the starting point for all interested parties to find out about the Council's planning policies in respect to a particular area or a particular issue within Wear Valley District, together with the status of those policies. It illustrates the relationship between the individual documents and how they fit into the Council's wider strategies. Importantly this *Local Development Scheme* provides clarification as to the proposed arrangements for making the transition between the existing and emerging development plans.
- 2.2 Considerable preparatory public consultation work has already been carried out on the issues likely to be of concern to the public and stakeholders. The content of the *Local Development Scheme* therefore reflects these concerns.
- 2.3 Draft versions of this *Local Development Scheme* have been the subject of consultation with Government Office For the North East, The Planning Inspectorate and have been approved by the Council.
- 2.4 The Wear Valley District *Local Development Framework* will consist of the *Statement of Community Involvement*, the *Core Strategy a generic DC policy DPD*, a *housing DPD* and 1 Action Area Plan based upon an area of the district where the requirement for significant change and the opportunity for delivery is known to exist.
- 2.5 It is anticipated that the *Local Development Framework* for the District will also include a number of other *Action Area Plans* and *Supplementary Planning Documents*, however the number, subject and timing of these are still to be determined at present and are therefore not detailed in this initial *Local Development Scheme*. This point will be clarified in updated *Local Development Schemes* to be prepared in subsequent years.
- 2.6 A summary of the contents of the *Local Development Framework* currently proposed is set out in **Appendix 1**.
- 2.7 The table contained within **Appendix 2** illustrates the format and relationships between the *Local Development Documents* that will make up the Wear Valley District Local Development Framework.
- 2.8 The table contained in **Appendix 3** is a simple GANTT chart providing an overview of the proposed timetable for preparation of the new *Local Development Documents*. This includes all documents to be commenced within the first 3 years from enactment.

2.9 It must be recognised that the structure of the Wear Valley District *Local Development Framework* and its timetable for production has evolved over time in response to a number of factors:-

- The commitment that the Council has to producing a *LDF* that is user friendly.
- The need to produce a development plan, which can be flexible enough to be able to respond to future changes in local circumstances, demands or national planning policy direction.
- Co-ordination with the Planning Inspectorate particularly with respect to the period allowed between submission of a *DPD* and receipt of the Inspectors binding report.
- The requirement to have an adopted *Core Strategy* to set an updated planning framework context.
- The need to have regard to the resources that are likely to be available to the local planning authority.
- Identification of areas where requirement for change is a priority and delivery mechanisms are currently available.

### 3. Ownership of the Local Development Framework: Stakeholder and Community Involvement

3.1 The Council has identified four values, which it believes need to be embraced to ensure that all the work it undertakes is well founded. These principles require the Council to be:

- Citizen focused
- Community lead
- Customer centred
- Excellent in management and organisation

3.2 It can be appreciated that three of these 'core values' relate directly to the process of public involvement in the management and development of the District.

3.3 In this regard, the preparation and implementation of the *Local Development Framework* has a key role to play. The Government's companion guide to Planning Policy Statement 12 'Creating Local Development Frameworks' (2004) emphasises community and stakeholder involvement in planning as being a main aim and principle of the new planning system. It also emphasises the need to secure not merely acceptance but rather 'buy-in' to the *LDF* strategy by the community.

*'...it will be important to secure widespread buy-in to the strategy.....This will require a change in LPA's approach to involving the community in plan preparation. Key to this will be a more proactive approach, which values the contributions of a wide range of stakeholders and sections of the community.'*

3.4 Government also expects this method of working to be adopted from the outset, i.e. 'front-loaded.' The means by which the Council will engage with stakeholders throughout the plan making process will be clearly presented in the forthcoming *Statement of Community Involvement*.

3.5 Wear Valley has already undertaken an initial consultation exercise in preparation for the commencement of work on the *LDF* based on the document 'Moving Forward: Wear Valley District Local Plan Review – The Key Issues for Consideration, June 2003.' Some 21 public meetings were held with a variety of organisations throughout the District, and comments were received in writing, by telephone and e-mail. It is important that this type of involvement is continued and expanded upon as an integral part of the preparation of the Local Development Framework. It can be readily appreciated that the Council's adoption of core values centred on public involvement should significantly assist in the process.

## 4. Proposed Transitional Arrangements

- 4.1 The new planning system makes provision for existing policy documents to be 'saved,' so that they will remain a material consideration in the determination of planning applications and safeguard against a 'policy vacuum'. Current documents can be 'saved' under this arrangement to endure for up to three years from the enactment in September 2004 until replaced by a new policy within the *LDF* whichever is sooner.
- 4.2 The existing District Local Plan is due to expire in March 2006 and it is intended that this existing plan will be 'saved' to allow an orderly transfer to the 'new' system. The schedule contained in **Appendix 4** lists all of the policies and supplementary planning guidance contained within the existing Local Plan and indicates as to whether they are to be merged, replaced or deleted. An indication is given as to where those policies to be merged or replaced will be located within the new *Local Development Framework*. However this may be subject to change as work progresses. Any such change will be identified in subsequent *Local Development Schemes*.
- 4.3 It is anticipated that the current timetable would require the existing Wear Valley District Local Plan policies to be 'saved' beyond the 3-year period currently advocated in the planning legislation to safeguard against a 'policy vacuum'. This is likely to be unavoidable given the need placed on the Local Planning Authority due to the age of the existing Wear Valley District Local Plan to have an adopted *Core Strategy* upon which related *DPDs* can then be developed. This is coupled with the Government's requirement for the Local Authority to be realistic in terms of what can be delivered and therefore the need to prioritise areas of work. Any change in the timetable for the production of the *DPDs*, and therefore the definitive need to 'save' policies for an additional period, will be identified in the subsequent Annual Monitoring Report and will require appropriate justification to the Government Office.
- 4.4 Any existing *supplementary planning guidance* linked to a policy in the Local Plan will also be saved according to the life of the policy to which it relates.
- 4.5 As *DPDs* are adopted the existing *Proposals Map* will be modified, thus eventually superseding all of the elements of the existing Local Plan.
- 4.6 The adopted County Structure Plan also forms part of the current development plan. This will be saved for 3 years from enactment.



## 5. Annual Monitoring Report

- 5.1 The Council is required to continually monitor and report annually on the effectiveness of policies and proposals set out in the *Core Strategy* and other *LDDs*.
- 5.2 There is a requirement to publish the first such report (*AMR*) by the end of December 2005, which covers the period April 2004 – April 2005 and assesses:
  - whether the Council is likely to meet its targets and milestones as set out in *LDDs*, and if not, the reasons why and how it intends to remedy the situation;
  - the impact of *planning policy implementation* on other targets set at national, regional or local level;
  - the need to adjust or replace any policies to meet sustainable development objectives or changing national or regional planning guidance
  - assessing any significant sustainability effects of the plan
  - the action required if policies need to be replaced
- 5.3 The Council intends to publish subsequent *Annual Monitoring Reports* by the end of July each year thereafter relating to the preceding financial year.
- 5.4 The Council will act upon the findings of the *AMR* where necessary. Consideration of required changes, if any, will need to be made and will be initiated in the subsequent review of the *Local Development Scheme*.
- 5.5 Reviews of the *LDDs* may be full or partial depending upon the change in circumstance that requires the review to be undertaken. Partial review may be applicable in instances where only part of the *LDD* does not appear to be effective. Full review will be considered if changes required are considered to be more fundamental. In any case the *Core Strategy* will be reviewed in line with the review period of the *Regional Spatial Strategy*, that is to say on a 5 year basis and other *DPDs* reviewed every 3 years.

## 6. Local Development Document Profiles

- 6.1 The relationship between all of the documents comprising the Wear Valley Local Development Framework is shown in **Appendix 2**, whilst an overview of the timetable as it is anticipated is shown in **Appendix 3**.
- 6.2 More detailed information on all of the proposed *Local Development Documents* to be prepared by the Council as outlined in **Appendix 1** is given in the following '*Local Development Document*' Profiles. This information includes details of their roles and subject matter; geographic coverage; status; chains of conformity; indicative timetable; production arrangements, milestones to adoption and the review process to be followed.
- 6.3 It should be noted that the timetable for *LDD* production has been structured assuming the availability of the Planning Inspectorate to hold examinations. An early warning of the programme has been given to the Planning Inspectorate via G.O.N.E (***and a service level agreement secured – awaiting confirmation***).
- 6.4 As mentioned in paragraph 4.5 the current *Proposals Map* will be modified to reflect the progression of policies and proposals contained within the emerging *LDDs* until full policy coverage is reached. This map will continue to be modified in accordance with the outcomes of subsequent review of the *LDDs*.

<b>Statement of Community Involvement</b>		
<b>DOCUMENT DETAILS</b>		
<b>Role and Subject</b>	Council's service level agreement with the community and stakeholders, setting out means for engagement in the planning process in terms of development plan preparation and determination of planning applications.	
<b>Geographic coverage</b>	District-wide and immediate adjoining area.	
<b>Status</b>	<i>A Local Development Document forming part of the Local Development Framework.</i>	
<b>Conformity</b>	Must meet at least the minimum requirements as set out in regulations issued by the Government. Should also follow the Council's corporate communications strategy.	
<b>TIMETABLE.</b>		
<i>*Including Key Milestones.</i>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Stage</b>
	April 2005	<i>Commencement of document production. *</i>
	April – July 2005	Preparation of draft SCI with engagement.
	August – Sept 2005	<i>Public participation on draft. *</i>
	October – Nov 2005	Preparation of submission statement.
	December 2005	<i>Submission to Secretary of State. *</i>
	December 2005 – February 2006	Pre examination consideration of representations.
	April 2006	<i>Pre examination meeting. *</i>
	June 2006	<i>Commencement of examination. *</i>
	July – Aug 2006	Receipt of Inspectors binding report.
September 2006	<i>Adoption &amp; publication of document. *</i>	
<b>ARRANGEMENTS FOR PRODUCTION.</b>		
<b>Lead organisation</b>	Wear Valley District Council Planning Policy Team	
<b>Management Arrangements</b>	SCI Steering Group to report to Members of Wear Valley District Council Regeneration Committee via LDF Project Management Board.	
<b>Resources</b>	Wear Valley District Council's Planning Policy, Development Control & Economic Regeneration sections and Management Support Unit. Local Strategic Partnership and sub-district partnerships will provide the key links to community planning consultation processes and hard-to-reach groups. Representatives of stakeholder groups to attend meetings and focus groups. Scope for facilitation through partnership working with the voluntary sector, including Planning Aid N.E.	
<b>Community and Stakeholder Involvement</b>	The Community Network which includes the Local Strategic Partnership and sub-district partnerships will provide the key links to community planning consultation processes and hard-to-reach groups. Representatives of stakeholder groups to attend meetings and focus groups	
<b>POST PRODUCTION</b>		
<b>Monitoring</b>	To be monitored through the <i>Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)</i>	
<b>Review</b>	Where a need is highlighted through the <i>AMR</i> or every 3 years, whichever is earlier.	

<b>Core Strategy Document</b>		
<b>DOCUMENT DETAILS</b>		
<b>Role and Subject</b>	Document setting out the overall vision and spatial strategy for Wear Valley District to 2021, including general dwelling requirements and strategic development control policies. Broad locations for known and anticipated development needs will be shown cartographically. Principal transport factors, and relationships to other agreed strategies and neighbouring local authority areas would also be indicated. The document will also set out a monitoring and implementation framework.	
<b>Geographic coverage</b>	The whole of Wear Valley District area.	
<b>Status</b>	<i>Development Plan Document</i>	
<b>Conformity</b>	General conformity with the Regional Spatial Strategy, the District's Community Strategy, and national Planning Policy Statements & Guidance.	
<b>TIMETABLE</b>		
<i>* Including Key milestones.</i>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Stage</b>
	<i>July 2005</i>	<i>Commencement of DPD production. *</i>
	July – November 2005	Preparation of issues & alternative options and initial Sustainability Appraisal report
	<i>December 2005 – April 2006</i>	<i>Engagement on preferred options and formal SA report. *</i>
	May – September 2006	Consideration of representations & discussions with community & stakeholders Preparation of Submission document and amendments to Sustainability Appraisal report
	<i>October 2006</i>	<i>Submission of DPD to Secretary of State &amp; Sustainability Appraisal report. *</i>
	October – November 2006	Public consultation on submission DPD & Sustainability Appraisal report
	November 2006 – January 2007	Pre examination consideration of representations
	<i>February 2007</i>	<i>Pre examination meeting. *</i>
	<i>April 2007</i>	<i>Commencement of examination. *</i>
	October 2007	Receipt of binding Inspectors report.
	<i>December 2007</i>	<i>Adoption &amp; publication of document &amp; revised proposals map.*</i>
<b>ARRANGEMENTS FOR PRODUCTION.</b>		
<b>Lead organisation</b>	Wear Valley District Council Planning Policy Team	
<b>Management Arrangements</b>	LDF Project Management Board will report to Members of Wear Valley District Council Regeneration Committee.	
<b>Evidence</b>	Council Plan; Community Plan and associated background work including community appraisals; Urban Capacity Study; Housing Needs Survey; Housing Stock Condition Survey; Housing Market Assessment; Coal field Housing Study; Retail Study; Employment Land Study; Economic Futures Study; Open Space Assessment; Census; District Demographics; Community Facility Survey, Co Durham Renewable Energy Study, Contaminated Land Study, Local Transport Plan.	
<b>Resources</b>	Wear Valley District Council's Planning Policy Team , including provision of GIS technical assistance/administrative support. Expertise from Development Control Section and cross-departmental working will be drawn in where appropriate. Consultancy assistance in relation to the Economic Futures Study, Housing Market Assessment and Open Space Assessment required. Printing, consultant & consultation costs.	
<b>Community and Stakeholder Involvement</b>	Core strategy produced in line with Statement of Community Involvement. Particular interest groups and sub groups of the Local Strategic Partnership will also be involved.	
<b>POST PRODUCTION.</b>		
<b>Monitoring</b>	To be monitored through the <i>Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)</i>	
<b>Review</b>	Where a need is highlighted through the <i>AMR</i> or every Five years, whichever is earlier.	

<b>Development Control DPD</b>		
<b>DOCUMENT DETAILS</b>		
<b>Role and Subject</b>	Document setting out a limited suite of generic development control policies that will be used to determine all planning applications and proposals. Collectively they will be aimed at delivering the objectives of the <i>Core Strategy DPD</i> .	
<b>Geographic coverage</b>	The whole of Wear Valley District area.	
<b>Status</b>	<i>Development Plan Document</i>	
<b>Conformity</b>	General conformity with the Regional Spatial Strategy, the District's Community Strategy, <i>Core Strategy</i> and national Planning Policy Statements & Guidance.	
<b>TIMETABLE</b>		
* Including Key milestones.	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Stage</b>
	July 2005	<i>Commencement of DPD production. *</i>
	July – November 2005	Preparation of issues & alternative options and initial Sustainability Appraisal report
	December 2005 – April 2006	<i>Engagement on preferred options and formal SA report. *</i>
	May – September 2006	Consideration of representations & discussions with community & stakeholders Preparation of Submission document and amendments to Sustainability Appraisal report
	October 2006	<i>Submission of DPD to Secretary of State &amp; Sustainability Appraisal report. *</i>
	October – November 2006	Public consultation on submission DPD & Sustainability Appraisal report
	November 2006 – January 2007	Pre examination consideration of representations
	February 2007	<i>Pre examination meeting. *</i>
	April 2007	<i>Commencement of examination. *</i>
October 2007	Receipt of binding Inspectors report.	
December 2007	<i>Adoption &amp; publication of document &amp; revised proposals map.*</i>	
<b>ARRANGEMENTS FOR PRODUCTION.</b>		
<b>Lead organisation</b>	Wear Valley District Council Planning Policy Team	
<b>Management Arrangements</b>	LDF Project Management Board will report to Members of Wear Valley District Council Regeneration Committee.	
<b>Evidence</b>	Planning Policy Guidance & Statements: Council Plan; Community Plan and associated background work including community appraisals; Urban Capacity Study; Housing Needs Survey; Housing Stock Condition Survey; Housing Market Assessment; Coal field Housing Study; Retail Study; Bishop Auckland Town Centre Master Plan; County Durham Employment Land Study; Economic Futures Study; Open Space Assessment; Census; District Demographics; Community Facility Survey, Co Durham Renewable Energy Study, Contaminated Land Study, Local transport Plan.	
<b>Resources</b>	Wear Valley District Council's Planning Policy Team, including provision of technical assistance/administrative support. Expertise from Development Control Section and cross-departmental working will be drawn in where appropriate. Consultancy assistance in relation to the Economic Futures Study, Housing Market Assessment and Open Space Assessment required. Printing, consultant & consultation costs.	
<b>Community and Stakeholder Involvement</b>	To be produced in line with Statement of Community Involvement. Particular interest groups and sub groups of the Local Strategic Partnership will also be involved.	
<b>POST PRODUCTION.</b>		
<b>Monitoring</b>	To be monitored through the <i>Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)</i>	
<b>Review</b>	Where a need is highlighted through the <i>AMR</i> or every Five years, whichever is earlier.	

<b>Housing DPD</b>		
<b>DOCUMENT DETAILS.</b>		
<b>Role and Subject</b>	Document providing the framework for the determination of planning proposals by presenting site-specific locations for housing and related social infrastructure.	
<b>Geographic coverage</b>	The whole of Wear Valley District area.	
<b>Status</b>	<i>Development Plan Document</i>	
<b>Conformity</b>	General conformity with the Regional Spatial Strategy, the District's Community Strategy, <i>Core Strategy</i> and national Planning Policy Statements & Guidance.	
<b>TIMETABLE.</b>		
* Including Key milestones.	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Stage</b>
	July 2005	<i>Commencement of DPD production. *</i>
	July – November 2005	Preparation of issues & alternative options and initial Sustainability Appraisal report
	December 2005 – April 2006	<i>Engagement on preferred options and formal SA report. *</i>
	May – September 2006	Consideration of representations & discussions with community & stakeholders Preparation of Submission document and amendments to Sustainability Appraisal report
	October 2006	<i>Submission of DPD to Secretary of State &amp; Sustainability Appraisal report. *</i>
	October – November 2006	Public consultation on submission DPD & Sustainability Appraisal report
	November 2006 – January 2007	Pre examination consideration of representations
	February 2007	<i>Pre examination meeting. *</i>
	April 2007	<i>Commencement of examination. *</i>
	October 2007	Receipt of binding Inspectors report.
	December 2007	<i>Adoption &amp; publication of document &amp; revised proposals map.*</i>
<b>ARRANGEMENTS FOR PRODUCTION.</b>		
<b>Lead organisation</b>	Wear Valley District Council Planning Policy Team	
<b>Management Arrangements</b>	LDF Project Management Board will report to Members of Wear Valley District Council Regeneration Committee.	
<b>Evidence</b>	Council Plan; Community Plan and associated background work including community appraisals; Urban Capacity Study; Housing Needs Survey; Housing Stock Condition Survey; Housing Market Assessment; Coal field Housing Study; Retail Study; County Durham Employment Land Study; Economic Futures Study; Open Space Assessment; Census; District Demographics; Community Facility Survey, Contaminated Land Study, Local Transport Plan.	
<b>Resources</b>	Wear Valley District Council's Planning Policy Team, including provision of GIS technical assistance/administrative support. Expertise from Development Control Section and cross-departmental working with Housing and Community Services Departments will be required. Consultancy assistance in relation to the Economic Futures Study, Housing Market Assessment and Open Space Assessment required. Printing, consultant & consultation costs.	
<b>Community and Stakeholder Involvement</b>	Core strategy produced in line with Statement of Community Involvement. Particular interest groups and sub groups of the Local Strategic Partnership will also be involved.	
<b>POST PRODUCTION.</b>		
<b>Monitoring</b>	To be monitored through the <i>Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)</i>	
<b>Review</b>	Where a need is highlighted through the <i>AMR</i> or every Five years, whichever is earlier.	

## Southern & Eastern Bishop Auckland Action Area Plan

### DOCUMENT DETAILS.

<b>Role and Subject</b>	A strategy with a spatial dimension that focuses upon an area where there is a requirement for social, economic and physical regeneration, an increasing development pressure for housing and retail is coupled with an apathy in employment land take and delivery mechanisms are currently available. The document will contain detailed policies and site proposals aimed at regenerating the area's social, economic and environmental base so as to facilitate an inclusive, sustainable area.
<b>Geographic coverage</b>	Southern and eastern part of Bishop Auckland encompassing Tindale Crescent, Coundon and Dene Valley.
<b>Status</b>	Development Plan Document
<b>Conformity</b>	General conformity with the Regional Spatial Strategy, the District's Community Strategy, <i>Core Strategy</i> , Housing <i>DPD</i> and national Planning Policy Statements & Guidance.

### TIMETABLE.

	Dates	Stage
* Including Key milestones.	July 2005	<i>Commencement of DPD production. *</i>
	July – November 2005	Preparation of issues & alternative options and initial Sustainability Appraisal report
	December 2005 – April 2006	<i>Engagement on preferred options and formal SA report. *</i>
	May – September 2006	Consideration of representations & discussions with community & stakeholders Preparation of Submission document and amendments to Sustainability Appraisal report
	October 2006	<i>Submission of DPD to Secretary of State &amp; Sustainability Appraisal report. *</i>
	October – November 2006	Public consultation on submission DPD & Sustainability Appraisal report
	November 2006 – January 2007	Pre examination consideration of representations
	February 2007	<i>Pre examination meeting. *</i>
	April 2007	<i>Commencement of examination. *</i>
	October 2007	Receipt of binding Inspectors report.
	December 2007	<i>Adoption &amp; publication of document &amp; revised proposals map. *</i>

### ARRANGEMENTS FOR PRODUCTION.

<b>Lead organisation</b>	Wear Valley District Council Planning Policy Team
<b>Management Arrangements</b>	LDF Project Management Board will report to Members of Wear Valley District Council Regeneration Committee.
<b>Evidence</b>	Council Plan; Community Plan and associated background work including community appraisals; Urban Capacity Study; Housing Needs Survey; Housing Stock Condition Survey; Housing Market Assessment; Coal field Housing Study; Retail Study; County Durham Employment Land Study; Economic Futures Study; Open Space Assessment; Census; District Demographics; Community Facility Survey, Contaminated Land Study, Local Transport Plan.
<b>Resources</b>	Wear Valley District Council's Planning Policy Team, including provision of GIS technical assistance/administrative support. Expertise from Development Control Section and cross-departmental working with Housing and Community Services required. Consultancy assistance in relation to the Economic Futures Study, Housing Market Assessment, Durham Coalfields Study and Open Space Assessment required. Printing, consultant & consultation costs.
<b>Community and Stakeholder Involvement</b>	Core strategy produced in line with Statement of Community Involvement. Particular interest groups and sub groups of the Local Strategic Partnership will also be involved.

### POST PRODUCTION.

<b>Monitoring</b>	To be monitored through the <i>Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)</i>
<b>Review</b>	Where a need is highlighted through the <i>AMR</i> or every Five years, whichever is earlier.



<b>Proposals Map</b>		
<b>DOCUMENT DETAILS</b>		
<b>Role and Subject</b>	Cartographic and geographical representation on an Ordnance Survey base of the policies and proposals contained in the LDF	
<b>Geographic coverage</b>	Whole District. Areas requiring greater detail will be shown on the relevant separate inset maps	
<b>Status</b>	<i>Local Development Document</i>	
<b>Conformity</b>	All other <i>Local Development Documents</i> & 'saved' polices	
<b>TIMETABLE</b>		
<b>Dates</b>	<b>Stage</b>	
	N. B. Map to be produced in association with all DPD documents	
May – September 2006	Preparation of submission document	
October 2006	Submit to Secretary of State	
May 2006 – January 2007	Public consultation/consider responses	
April 2007	Examination	
December 2007	Estimated date for adoption	
<b>PRODUCTION ARRANGEMENTS</b>		
<b>Production arrangements</b>	<b>Lead organisation</b>	Planning Policy team
	<b>Management Arrangements</b>	The Planning Policy Team will oversee the production of the Proposals Map, updating it as required at various stages of the process.
	<b>Evidence</b>	None
	<b>Resources</b>	Cartographic, printing and copying costs. An electronic version of the map will also be necessary
	<b>Community and Stakeholder Involvement</b>	No separate consultation required.
<b>POST PRODUCTION</b>		
<b>Monitoring &amp; Review</b>	Minor review only. Changes made immediately to the electronic version at the same time as any DPD is prepared or revised. Paper version reprinted in its entirety as and when the number and significance of changes makes reprinting economically justifiable. Other minor paper alterations published separately to be read in conjunction with most recently printed version.	



## 7. Supporting Statement

- 7.1 This statement sets out and justifies the approach adopted in the Wear Valley District *Local Development Scheme*. It also indicates how resources and the evidence base will be managed.

### **Geographical coverage of Local Development Documents**

- 7.2 The Core Strategy Housing and Generic DC Policy and DPDs will be applicable to the whole of the District. Where possible the core strategy will be presented in a manner that reflects the 3 sub areas of the Crook/Willington, Weardale and Bishop Auckland. This is considered an appropriate approach, given the subtle differences between these three areas and the network of existing community groups that are already in existence. The Action Area Plan will relate to particular defined areas within the District. These areas are illustrated on the map contained in Appendix 7.
- 7.3 Wear Valley District covers some 505 square kilometres of south west County Durham, including part of the former coalfield and Weardale, which extends to the County border with Cumbria. Large tracts of the District comprise landscapes of national significance, including a substantial part of the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The population of the District at the 2001 census was 61,339. The current population trend has been one which is both aging and in decline although recently there has been evidence of stabilisation.
- 7.4 Although it is predominantly rural in character, significant concentrations of population are found in and around the main urban centres of Bishop Auckland, Crook and Willington. These settlements have seen significant housing growth within recent years. However, this is mirrored by continuing evidence of housing market failure within Durham Coalfield zone of the District. Bishop Auckland is the second most important retail centre within Durham County. In recent months the District has begun to experience pressure from the retail sector. There are several other important settlements such as Tow Law and market towns of Wolsingham and Stanhope that serve the rural hinterland.
- 7.5 The District's economy was originally based upon agriculture, mining and traditional manufacturing, all of which have suffered continual decline although employment levels have remained relatively constant. The tourist industry has yet to reach its full potential. In recent months the District has experienced the demise of two significant employers based in Weardale alone. Consequently 15 of the Districts 21 wards fall within the most deprived 20% of wards in the country. The District is also ranked as the most deprived rural authority in the country. Restricted accessibility is compounded by the District's relationship with the adjacent 'City Regions' identified in '*The Northern Way*' Growth Strategy.

These are all likely to be major future challenges for the *Local Development Framework* to tackle.

- 7.6 Notwithstanding the above the environment of much of the District with its absence of congestion, abundance of areas of landscape quality and importance, conservation areas, listed buildings and Scheduled Ancient Monuments is such that the District has the advantage of offering 'quality of life' to existing and prospective investors, workforce, residents and visitors alike which has the potential to be maximised by creative but nonetheless appropriate local planning policy and implementation.

### **Regional and Strategic Planning Context**

- 7.7 The adopted *Structure Plan* makes provision for 2,500 dwellings across the District from 1991 to 2006. The existing *Regional Planning Guidance* identifies annual build rates of 1050 p.a. to 2006 and 1250 p.a. 2006 – 2016 across the whole of the County. Durham County Council is considering the breakdown of this figure into district level totals. However, the new *RSS* for the North-East which is currently being consulted upon is proposing to put forward a reduction in housing figures for the County and the District.

- 7.8 It will be necessary to prepare the *Core Strategy* in conformity with the existing *RPG1* and in advance of the replacement *RSS*. Advice from ODPM is that, despite the interim nature of *RPG1*'s housing policies, the starting point for local planning authorities must be the *RSS* in place at commencement, i.e. *RPG1*. Subsequently, the North East Assembly (NEA) will comment on the Preferred Options Report from an adopted *RSS (RPG1)* perspective, although they can have regard to the emerging review *RSS*.

- 7.9 When the submission *DPDs* are being prepared, a general conformity assessment with the *RSS* will need to be undertaken. Again, this should be based on the existing *RSS (RPG 1)* whilst having regard to the *emerging RSS* (the weight given to the latter depending upon the stage which it has reached.) Subsequently, NEA will be requested to provide its own conformity assessment. In addition, NEA has the option to make representations concerning changes to specific policies and proposals that it would wish to see.

### **Evidence base**

- 7.10 An important element of the production of this District's *LDF* is to provide a strong evidence base upon which to base policies and proposals. This needs to be undertaken early on in the process, kept up to date and cover all aspects of social, economic and environmental characteristics of the District so as to ensure that a 'sound' spatial plan may be produced. Strategic information such as population trends and transport provision will be developed in partnership with Durham County Council.

7.11 Where a *LDD* relies upon the content of a technical or background document this will be made publicly available at the same time or in advance of the publication of the relevant *LDD*.

7.12 The table contained in **Appendix 5** summarises the working progress relating to this matter.

### **The Community Strategy and other external strategies**

7.13 The draft Wear Valley Community Strategy is about to be published and will be the subject of full and meaningful consultation. The final document will include reference to more detailed action plans. The *LDF* has to respond to the aspirations of the Community Strategy and will tailor land use policies and allocations to reflect these aspirations and give practical assistance towards their implementation.

7.14 Other local programmes and strategies exist which contain important and far-reaching development proposals that will have land use implications. These will also need to be taken into account in the preparation of the *LDF* and include;

- Housing Strategy
- Housing Market Assessment (emerging)
- Local Action 21
- Contaminated Land Strategy
- Open Space Strategy (emerging)
- Playing Pitch Strategy
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan
- Durham Coal Fields Study (emerging)
- Weardale Strategy
- Economic Strategy (emerging)
- Bishop Auckland Town Centre Strategy
- Tourism Strategic Action Plan
- Council Plan

7.15 It is important to recognise that public consultation and involvement has been occurring widely and in depth throughout the District for some considerable time on a variety of issues, many of them inter-related. It makes sense to synchronise and rationalise this involvement to achieve economies of scale, a unity of approach and the avoidance of 'consultation fatigue,' which can work in a negative way. Provided the requirements of the *Statement of Community Involvement* are met, then the public's role in *LDF* preparation should be carefully nurtured via the Council's and other stakeholders' continuing programmes of public consultation to ensure all methods are utilised.

### **Joint Working**

7.16 The Durham Development Plan Monitoring Group has been active for several years and includes representatives from the County Council and all Districts in the County. This group already operates as a forum to

discuss changes in the planning system and will remain a valuable resource throughout the preparation of the *LDF*.

7.17 This group has identified several common issues potentially requiring *Supplementary Planning Document* coverage. It has been agreed in principle that there is scope for individual authorities to lead on the preparation of each and assimilate the results across the County. This work will be detailed in subsequent *Local Development Schemes*.

## **Resources**

7.18 The preparation of the *Local Development Framework* represents the bulk of the work of the Council's Planning Policy Team. It is expected to take up at least 90% of two and a half professional officers' time and a substantial part of that of the two technical officers. It also has to be recognised that assistance will be required from the Development Control Team, the Economic Development Team and from other Departments of the Council, particularly Housing and Community Services departments.

7.19 Where there is a lack of expertise or problems with capacity, it will also be necessary to utilise consultancy assistance, whilst the County Council's resources will also be drawn upon, especially in relation to environmental and transport issues.

## **Strategic Environmental Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal**

7.20 All *LDDs* will be subject to a *Sustainability Appraisal (SA)* to begin as soon as a new *LDD* has been conceived. This is referred to in the timeline contained within Appendix 3. This appraisal will consider the environmental, social and economic impacts of the policies and proposals in the *LDD*. This will also enable the *LDF* to comply with the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (European Directive 2001/42/EC.) The *SA* will be continually updated as the *LDF* progresses and methods of community and stakeholder involvement in the *SA* processes will be included in the *SCI*. Additionally, the *SA* of each *LDD* will be subject to a statutory public consultation to run concurrently with the deposit period for the Submission *DPD* or final draft *SPD*.

7.21 Hence, during the preparation of *LDDs*, the Council will

- prepare an environmental report on the significant effects of the proposals and strategies in the 'Preferred Options' and Submission *LDDs*
- carry out consultation on the environmental report
- take into account the environmental report and the results of consultation in decision making
- provide information when the plan is adopted
- show how the results of the *SEA* have been taken into account

- 7.22 Initial work on SA and SEA will have to be carried out within the Planning Policy Team. However, lack of expertise and staff resources will make it difficult for the team to undertake the whole process. The expertise however does potentially exist within Durham County Council to undertake iterative, objective led and independent SA/SEA of the LDF with ongoing involvement of the public and relevant stakeholders. This would meet the key requirements of the draft guidance on 'Sustainability appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Frameworks' (ODPM September 2004).
- 7.23 There is an issue with the current capacity of Durham County Council's Sustainability team and discussions are progressing with respect to developing a service level agreement between the County Council and interested District Councils that would result in the employment of staff to meet the demand. Alternatively there may be scope for districts work jointly by pooling and augmenting existing internal Sustainability Officer expertise. Should neither of these proposals be forthcoming then it is likely that consultants will need to be appointed to carry out the SEA/ SA.

### **Potential constraints on progress with LDDs**

7.24 The main areas of risk in preparing the *Local Development Framework* are likely to be:-

- *Problems with staff resources.*  
Staff turnover has increased and a regional problem is arising in finding good calibre, experienced staff to fill posts. There will be 'peaks and troughs' with regard to manpower required throughout given the nature of the process. More flexible use of existing staff, collaboration with other neighbouring authorities and where appropriate and necessary, the use of consultants, are ways by which these difficulties might be minimised.
- *The capacity of the Planning Inspectorate and other statutory consultees.*  
Any such lack of capacity is outside the local authority's control but this national problem has been identified and other agencies are aware of the ramifications. The Council intends to ensure that the *Local Development Scheme* is circulated to relevant bodies in the interests of effective programme management for all involved.
- *Robustness of the development plan documents.*  
A new system has been introduced and it is imperative that the LDDs are well founded and solidly based on good information with adequate public involvement. To avoid legal challenge the Council will need to work closely with GONE and other partners to ensure that subjects are thoroughly covered and meet statutory requirements.
- *Programme slippage.* Because the process and procedures are new, programming is difficult and some slack has to be built in to

allow for this. Any necessary change in the timetable contained within the Local Development Scheme will be identified in its successor and a recovery plan presented where appropriate.

- *Level of interest.* There is a risk that should public and stakeholder interest significantly increase under the new arrangements the Planning Policy Team will be too small to cope. It may be necessary to tap into resources and expertise assistance from within the wider Council, the voluntary sector and consultants.
- *Delay in the progression of emerging RSS.* This is pertinent particularly in respect to housing issues. Liaison with the regional planning body will be critical in order that any slippage and ramifications of such slippage may be identified at the earliest possible time so as to avoid abortive or inappropriate work.

### **Programme Management Approach**

7.25 The importance of work on the *LDF* is underlined by the priority that the Council has accorded this task. The Council is committed to effective programme management to achieve the milestones set out in **Appendix 3**.

7.26 The work timetable is set out in **Appendix 3** of this document. It is intended to break down each stage identified and produce a work programme for each stage. At this stage, as mentioned earlier, assumptions have had to be made about the exact availability of the Planning Inspectorate to hold examinations, but arrangements will be clarified and adjustments made when the *LDS* is next reviewed.

7.27 Programme management is to be based upon the PRINCE 2 model. The Principal Planning Policy Officer is the designated Project Manager, reporting to a Project Management Board comprising of the Head of Planning & Environmental Policy, Head of Development and Building Control and Director of Regeneration and Chair of Regeneration Committee. The Project Board will give overall direction to the project and take management decisions on behalf of the Council where necessary. Regular reports on progress will be submitted to the Council's Regeneration Committee. Other key contacts will be;

- Chief Executive
- Head of Management Support
- LSP Manager

7.28 Regular internal progress meetings will be held, and sub-groups of officers and Members will be constituted to deal with particular topics as appropriate in addition to the engagement methods outlined in the *Statement of Community Involvement*.

7.29 All officers engaged on the project are linked by e-mail and shared work directories facilitate effective joint working.

## Content of Wear Valley District Council Local Development Framework

Local Development Document Title	Status	Brief Description	Full Profile (Page)
Statement of Community involvement	N/A	Outlines how the Council will involve local communities and other stakeholders in the <i>LDF</i> and <i>Development Control</i> processes and how the Council will facilitate their participation.	9
Core Strategy	<i>DPD</i>	The document setting out the vision and spatial strategy for Wear Valley District to 2021 and may include some strategic generic development control policies.	10
Development Control	<i>DPD</i>	A suite of generic policies against which any planning application or proposal will be judged.	11
Housing	<i>DPD</i>	Gives the site-specific locations for housing and related social infrastructure opportunities, aimed at delivering the objectives of the <i>Core Strategy</i> .	12
Southern & Eastern Bishop Auckland Action Area Plan	<i>DPD</i>	Detailed development proposals relating to a specific part of the district, showing the location and disposition of individual land uses and how, by whom and when, their implementation will be expected to be achieved.	13
Proposals Map	N/A	Spatial presentation of the policies and proposals contained in the <i>LDF</i> and during the transitional period the saved policies and proposals of the Wear Valley District Local Plan. This map will be updated as work on <i>DPD</i> 's progresses.	14
Action Area Plans (various to be determined)	<i>DPD</i>	Detailed development proposals showing the location and disposition of individual land uses and how, by whom and when, their implementation will be expected to be achieved. Coverage and numbers yet to be determined.	N/A
Supplementary Planning Documents (various to be determined)	<i>SPD</i>	Guidance supporting policies contained within the <i>LDF</i> , including design guides, concept statements and development briefs.	N/A

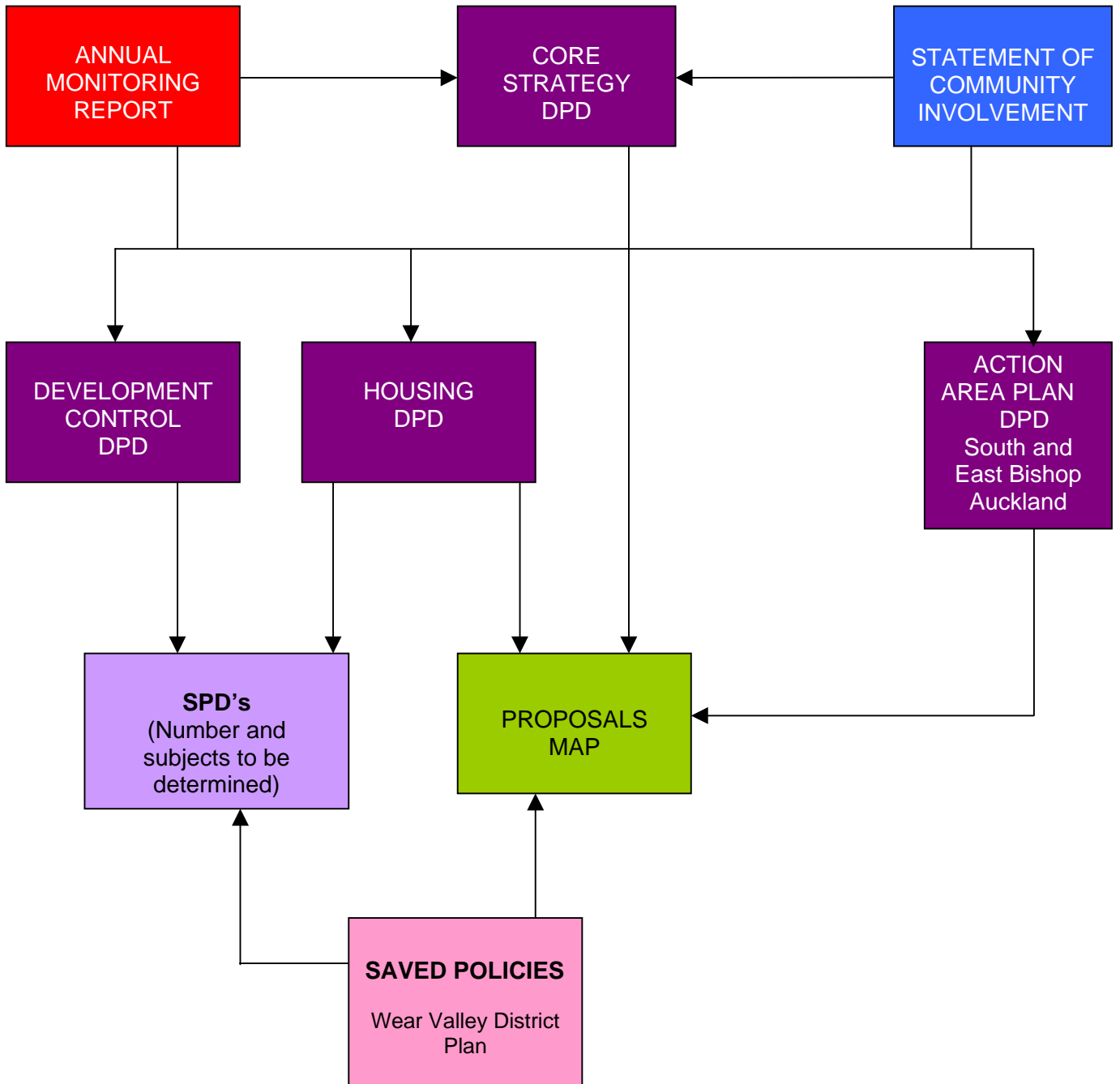
**Local Development Scheme –  
Schedule of Proposed Local Development Documents**

<b>Document Title</b>	<b>Status (i.e. DPD/SPD)</b>	<b>Role and Content</b>	<b>Geographical Coverage</b>	<b>Chain of Conformity</b>	<b>Dates for Pre-Submission consultation</b>	<b>Dates for public participation on preferred option (DPD) and sustainability appraisal report</b>	<b>Date for submission to Secretary of State</b>	<b>Proposed date for adoption</b>
<b>Statement of community involvement</b>	N/a	Document Setting out standards and approach to involving the community and stakeholders in the production of the LDF and determination of major planning applications	Whole Authority Area	N/a	April – November 2005	N/A	December 2005	September 2006
<b>Core Strategy</b>	DPD	Sets out the spatial vision, spatial objectives and strategy for the development of the area and framework for development control including strategic generic policies.	Whole authority area	Consistent with national planning policy and general conformity with Regional Spatial Strategy & District's Community Strategy.	July – November 2005	December 2005 – April 2006	October 2006	December 2007
<b>Development Control</b>	DPD	Providing the framework for the determination of planning proposals by presenting site specific locations for housing, community facilities, recreation and leisure and may include relevant generic policies.	Whole authority area	Consistent with national planning policy and general conformity with Regional Spatial Strategy & Core Strategy	July – November 2005	December 2005 – April 2006	October 2006	December 2007
<b>Housing</b>	DPD	Providing the framework for the determination of planning proposals by presenting site specific locations for housing and related social infrastructure	Whole authority area	Consistent with national planning policy and general conformity with Regional Spatial Strategy & Core Strategy	July – November 2005	December 2005 – April 2006	October 2006	December 2007



<b>Southern &amp; Eastern Bishop Auckland Action Area Plan</b>	DPD	A strategy with a spatial dimension that focuses upon an area considered as a priority for social, economic and physical regeneration., The document will contain detailed policies and site proposals to facilitate an inclusive, sustainable area.	Southern and eastern part of Bishop Auckland including Tindale Crescent, Coundon and Dene Valley.	Consistent with national planning policy and general conformity with Regional Spatial Strategy & Core Strategy	July – November 2005	December 2005 – April 2006	October 2006	December 2007
--	-----	--	---	--	----------------------	----------------------------	--------------	---------------

# STRUCTURE OF WEAR VALLEY LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK







## APPENDIX 5

Evidence Base	Internal Capacity	External Capacity	Comment
Demographic analysis	√	√	Including population profiling & projections, migration & travel to work data. External data from 2001 Census & Durham County Council to be used.
Urban Capacity Study	√		Completed & adopted September 2004. Annual review will be required.
Assessment of potential housing land beyond existing settlement boundaries.	√		Initial work has commenced. Joint housing site assessment methodology may be developed across the county.
Housing Needs Survey		√	Coverage of part of District by Rural Housing Enabler partnership work.
Housing Market Assessment	√	√	Discussions ongoing with other Durham District authorities regarding progression of this through joint working/ appointment of consultants. Outcome to be confirmed.
Retail Study of district		√	Completed September 2004. Annual review required.
Employment land assessment and identification of need		√	Commenced in February 2005 through Economic Futures Study. Supplemented by County Sites & Premises Study.
Tourism Strategic Action Plan		√	Completed.
Conservation Area Appraisals	√	√	May be some capacity internally to complete. May need to consider use of students / other external sources.
Open Spaces & Leisure quantitative & Qualitative Needs Assessment	√	√	Work ongoing in partnership with Community Services Department & stakeholders in wider quest to develop Open Space Strategy based upon CABA Space good practice.
Community Facilities Survey	√		Commenced in house. May need to consider use of students or other sources.
Landscape Character Assessment		√	Completed in 2004 in partnership with Durham County Council
Flood Risk Assessment	√	√	Mapping/ baseline information supplied from Environment Agency yet to be analysed.

## Glossary of Terms

<b>Area Action Plan (AAP)</b>	Planning frameworks for areas of change and areas of conservation
<b>Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)</b>	A report on how the authority is performing with regards to the delivery of the LDS and relevant targets set out in development plan documents, and indicating any remedial action to be taken if required.
<b>Community Strategy</b>	A vision for Wear Valley District formed through key organisations working in partnership with local business, community groups and organisations, and Wear Valley Council.
<b>Core Strategy</b>	To set out the vision, spatial strategy and core policies for the spatial development of the Local Planning Authority area.
<b>Development Plan Document (DPD)</b>	Spatial planning documents covering a range of policy areas that will undergo a process of consultation and area subject to alteration following independent examination.
<b>Local Development Framework (LDF)</b>	The framework for delivering the spatial planning strategy for the area and comprised of local development documents.
<b>Local Development Document (LDD)</b>	Planning documents with development plan status, known as Development Plan Documents (DPDs), and Supplementary Documents (SPDs).
<b>Local Development Plan Scheme (LDS)</b>	Local planning authorities will submit a local development scheme to the First Secretary of State for approval within six months of the commencement of the Act. The LDS will set out the preparation programme and timetable of the local development documents, indicating proposals for the development of their LDF over a three year period.
<b>Planning Policy Statement (PPS)</b>	Subject specific Government guidance, advice and policies, on national land use in England which replace Planning Policy Guidance (PPGs) notes.
<b>Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS)</b>	Identification and definition of policies relating to the development and use of land in the North East region prepared by the North East Regional Assembly and approved by the First Secretary of State.
<b>Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)</b>	Sets out the standards to which the local planning authority will involve and consult with the community in the preparation, alteration and continuing review of local development documents, and how these standards will be achieved. The SCI will be subject to independent examination. All local development documents must reflect upon how, in their preparation, they have complied with the SCI.
<b>Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)</b>	An internationally used term to describe the environmental assessment to be applied to plans, policies and programmes.
<b>Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)</b>	Issues and sites for which the local planning authority wishes to provide detailed policy guidance, which will supplement policies and proposals in the development plan documents.
<b>Sustainability Appraisal (SA)</b>	Assessment of the impact of policies from environmental, economic and social perspectives, to ensure that all policies and proposals reflect sustainable development policies.

<b>Sustainable Development</b>	Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
<b>The Planning Act</b>	The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 will fundamentally reform the planning system, by introducing LDFs to replace the current system of local, structure and unitary development plans. The reform aims to speed up plan preparation, enhance community involvement in planning, strengthen policy content, and achieve a better focus on implementation.

