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Michael Laing Chief Executive

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4<sup>th</sup> September 2007

Dear Councillor,

I hereby give you Notice that a Meeting of the **REGENERATION COMMITTEE** will be held in the COUNCIL **CHAMBER, CIVIC CENTRE, CROOK** on **WEDNESDAY 12<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2007** at **6.00 P.M.**

### **AGENDA**

1. Apologies for absence.
2. To consider the Minutes of the last Meeting of the Committee held on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2007 as a true record. Copies previously circulated
3. To consider the Audit Commission Service Inspection Report – Regeneration in Wear Valley District. 1 - 7
4. To consider a review of sub-national economic development and regeneration. 8 -14
5. To consider the new White Paper on Planning – Planning for a Sustainable Future. 15 - 25
6. To consider the final Sustainability Appraisal Framework in respect to the Local Development Framework's Core Strategy and Generic Development Control Policies. 26 - 37
7. To consider the Wear Valley District Local Plan: Saved Policies. 38 - 41
8. To consider the district wide Employment Land Review. 42 - 52
9. To consider the findings of the Wear Valley District Wide Retail Study Update (2007). 53 - 59
10. To consider the response of the Strategic Director to the Consultation by Northumberland County Council on the Northumberland Minerals and Waste Development Framework. 60 – 62
11. To consider the Capital Programme 2007/08. 63 – 68
12. To receive an update in relation to the Bishop Auckland Urban Renaissance MasterPlan. 69 – 86

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| 13. | To consider the 1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter Monitoring update.  | 87 – 97  |
| 14. | To consider a Risk Register update.   | 98 – 100 |
| 15. | To consider the Revenue Budget action plan.   | 101-105  |
| 16. | To consider such other items of business which, by reason of special circumstances so specified, the Chairman of the meeting is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency. |          |

Yours faithfully



**Chief Executive**

Members of this Committee: Bailey, Buckham, Ferguson, Grogan, Hardaker, Hayton, Laurie, Mews, Mowbray, Murphy\*, Miss Ord, Perkins, Seabury\*, Stonehouse, David Wilson, Yorke and Zair.

\*ex-officio, non-voting capacity

Chair: Councillor Mowbray

Deputy Chair: Councillor Yorke

TO: All other Members of the Council for information  
Management Team



## REGENERATION COMMITTEE

12 SEPTEMBER 2007

Report of the Strategic Director for Environment and Regeneration

### **AUDIT COMMISSION SERVICE INSPECTION REPORT – REGENERATION WEAR VALLEY DISTRICT COUNCIL**

#### **purpose of the report**

1. To consider the Audit Commission's report on the Inspection of Regeneration in Wear Valley District and to agree action, where appropriate.

#### **background**

2. As members are aware the Audit Commission undertook a best value review of Regeneration in Wear Valley in March this year. The Inspection included outside inspection/interviews on 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> March and a formal feedback session on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2007. The report of Inspection is tabled. Publication of the report has been delayed so as not to conflict with announcements on Local Government Review.
3. The inspection has been carried out alongside two other individual inspections of Teesdale and Durham City district councils and a county-wide overview inspection of regeneration in County Durham, which covered all eight local councils in the county. This is reported separately. Recommendations from the county-wide inspection are applicable to each district council, complement the other recommendations in this report and are included in outline with the other recommendations in the district report.

#### **scope of inspection**

4. The Council's regeneration activity takes place within the framework of the County Durham Economic Partnership and the county-wide Durham Local Area Agreement, in which other organisations have lead roles and statutory responsibilities and control substantial budgets for particular aspects of regeneration. The other organisations include One NorthEast, which has overall responsibility for economic growth in the region, the Learning and Skills Council, which is responsible for improving skills and Job Centre Plus, which is responsible for helping people into work, and Government Office North East, which implements national policy for the regions.

5. The Audit Commission have, therefore, focused on how the Council works strategically, within the framework described above, focusing particularly on the economic issues facing the district, including maintaining the competitiveness of existing businesses, worklessness and health, entrepreneurship and skills, town centres and tourism, and the relationship between housing, transport and economic development.

### **scoring the service**

6. The Audit Commission assessed Wear Valley District Council as providing a ('good', **two-star service that has promising prospects for improvement**).
7. The report recognises that the service is a good, two-star service because:-
- it has a good understanding of local need and has targeted its interventions toward solving local issues and achieving a balance between physical, social and economic regeneration;
  - it has succeeded in minimising the negative impact of the decline of some of its key industries:-
    - despite closures of major industrial employers, employment levels have been maintained over the last ten years;
    - the service has a good understanding of business needs, it is proactive in its approach to working with businesses and works with partners to provide coherent business support;
    - business land and premises are being developed to provide infrastructure to meet contemporary needs;
    - business stock has increased;
    - the Council and partners are developing appropriate pathways to work;
    - the overall employment rate has increased from 60.9 per cent in 2002/03 to 73.3 per cent in 2004/05;
    - incapacity claimant rates, although still high, are reducing; and
    - economic activity and inactivity rates are better than the regional average;
  - local communities are becoming more sustainable:-
    - Improvements to the natural and built environment are improving the image of the area;
    - housing choice and quality have improved; and
    - population levels are beginning to increase after a long period of decline;
  - overall satisfaction with Council services has increased significantly (at the time assumed from unaudited figures) especially when compared to a national trend of declining satisfaction; and

- the service meets the requirements of external funders in relation to value for money and initiatives contribute to cost reductions across public agencies.
8. However it is recognised that:-
- the district continues to lag behind the region and/or sub-region on many indicators and has failed to diversify significantly into knowledge-based areas of the economy; and
  - there is a lack of research to ensure that the Council's focus for regeneration work meets the needs of some groups at risk of exclusion within the community, for example migrant workers and their families and older people, particularly those of working age.
9. The report identifies that the service has promising prospects for improvement because:-
- there is now a much stronger focus on opportunities to exploit the unique advantages of the district through the economic strategy;
  - performance management arrangements encourage wide ownership and community involvement;
  - the Council has a good track record of accessing external funding and applying that to meet its strategic objectives;
  - staff capacity is good and there is a holistic approach to regeneration throughout the organisation;
  - the planning service supports regeneration activity; and
  - the Council is capable of demonstrating good leadership.
10. The report, however, identifies the following weaknesses:-
- the current approach to regeneration is insufficiently strategic to maximise benefits; it does not cross administrative boundaries to maximise potential benefits; it is insufficiently co-ordinated at a wider strategic level, regardless of administrative boundaries; and
  - there is insufficient work being done to identify skills needed for the future and to work with partners to develop them in local people thereby raising their aspirations by ensuring that they are better prepared to participate in future employment markets.

### **recommendations of the inspection**

11. To achieve continuous improvements the inspection recommends that the Council should do the following:-

## Recommendation

R1 To improve the effectiveness of regeneration activity in the county, take steps to strengthen the coherence of regeneration activity and collaboration amongst stakeholders by acting on the recommendations in the county-wide report to:-

- *start and maintain a public debate on the future of Durham's economy;*
- *align regeneration strategies and strengthen collaboration amongst partners to match the pace of external change, without regard to local government boundaries;*
- *consider with partners how the importance of skills and aspirations can be embedded in the culture of County Durham;*
- *ensure that housing strategies align with economic strategies and opportunities and with transport strategy;*
- *strengthen leadership on regeneration activity;*
- *provide independent capacity to develop and deliver strategy; and*
- *review how resources are used to lever in private funding in order to maximise their impact.*

12. The expected benefits of this recommendation are considered to be:-

- to build a consensus around a sustainable future for County Durham within a prosperous North East;
- to maximise opportunities and build mutual support;
- to strengthen and clarify leadership, make procedures clearer and more acceptable to private and other sector representatives and speed up decision-making;
- to develop a strategic approach to regeneration that builds synergies between projects and places and has the confidence of stakeholders and ensure programmes are responsive to user needs and continue to be supported by the participating organisations; and
- more effective use of resources and greater influence on private sector investors.

13. The implementation of this recommendation is considered to have high impact with medium costs and should be implemented within 15 months.

## Recommendation

R2 *Ensure that the Council has enough timely information about all groups at risk of exclusion so that their needs can be identified and met in relation to regeneration activities.*

14. The expected benefits of this recommendation are considered to be:-
- reduced risk of inadvertent exclusion of some groups' needs from regeneration activities; and
15. The implementation of this recommendation is considered to have high impact with low costs and should be implemented by December 2007.

#### Recommendation

*R3 Work with others to develop a clearer understanding of the likely future skills needs, both specific and generic, and use that to influence local skills delivery appropriately.*

16. The expected benefits of this recommendation are:
- an adaptable and skilled workforce able to take up new opportunities locally and so support community ambitions relating to population growth and economic prosperity.
17. The implementation of this recommendation is considered to have high impact with medium costs and should be implemented by December 2007.

#### response to recommendations

18. The report portrays the Council as providing a good and effective regeneration services. The recommendations of the inspection are accepted and welcomed as positive and constructive and will help the Council further develop its services and potential target customers with greater understanding and purpose. The recommendations are accepted and should be acted upon. In particular:-
- R1 The need for a Countywide debate on the effectiveness of regeneration in the County is accepted and the Council will participate if this initiative is pursued at a sub-regional level. The Council is already fully engaged at the sub-regional level in helping to shape the emerging County Economic Strategy, and has been invited to participate in arrangements for developing and implementing the Tees Valley City Region proposals.
- R2 The focus on excluded groups is accepted and will be presented within the action plan for the District Economic Strategy. Further research will be undertaken in respect of both older people and migrant labour to bring forward proposals through the economic strategy action plan within the agreed timescale of the recommendations.

R3 The need to develop a clearer understanding of future skill needs will also be pursued through the Economic Strategy Action Plan. A skills audit was produced through the Forum for Business and an Eastgate “Skills and Employability Plan” currently being developed will provide input into this work.

19. As a response to these recommendations an improvement plan has been prepared. This is attached at Annex 1.

### **considerations**

financial implications/legal implications/human resource implications

20. None at this stage.

### **conclusion**

21. The Best Value Inspection has given a clear endorsement of Council activity to achieve the regeneration of the District. The report should be welcomed by the Council. The proposed improvement plan provides a standard response to the inspection recommendation. If agreed, this will be implemented in accordance with the recommended timescales.

### **RECOMMENDED**

- 1 That members welcome the recommendations of the Audit Commission Inspection.
- 2 That members agree the content of the improvement plan and receive further reports on its implementation.

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**Officer responsible for the report**  
Robert Hope  
Strategic Director for Environment and  
Regeneration  
Ext 264

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**Author of the report**  
Robert Hope



## REGENERATION COMMITTEE

12 SEPTEMBER 2007

Report of the Strategic Director for Environment and Regeneration

### **REVIEW OF SUB-NATIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION – HM TREASURY, DEPARTMENT FOR BUSINESS ENTERPRISE AND REGULATORY REFORM AND COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT JULY 2007**

#### **purpose**

1. For members to consider the proposals and implications of the sub-national review.

#### **background**

2. As part of the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review, the Chancellor announced in Budget 2006 that the Government would undertake a review of sub-national economic development and regeneration in England. The review was concerned with streamlining and rationalising current arrangements for economic development but also with allocating responsibilities and powers for economic development to the most appropriate tier of government. An important aspect of the review concerned accountable arrangements for regional government in the aftermath of the North East referendum.
3. The review's publication follows shortly after a central government re-organisation, which, among other things has created a Minister for each region and has diverted about £7bn of Learning and Skills (LSC) funding to local authorities and CLG announcement on Local Government Review. Other recent developments with implications for regional and local economic development are the Planning White Paper, a Draft Bill on transport, the creation of the Homes Agency, and proposals for City Development Companies.
4. In summary the document contains several significant announcements, including:-
  - the intention to abolish Regional Assemblies in their current form;
  - future consultation on a statutory economic development duty which would require upper tier local authorities to carry out a local economic assessment;
  - proposals to bring forward options for reforming the Local Authority Business Growth Incentive scheme (LABGI).

- a reform of Neighbourhood renewal funding to target more intensively on fewer areas of particularly acute deprivation rather than local authority areas as a whole, including a reward element for local authorities;
- proposals for a new local government performance framework directly linked to national Public Service Agreements and indicators;
- A requirement for new economic development and neighbourhood renewal objectives in LAAs to reflect the local contribution to achieving regional economic strategies;
- A requirement for Regional Development Agencies (RDA's) to delegate responsibility for spending to local authorities or sub-regions wherever possible;
- An expectation that sub-regional arrangements will be strengthened. The Government will work with interested sub-regions to explore the potential for allowing groups of local authorities to establish statutory sub-regional authorities.;
- A proposal for a single regional strategy for each region setting out economic, social, and environmental objectives; and
- Each region will be set a regional growth objective, which will define a simplified outcome and growth-focused framework. The growth objective will be aimed at increasing regional Gross Value Added per capita.

5. The key implications of the review include:-

- A strengthened role for local authorities;
- Greater collaboration across sub-regions; and
- A new role for regional agencies.

#### **a strengthened role for local authorities**

6. The document sets out proposals for strengthening the role of local authorities in economic development.
7. It is acknowledged in the paper that local authorities already have a broad power to promote the economic, social, and environmental well-being of local people. Nonetheless, in order to increase the focus on economic development, the Government will consult on a statutory economic development duty which would require upper tier local authorities to carry out a local economic assessment (county councils would be required to undertake an assessment jointly with districts). The assessments would support regional economic strategies, local sustainable community strategies, and Local Area Agreements.
8. The Government will bring forward options for reforming the Local Authority Business Growth Incentive scheme (LABGI). The incentive could be strengthened by linking rewards more closely to growth, by simplifying the scheme and giving local authorities greater certainties over rewards in face of the volatility of year-on business growth. The Government will continue to support and encourage Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) and the Local Enterprise Growth Initiative (LEGI) as an additional incentives for economic development.
9. Neighbourhood renewal funding is to be reformed so that it will be targeted more intensively on fewer areas of particularly acute deprivation rather than local

authority areas as a whole. The reform could include a reward element for local authorities.

10. The Government will make further announcements on the Housing and Planning Delivery Grant (HPDG) in the Comprehensive Spending Review.
11. Under the new performance management framework, Local Area Agreements (LAAs) will form the central delivery agreement between central government and local government and its partners. They will be outcome-focused agreements based on agreed targets. The 'duty to co-operate' will ensure that other public bodies work more effectively with local authorities. The reforms to LAAs will give all local authorities a clearer role in economic development and in delivering neighbourhood renewal in deprived neighbourhoods.
12. The new local government performance framework will be directly linked to national Public Service Agreements and indicators. The economic development and neighbourhood renewal objectives in LAAs will also need to reflect the local contribution to achieving regional economic strategies.
13. Details of the full indicator set will be published alongside the Government's new performance management framework as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review. The indicator set will include a clear focus on economic development and neighbourhood renewal. For economic development, the set will include outcome indicators for the following:-
  - employment and worklessness
  - education and skills for 19 year-olds and younger
  - investment in housing and infrastructure, especially transport
  - creating an attractive local environment for business and citizens.
14. For neighbourhood renewal, the Government will explore how place-based indicators in the new performance management framework will help drive performance on worklessness, health, crime, and education.
15. In budget 2007, it was stated that the Government believed that a supplementary business rate, as proposed in the Lyons Review, could create additional flexibility for economic development. The Government is currently considering options, and will report later this year.
16. The Government will continue to develop innovative finance solutions to promote sustainable development. It will also continue to support the development of City Development Companies (CDCs).

17. The Government will expect the RDAs to delegate responsibility for spending to local authorities or sub-regions wherever possible, unless there is a clear case for retaining spending at the regional level. However, it is stated that the 'RDAs will need to be satisfied that the body receiving funding has the necessary capacity'. The Comprehensive Area Assessment process, it is stated, will support the identification of capacity and leadership risks.

### **collaboration across sub-regions**

18. Much of the proposals for sub-regions refer to city-regions.
19. The Local Government White Paper signals the Government's proposals to develop Multi Area Agreements (MAAs) which would involve a group of local authorities coming together on a voluntary basis to agree collective targets and pooled funding streams. MAAs could allow sub-regions, including city-regions, to take a more active role in leading economic development. MAAs should have an 'economic core' and relate principally to economic development. In the light of experience of the first round of LAAs, the Government will consider whether the duty to co-operate could also be applied to the authorities participating in a MAA. The Government will issue guidance on MAAs by the end of the year and will work with selected sub-regions and city-regions to have the first MAAs in place by 2008.
20. The Government will work with interested sub-regions to explore the potential for allowing groups of local authorities to establish statutory sub-regional authorities which will pool responsibilities on a permanent basis as they already are in some circumstances for transport. Other functions which could be effectively delivered by a group of local authorities in a statutory partnership across a city region or sub region are planning, housing, and economic development.

### **the regional tier**

21. The report sets out the case for a regional tier on the basis of being able to:-
- deliver economies of scale and scope
  - prioritise investment between places
  - provide capacity support
  - ensure consistency in policy delivery (for example, in business support)
  - co-ordinate sub-regional strategies.
22. The Government proposes a single regional strategy for each region setting out economic, social, and environmental objectives. This will be formed by bringing together the Regional Economic Strategy (currently the responsibility of RDAs) and the Regional Spatial Strategy (currently the responsibility of Regional Assemblies).
23. Each region will be set a regional growth objective which will define a simplified framework, focused on outcomes and growth. The growth objective will be aimed at increasing regional Gross Value Added per capita. The growth objective will be measured by five outcome-focused performance indicators covering:-
- GVA per hour worked

- the employment rate
  - skills
  - research & development
  - business start-ups.
24. RDAs will also be required to demonstrate regard to a set of underlying principles in seeking to achieve their growth objective. These include the five principles of sustainable development (living within environmental limits, ensuring a just society, achieving a sustainable economy, using science responsibly and good governance) and ensuring all urban and rural localities achieve their potential.
25. The proposals for regional governance are set out as follows:-
- "The Government will bring forward proposals to give the Regional Development Agencies the executive responsibility for developing the integrated regional strategy working closely with local authorities and other partners. Regional Assemblies in their current form and function will not continue. Instead, local authorities in the regions will be responsible for agreeing the regional strategy with the RDAs. Local authorities will also be responsible for effective scrutiny of RDA performance....".*
26. Later this year the Government will consult further on how to implement these reforms. The present document includes some clues about how the new arrangements might work.
27. RDAs will assume responsibilities for planning and transport strategy development currently residing with the Regional Assemblies. The RDAs will be formally designated as regional planning bodies (RPBs), subject to passing primary legislation. Each RDA will have responsibility for agreeing the draft regional strategy with local authorities in the region. The regional strategy will be built up from proposals made by local authorities for local area sustainable development, and in particular by sub-regions. However, to ensure both accountability and a strategic approach, effective local authority representation at the regional level is required. This might take the form of a regional forum of leaders.
28. The spatial planning aspects of the regional strategy will be subject to an independent examination in public. The regional strategy will be signed off by the Secretaries of State for Communities and Local Government and Business, Enterprise, and Regulatory Reform. The spatial aspect of the strategy will be issued by the SoS for CLG as a statutory document. Finally, the Government will consult with Parliament on the best way of enhancing Parliamentary scrutiny of regional agencies.

## comment

29. This review is important in that it announces a significant enlargement in the role of local authorities in local economic development - a key element of their role as place-makers, as identified by Lyons.
30. On the plus side, the new duty to produce an economic assessment will be more than the mere production of a report - it will allow local authorities to get to grips with their local economies and will strengthen their position in relation to larger sub-regions and regions. The duty to co-operate means a strengthening of strategic capacity and more leverage over the activities of other statutory agencies in delivering an economic development strategy. The possibility of a local business rate supplement could mean a closer and more constructive relationship with business.
31. The proposals for sub-regions and city-regions, notwithstanding LGR, are welcomed. Again, it implies a strengthening of strategic capacity, particularly in critical areas like planning, transport, economic development and housing. It is to be hoped that the proposals for joint working will not be confined to the English 'core cities' but will extend to all city region areas.
32. LABGI, which, as an incentive scheme, has been widely criticised as complex and unpredictable. Because of its focus on rateable value as a measure of business growth, it offers a perverse incentive - rateable value can be increased by building a massive out-of-town hypermarket, going against other strategies for sustainability and town centre development.
33. The relationship between local authorities and RDAs and in the proposed performance frameworks for local authorities and RDAs is unclear. There is an urgent need to strengthen the democratic accountability of regional governance, and Government has sought to find an alternative in the wake of the North East referendum. But is extremely unclear how local authorities are going to work with RDAs in their regions. There are 26 local authorities in the North East, 11 of which are unitary or county authorities. What happens if one authority refuses to sign up to the regional strategy? One difficulty identified with Regional Assemblies in this document was that they were sometimes used by individual local authorities as a forum for defending local interests. But the proposed alternative looks even more like a free-for-all.
34. Another area of accountability that requires clarification is the scrutiny process. The function is to move to local authorities but there is a question of how this process will function. Consideration must be given to how scrutiny of RDAs by local authorities will be effectively developed and implemented.
35. Most councils will want to pursue economic development, but in ways appropriate to their circumstances. Economic circumstances are very different across the country. Some areas are lagging economically but others are struggling with the consequences of growth. It is to be hoped that the performance framework does not force councils into a straight-jacket that compels them to pursue inappropriate actions.
36. The growth target set for RDAs may also distort objectives. GVA development per capita is an imperfect measure of economic performance. It is influenced

both by the employment rate and by productivity per head. A low level of non-working dependents will inflate GVA per head. More importantly, there is no means within the target to account for the costs of economic activity, including environmental damage. Although RDAs will be required, in various ways, to have regard to sustainability, the incentive to pursue it would be weakened if environmental costs are not included in the balance sheet of economic growth. Environmental accounting is one means by which RDAs can integrate economic with environmental goals, but there is a danger that attention will be diverted from sustainability issues by an exclusive focus on the 'headline' GVA target.

### **financial implications/legal implications/human resource implications**

37. None at this stage.

### **conclusions**

38. This review gives a range of clear responsibilities for local government in economic development and regeneration operating at different spatial levels. Through the County Durham Association, local government in the North East has been pressing for devolved decision making, strengthened powers, increased flexibility and resources, in order to fundamentally tackle the challenges of economic growth and regeneration. The review sets out the Government's vision of every region having the opportunity to benefit from increasing prosperity and closing regional economic disparities between regions of the country.
39. In shaping the right way forward for the North East, in our leadership role, working together and with the new Minister for the North East, MPs, and other partners, we will need to ensure that we have firm propositions at different levels, that proposals in the sub-national review are underpinned by strong and improved democratic legitimacy and accountability and that issues such as scrutiny, policy and strategy development processes, and funding (including the operation of a further Regional Funding Allocations process) are carefully considered.

### **RECOMMENDED**

- 1 That the contents of the review are noted.
- 2 That the Chair and Director participate in any future discussions on this issue.

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**Officer responsible for the report**  
 Robert Hope  
 Strategic Director for Environment and  
 Regeneration  
 Ext 264

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**Author of the report**  
 Robert Hope

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## REGENERATION COMMITTEE

12 SEPTEMBER 2007

Report of the Strategic Director for Environment and Regeneration

### PLANNING FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

#### purpose of the report

1. To consider the proposals and implications of the new White Paper on Planning – Planning for a Sustainable Future.

#### background

2. The new White Paper on planning - *Planning for a Sustainable Future* and accompanying consultations draw on the *Barker Review of Land Use Planning* and the *Eddington Report on Transport*, published in December 2006. Both the Barker and Eddington Reports argued the case for streamlining the approval process in land-use planning, particularly for large infrastructure projects. The White Paper puts forward for discussion a series of important and wide ranging reforms which Government would hope to implement by 2009.
3. The key elements of the document include:-
  - a firm commitment to support and promote town centres, on which there will be a consultation in the summer;
  - no fundamental change to Green Belt policy;
  - proposals to make it easier for households and businesses to pursue minor developments, including the installation of micro-generation equipment; and
  - the establishment of an independent Infrastructure Planning Commission to decide on major infrastructure projects of national significance. In its present form, the proposal could undermine the planning powers of local authorities.
4. The Planning White Paper is one of a series of policy documents published this month, including the Energy White, Defra's strategy paper on waste and a draft Local Transport Bill, which is currently open for consultation, detailed in Annex 2. Together these documents create a comprehensive picture of the Government's position on the future of the UK's physical development.



## **land use planning: the need for change**

5. The White Paper sets out the combination of pressures that require the planning system to be reformed. These include:-
  - climate change and growing pressures on the environment and natural resources;
  - the long-term security of energy supplies;
  - a requirement to be more facilitative of economic development;
  - the current housing shortage; and
  - higher expectations for the quality of infrastructure, public services, and commercial and leisure facilities.
6. The White Paper sets out a number of important and wide ranging reforms in detail, all of which are underpinned by the following five core principles:-
  - Planning must be responsive, particularly to longer-term challenges such as increasing globalisation and climate change, and properly integrate economic, social and environmental objectives to deliver sustainable development;
  - The planning system should be streamlined, efficient and predictable;
  - There must be full and fair opportunities for public consultation and community engagement;
  - The planning system should be transparent and accountable; and
  - Planning should be undertaken at the right level of Government – national, regional and local.
7. The major proposals, (see Annex 3), include the following:-

## **national policy statements**

8. The Government will prepare a set of national policy statements (NPSs) which will establish the national case for infrastructure development and set the framework for an Infrastructure Planning Commission decisions. Each NPS will have a time frame of 10-25 years, reviewed at least every 5 years. Infrastructures covered by the statements will include those for energy, transport, water, wastewater, and waste. The aim is to separate the *national* case for infrastructure development from decisions about applications for *local* development consent, however, some NPSs will have to be locationally specific.
9. The Government promises "effective public consultation" around the NPSs with statutory agencies and where locationally specific with local people. The NPSs will be subject to ultimate approval by Parliament.

## major infrastructure development

10. A large proportion of the White Paper is devoted to major infrastructure projects, such as roads, power stations, and airports. The Government is keen to address the efficiency, consistency, transparency and accountability of the planning system for such projects. It proposes to do so by creating a system based on:-
  - The proposed national policy statements to ensure that there is a clear policy framework for nationally significant infrastructure which integrates environmental, economic and social objectives to deliver sustainable development;
  - provide greater certainty for promoters of infrastructure projects and help them to improve the way that they prepare applications by making better advice available to them; by requiring them to consult publicly on proposals for development; and by requiring early and effective engagement with key parties such as local authorities, statutory bodies, and relevant highway authorities;
  - streamline the procedures for infrastructure projects of national significance by rationalising the different consent regimes and improving the inquiry procedures for all of them;
  - clarify the decision making process, and achieve a clear separation of policy and decision making, by creating an independent **Infrastructure Planning Commission** to take the decisions on nationally significant cases within the framework of the relevant national policy statement. The IPC will have a duty to consult and its decisions will be open to Parliamentary and judicial scrutiny. Membership of the IPC will comprise between 20 and 30 commissioners who will be appointed for fixed periods of up to 8 years. Its composition is proposed as follows:-

*"The commission would comprise well respected experts, drawn from a range of fields. These might include national and local government, community engagement, planning, law, engineering, economics, business, security, environment, heritage and health".*
  - improve public participation across the entire process by providing better opportunities for public consultation and engagement at each stage of the planning approval process; improving the ability of the public to participate in inquiries by introducing a specific "open floor" stage; and, alongside the introduction of new system, providing additional funding to bodies such as Planning Aid.
11. The White Paper provides examples of thresholds for national projects. To give a sense of scale, the Commission, supported by a secretariat, is expected to consider about 10 major projects a year as well as a large number of smaller applications relating to elements of national infrastructure.

## delivering sustainable development

12. The Planning Policy Statement (PPS) Planning for Climate Change sets out how planning should help shape places with lower carbon emissions and which are resilient to the effects of climate change. The consultation for the PPS is currently nearing its close.
13. Development plans will be tested on their carbon ambitions. They should deliver patterns of urban growth that help secure the fullest possible use of sustainable transport and reduce the need for travel. Local planning authorities should ensure that a significant proportion of energy supply is gained on-site and renewably or from a decentralised renewable or low carbon supply. Regional planning bodies are required to set targets in regional development strategies for renewable energy capacity. The PPS on Planning for Climate Change sets out a framework to support progress towards zero carbon homes.
14. The Government will legislate to set out clearly the role of local authorities in tackling energy efficiency and climate change. It is currently consulting on its proposals to relax development restrictions for households wishing to install micro-generation equipment.

### **improving the town and county planning system**

15. The fundamental principle of sustainable development, set out in the Government's Sustainable Development Strategy and in PPS1 is that an integrated approach should be taken to achieving economic, environmental, and social objectives. This integrated approach should be present in national policy statements and should inform all decision making. The White Paper proposes to:-
  - produce a more strategic, clearer and more focused national planning policy framework with PPS1 – *Delivering Sustainable Development* at its heart, to provide the context for plan-making and decision-taking;
  - publish a new Planning Policy Statement, *Planning for Economic Development*, which will further reinforce the Government's commitment set out in PPS1 to promoting a strong, stable and productive economy with access for all to jobs, to regeneration and improved employment prospects;
  - improve the effectiveness of the town centre planning policy by replacing the need and impact tests with a new test which has a strong focus on our town centre first policy, and which promotes competition and improves consumer choice, avoiding the unintended effects of the current need test;
  - finalise the Planning Policy Statement on climate change and introduce legislation to set out clearly the role of local planning authorities in tackling energy efficiency and climate change;
  - work with industry to set in place a timetable and action plan to deliver substantial reductions in carbon emissions from new commercial buildings within the next 10 years;

- review and wherever possible extend permitted development rights on microgeneration to non residential types of land use including commercial and agricultural development;
- introduce Planning Performance Agreements, which will help streamline the processing of major applications, and support a properly resourced planning service with changes to planning fees and consult on devolving the setting of planning fees to local authorities;
- introduce a new impact approach to householder development which will reduce the number of minor applications whilst protecting the interests of neighbours, the wider community and the environment, and then extend this approach to other types of development; and
- streamline the planning application process, reduce the number of applications called in by ministers and introduce a range of measures to substantially improve the appeals process.

### **the role of local authorities: planning and place shaping**

16. The Government wants to raise the status of planning as a core 'place-shaping' activity. The planning function, it is claimed, has already moved from being merely a regulatory mechanism concerned with controlling development. The planning function is meant to bring together and integrate all the land use implications of a local authority's Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement.
17. The Government wants to see more comprehensive community engagement strategies. A new statutory best value duty to involve, inform, and consult across all local authority activities will remove the requirement for a separate examination of planning Statements of Community Involvement.
18. There will be changes to the Local Development Framework to allow more flexibility in the number and type of plans produced. The process of producing Development Plan Documents will be simplified and made more flexible by the introduction of a distinction between complex plans and simple plans. The time taken to produce a complex plan, it is claimed, will fall from 36 months to 28 months.

### **comments**

19. There is much that is sensible and welcome in the proposals set out in this White Paper. In particular, the proposals to simplify the application and appeals processes, particularly in small developments, are to be welcomed if they succeed in cutting bureaucracy and freeing up resources for more strategic purposes. Reducing the number of applications referred to the Secretary of State returns a good part of the process to the local level, where it is most appropriately situated. There is reduced emphasis on the Barker report's emphatic "economy first" approach and has re-affirmed its commitment to town centre and Green Belt policy.

20. Although possibly not a significant issue for the District, there has to be a major concern in some quarters about the proposal for an independent Infrastructure Planning Commission. It is considered that this could reduce the democratic accountability of important development decisions and undermine the ability of local authorities to represent the interests of their residents. It is sensible to have a national body with some real influence over developments which have national repercussions, but current proposals favour of a non-elected body or the "nationalisation" of planning.
21. The National Policy Statements will become an arena for debate and contest over the principles of the nations future development. With Parliament having the final vote on these frameworks, there will be inevitable tensions between short-term political expediencies and the long-term vision that the Statements must embody. In addition there will be inevitable tensions between the 'national' and 'local' interests that will possibly place Local Authorities in the middle. The sections on community involvement and consultation are few and somewhat vague on what this means in practice. Clarification should also be sought on under what circumstances planning inspectors will be able to "call in" local authority decisions, given the commitment made to reduce referrals to the Secretary of State.
22. The proposals concerning potential changes to the development control process, including increasing permitted development rights for certain developments and consequently reducing the demand on services through decreasing application numbers, needs to be carefully considered. Many planning applications for householder applications are relatively straightforward, but some often lead to neighbour problems /disputes. The process of relaxing controls could lead to an increase in such problems and greater requirement to deliver enforcement activity.
23. Proposals to streamline the LDF process are welcomed because the difficulties which the current system have produced, with a complexity of process. Over-elaborate documentation and significantly extended timescale for preparation. A review of the current system based, albeit only relatively recently introduced, and based on the evidence of recent years would be supported.

**financial implications/legal implications/human resource implications**

24. None at this stage.

## conclusions

25. The White Paper is one of a series of consultation reports from Government on ways to improve and make more efficient the planning service. There are clearly aspects that can be supported, including the commitment to climate change guidance and the proposed review of LDF preparation procedures. There are however aspects which we should be cautious about, including the potential elevation of decision making on strategic infrastructure developments to the national level and away from local determination, and the removal of certain PD rights, until it can be assessed what local issues this may generate.
26. The consultation period has ended and further report/updates will be made when decisions are taken by Government.

## RECOMMENDED

- 1 Note the content of the Planning White Paper and that a member seminar be convened to consider the potential implications of changes to the planning system.

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| <b>Officer responsible for the report</b>                                     | <b>Author of the report</b>                         |
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## REGENERATION COMMITTEE

12 SEPTEMBER 2007

Report of the Strategic Director for Environment and Regeneration

### **LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK: FINALISATION OF SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **purpose of the report**

1. To seek Members endorsement of the final Sustainability Appraisal Framework in respect to the Local Development Framework's Core Strategy and Generic Development Control Policies.

#### **background**

2. On 11<sup>th</sup> April 2007, Members of the Full Council endorsed the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report for the LDF's Core Strategy and Generic Development Control Policies. Public consultation on the Scoping Report was undertaken over a five week period closing on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2007. The objective of the consultation was to seek third party comments in relation to the appropriateness of the draft Sustainability Appraisal Framework contained in the Scoping Report for Wear Valley and the Core Strategy and Generic Development Control Policies documents.
3. The subject of this committee report is the final Sustainability Appraisal Framework (SAF) which has been amended in line with the representations received where appropriate. This final SAF will be used during the appraisal stages of preparing the Core Strategy and Generic Development Control Policies documents, to identify which policy options are the most sustainable for Wear Valley.

#### **consultation responses**

4. In total the Council received representations from 10 consultees in respect to the Scoping Report. A summary of the representations received and the actions required in relation to finalising the SAF are contained in Annex 4.

#### **key amendments**

5. The key amendments to the draft SAF resulting from the representations received are as follows:

- Inclusion of decision making criteria (discussed further below);
  - Use of sustainability baseline indicators during the appraisal stages (discussed further below);
  - Amendment to 5 draft SA Objectives in relation to natural resources, climate change, energy use, heritage and landscape; and
  - Inclusion of 2 new SA Objectives in relation to flood risk and water.
6. The proposed final SAF for the LDF's Core Strategy and Generic Development Control Policies is tabled for Members information.

### **inclusion of decision making criteria**

7. Following concern raised in relation the considerations behind the compatibility tests of the draft SA Objectives (contained in Section 4 of the Scoping Report), the appraisal of the draft plan objectives for the Core Strategy and Generic Development Control Policies (contained in Section 5 of the Scoping Report) and a recommendation made by English Heritage, it was considered appropriate to include decision making criteria within the final SAF.
8. Decision making criteria relate directly to the SA Objectives and take the format of questions. They are used during the appraisal stages of the SA to assess each policy option against the SA Objectives in a consistent manner and to ensure all the key issues are considered. Decision making criteria ensure the same sustainability considerations are awarded to each alternative option.
9. In the interests of transparency the Council considered it appropriate and necessary to consult on the inclusion of the decision making criteria prior to the finalisation of the SAF. Following discussions with the Council's Legal Section, GONE and the Chair of the Regeneration Committee, the consultation period on the Scoping Report was extended until the 11<sup>th</sup> August 2007.
10. To raise awareness of the inclusion of the decision making criteria in the draft SAF and the extended consultation period the Council:
- Wrote to all those who made representations in respect to the Scoping Report and provided them with a copy of the revised Section 4.
  - A paragraph describing the additions, the extended consultation period and details of where the documents could be viewed was included in all the letters sent out in relation to the public consultation on the LDF's Core Strategy and Generic Development Control Policies.
  - The Council's website was updated.



## **use of sustainability baseline indicators**

11. A number of the representations received related to the inclusion of additional indicators within the draft SAF. These indicators were frequently of a different format and nature of those presented in the Scoping Report.
12. English Heritage's representation contained generic guidance to all local authorities. This guidance highlighted that, at different stages in the SA process it is necessary to use different indicators. Furthermore, Government guidance indicates that during the appraisal stages and when predicting the likely impacts of the alternative options, sustainability baseline indicators should be used. This is to ensure the predictions made are firmly related to the current situation in Wear Valley. In the later stages of the SA, when the plan is finalised, monitoring indicators should be developed to monitor the sustainability of the plan and identify any unintended significant effects arising as a result of the plan.
13. The indicators presented in the draft SAF were designed to monitor the plan. It has therefore been necessary to look back at the sustainability baseline indicators collected as part of preparing the Scoping Report and contained in the Technical Appendices document and relate them back to the appropriate SA Objective. Sustainability baseline indicators identified within the representations have also been included where appropriate.
14. The indicators identified in the Scoping Report will be retained and used during the monitoring stages of the SA and added to or amended as appropriate once the content of the Core Strategy and Generic Development Control Policies are finalised.

## **legal, financial and human resource implications**

15. There are no financial, legal or human resource implications.

## **conclusion**

16. The consultation in relation to the Scoping Report received a reasonable response rate which highlighted a number of potential amendments to the draft SAF; these have informed the preparation of the final SAF.
17. The changes to the SAF included the amendment of 5 draft SA Objectives and the addition of 2 new SA Objectives. Decision making criteria and sustainability baseline indicators were included to assist during the appraisal and assessment stages of the SA process; this is in the interests of consistency and to ensure the predictions made are firmly related to baseline information specific to Wear Valley.

## **RECOMMENDED**

- 1 That Members endorse the use of the final SAF during the preparation of the LDF's Core Strategy and Generic Development Control Policies.

**background information**

- Joint Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report for the LDF's Core Strategy and Generic Development Control Policies and accompanying appendices (May 2007).
- Representations received from 10 organisations in relation to the consultation on the Scoping Report.
- Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents (ODPM, Nov 2005).

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|--|---|
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**REGENERATION COMMITTEE**

**12 SEPTEMBER 2007**

Report of the Strategic Director for Environment and Regeneration

**WEAR VALLEY DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN: SAVED POLICIES  
DIRECTION FROM SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL  
GOVERNMENT**

**purpose of the report**

1. To inform Members of the Direction which has been served on this Council in relation to the Wear Valley District Local Plan (Adopted 1997) and its implications as of 27<sup>th</sup> September 2007.

**background**

2. Members will be aware the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 reformed the English Planning System. The new planning system made provision for existing development plan policies to be 'saved' for an initial three-year period, to ensure that they remained a material consideration for the determination of planning applications and to safeguard against a policy vacuum. This initial three year period expires on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2007.
3. On 7<sup>th</sup> March 2007 Members approved the Council's proposal to 'save' a number of policies beyond 27<sup>th</sup> September 2007 under the Transitional Arrangements set out in the Act. The Council also presented a list to Members of those policies which did not meet the criteria set out in the Act, and as such could not be 'saved' beyond 27<sup>th</sup> September 2007; this list was also endorsed by Members.
4. Both lists were submitted to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government in March 2007 for consideration. On 31<sup>st</sup> August 2007 a Direction under paragraph 1(3) of Schedule 8 to the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 was served on this Council.

**implications of the direction**

5. The Direction is a 1 page letter with an attached schedule listing the 94 Local Plan policies that have been saved. The Council's application was successful in its entirety; all those policies the Council proposed to 'save' beyond 27<sup>th</sup> September 2007 are contained in the Direction. The Schedule of Policies contained in the Direction is contained in Annex 5. All other Local plan policies will expire on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2007.
6. Section 54A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 states that all planning applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless other material considerations dictate otherwise. As of 27<sup>th</sup> September

2007 only those policies listed under the Direction carry development plan status and can be used in development control functions.

7. Communities and Local Government urge that, following 27<sup>th</sup> September 2007, the extended policies should be read in context. As the Local Plan policies were adopted in 1997 other material considerations, in particular new national and regional policy and also new evidence (for example new evidence on local housing need or play and recreation standards), should be afforded considerable weight in decisions on planning applications.

#### **other considerations**

8. There are no financial, human resources, IT, health and Safety or crime and disorder implications of this Direction.

#### **conclusion**

9. The Wear Valley District Local Plan no longer exists in its entirety; the Direction served on this Council on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2007 specifies those policies which continue to carry development plan status. Those policies not referred to in this Direction will expire on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2007; the Council, as Local Planning Authority, can no longer use those policies not referred to in development control functions.
10. A schedule of "saved" policies will be compiled and circulated for use by Members.

#### **RECOMMENDED**

1. Members note the content of this report and the attachment and use as appropriate in matters relating to Development Control.

#### **background information**

- Wear Valley District Local Plan (adopted March 1997)
- Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Development Framework
- Wear Valley District Council: Saved Policies Regeneration Committee Report dated 7<sup>th</sup> March 2007.
- Protocol for handling proposals to save adopted Local Plan, Unitary Development Plan and Structure Plan policies beyond the 3 year saved period.

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**REGENERATION COMMITTEE**

**12 SEPTEMBER 2007**

Report of the Strategic Director for Environment and Regeneration

**DISTRICT WIDE EMPLOYMENT LAND REVIEW**

**purpose of the report**

1. To advise Members of the implications of a district wide Employment Land Review which will inform the preparation of proposals and policies for the Local Development Framework and the determination of planning applications whilst the new district plan is being prepared.

**background**

2. To complement the preparation of the District Economic Strategy the Council also commissioned consultants 'Shared Intelligence' to undertake a comprehensive district wide Employment Land Review. This Study provides a robust evidence base of employment land in Wear Valley in accordance with ODPM guidance published in December 2004. The final report which presents the consultant's findings and recommendations was completed in May 2007.
3. The Economic Strategy referred to above is focussed on a strong set of spatial priorities. In the east of the District, Bishop Auckland will form the key anchor. In the rural west of the District, the flagship Eastgate development will act as the key driver for Weardale. Crook and Willington are expected to increase their vibrancy and sustainability.

**the aim and objectives of the study**

4. The aim of the Employment Land Review is to review the suitability of the District's current sites and premises portfolio relative to likely future demand, and to make recommendations as to how any gaps in the portfolio should be filled.
5. The objectives of the study are to:-
  - Assess the current sites and premises portfolio against current and likely future demand, as well as to assess the 'fitness for purpose' of the current portfolio.
  - Recommend on the need for further employment land allocations, the scale and location of these allocations.
  - Identify, and provide recommendations as to how any failure in the market to supply new premises could be addressed.
  - To advise which sites and premises are considered unsuitable for or are unlikely to continue in employment use and should be de-allocated.

### **analysis of main findings: district wide**

6. A summary of the current land allocation portfolio is contained within a table located in Annex 6.
7. The study reveals that there is currently 226ha of industrial land in the District. Of this 123ha is in use and 103ha currently undeveloped.
8. In the District as a whole the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy indicates that the District should allocate up to 105ha of new employment land over the period 2004 to 2021. While the Study shows that the remaining undeveloped allocations of the current Local Plan amounts to around 103ha only 21ha are readily available for reasons of access, ownership and physical constraints giving rise to an effective employment land supply of only 3 to 4 years. Of the remaining 82ha of allocated land available 42ha could be available in the longer term once issues of access, ownership and physical constraints have been assessed. However, the remaining 40ha are considered to have substantial barriers to delivery. After making the recommended allocations the LDF will have to allocate an additional 18ha (16ha de-allocated plus the original shortfall of 2ha) to satisfy the 105ha regional target.
9. The Study indicates that a significant source of demand will come from local businesses seeking to re-locate within the District, mainly for reasons of expansion and or improvement to facilities. Evidence from investment enquiries and the business survey suggests that these existing Wear Valley businesses will form the bulk of the demand for future land and premises in the District, as opposed to inward investment from the outside.

### **analysis of main findings: Bishop Auckland sub-area**

10. The Study highlights the importance of the Bishop Auckland sub-area as the focal point for business with high demand for employment land, in particular for office based businesses.
11. However, for reasons explained below the Bishop Auckland sub-area has a shortage of readily available employment land, the result is a gap between supply and demand.
12. As at October 2006 the Bishop Auckland sub-area had 149.3ha of employment land 78.6ha (53%) of this land in use. This accounts for 64% of the district's total 123.1ha employment land in use. The remaining 70.7ha (47%) comprises of:-
  - 9.9ha (7%) available in the short term;
  - 24.0ha (16%) available long term; and,
  - 36.7ha (25%) having substantial barriers to delivery.
13. The trend for demand to be concentrated around Bishop Auckland is expected to continue in the future, especially given the focus of different economic strategies to establish a Darlington-Bishop Auckland strategic growth corridor and evidence from planning applications and a business survey. The Study recommends the sub-area should account for 60% of future demand for employment land within

the District. On this basis, around 60ha of employment land would need to be available within this sub-area over the period 2004 to 2021. However, the 9.9ha (Annex 6) which is available in the short term is only equivalent to a 3 to 4 years supply.

14. Whilst there are the starter units in Innovation House and the prospect of speculative development at Bracks Farm there is, as stated in the Economic Strategy, an urgent requirement for expansion or a follow-on site as the South Church allocation reaches capacity. Given the lack of private sector speculative development in bringing forward new employment sites the shortage will need to be made up through public intervention in the form of making existing sites more readily available and providing new serviced sites

#### **recommendations for the bishop auckland sub-area**

- identify a follow-on site for South Church.
- Adopt pipeline approach, using public sector money to open up employment land without swamping the market to stimulate developer interest.
- In the longer term an 8 - 10ha site needs to be allocated as a follow-on to Bracks Farm for either B1 or B1 & B2 depending on the success of Bracks Farm.
- De-allocate the following 4 sites:-
  - Romanway East
  - Railway Street / Chester Street / Peel Street
  - Witton Park
  - Auckland Park.These 4 sites are described in more detail in Annex 7.
- Strengthen policies to create a presumption against residential development on industrial estates.

#### **analysis of main findings: Crook and Willington sub-area**

15. As at October 2006 the Crook and Willington sub-area had 55.6ha of employment land, with 34.4ha (62%) of this land in use. This accounts for 28% of the district's 123.1ha employment land in use. The remaining 21.2ha (38%) comprises of:-
  - 9.9ha (18%) available in the short term;
  - 11.3ha (20%) available long term; and,
  - 0 (0%) having substantial barriers to delivery.
16. The Crook / Willington sub-area remains of key importance for general industry in the District. However, unlike the Bishop Auckland sub-area, and based on current trends, the allocated sites with 9.9ha available should cater for future demand up until 2021.
17. A public sector led development (mainly small offices) at Low Willington is due on the market this year. This site offers significant potential for the District to capitalise on spin-out demand from The City of Durham.

### **recommendations for the crook and willington sub-area**

- The Low Willington site should be a priority given its location.
  - A rationalisation of the Thistleflat employment land allocation is required.
  - Qualitative improvements are required for the Dans Castle site.
  - Retain the Inkerman site for employment use.
  - Retain the Dunelm and Pulverite sites as bad neighbours; reconsider if occupiers of the Dunelm site could relocate at a later date.
  - De-allocate the following 2 sites:-
    - Thistleflat Extension 1 (North)
    - Dans Castle Extension
- These 2 sites are described in more detail in Annex 7.

### **analysis of main findings: Weardale sub-area**

18. As at October 2006 the Weardale sub-area had 21.2ha of employment land, 10.1ha (48%) of this land was in use. This accounts for 8% of the district's 123.1ha employment land in use. The remaining 11.1ha (52%) comprises of:-
  - 0.7ha (3%) available in the short term;
  - 7.2ha (34%) available long term; and,
  - 3.2ha (15%) having substantial barriers to delivery.
19. There are no large employment sites within the Weardale sub-area with the small industrial units in Stanhope and Wolsingham experiencing relatively high occupancy. The only other alternative location for new local employment allocations are in Wolsingham.
20. The Study suggests that in the short term office units in Stanhope should satisfy demand in the Weardale sub-area.
21. Although the Eastgate site is not a local plan allocation the 2ha of employment land has been calculated in the District's total.
22. At the former Wolsingham Steelworks site planning approval has been given (subject to a S106 agreement) for a mixed development including 1ha of B1, B2 and B8 use. In respect of the adjoining Sawmill site there is still a degree of uncertainty following the refusal for outline permission for mixed use development in July 2007
23. In the more longer term, the Eastgate proposal could provide around 10,000 square metres of high quality workspace with possible spin-out benefits to the local economy.

### **recommendations for the weardale sub-area**

- The Wolsingham Sawmill site should be retained.
- Wolsingham Industrial Estate East should be retained in case the Sawmills site falters.



- Wolsingham Steelworks to be retained for housing and industrial units (1 ha for employment use as per planning approval number 3/2006/0817)
- The anticipated Eastgate development should make provision for flexible units to allow for business expansion.
- De-allocate the following 2 sites:-
  - East of Blairs
  - St. Johns Chapel (unoccupied part of site)
 These 2 sites are described in more detail in Annex 7.

## **implications for the ldf and planning applications**

### implications for the ldf

- There is a need to find and allocate 18ha amount of land through the LDF. Recommendations and conclusions suggest that, other than the 2ha at Eastgate this should be in the Bishop Auckland sub-area.
- Policies need strengthening to resist residential development on allocated sites.
- De-allocation of 8 sites, which equates to 16.3ha across the district. The de-allocation of these sites does not automatically result in residential development being acceptable in these locations. Future use to be considered in the LDF.
- Use recommendations in the determination of planning applications to ensure proposals do not undermine recommendations whilst the LDF is being prepared.

### implications for development

- The Council is working to bring forward new industrial sites to make serviced land available for development in the short term. This will take the form of a phased development strategy to open up sites and to prioritise specific actions and prioritisations. This Land Strategy will be presented to Committee at a future date.

## **conclusions**

24. The Employment Land Review will provide key evidence for the LDF which should also be used to inform investment and planning decisions in the interim.
25. Recommendations will help to deliver an Economic Strategy ,
26. The key implication is that 39% of the undeveloped employment land has significant barriers development.
27. 18 ha of additional employment land needs to found in Bishop Auckland sub area of which a large 8 -10ha site should be allocated as a follow on to Bracks Farm in the longer term.

**RECOMMENDED**

- 1 That Members consider and endorse the findings of the Employment Land Review to inform the LDF and future planning decisions.
- 2 That a Land Strategy will be presented to the Committee at a future date.

**background information**

Wear Valley Employment Land Review and appendices.

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## REGENERATION COMMITTEE

12 SEPTEMBER 2007

Report of the Strategic Director for Environment and Regeneration

### DISTRICT WIDE RETAIL STUDY UPDATE

#### **purpose of the report**

1. To advise Members of the findings of the Wear Valley District Wide Retail Study Update (2007).

#### **background**

2. In September 2004 the findings of the Wear Valley Retail Study were presented to Committee. The study considered the existing shopping provision within the District, carried out "health checks" of the centres in Wear Valley, determined shopping patterns and assessed future shopping needs. The present study updates the findings of that report and will be useful in both determining planning applications and feeding into the work of the Local Development Framework Core strategy.
3. The Retail Study area is larger than the administrative area of Wear Valley and includes neighbouring settlements such as Shildon and Spennymoor. This reflects the popularity of Bishop Auckland as a shopping centre, in that it attracts shoppers from a wide area and compensates for the "leakage", or loss of trade/retail spending from the District to other centres such as Darlington and the Metro Centre.

#### **summary of main findings.**

4. The Study Update looked at the existing floorspace of the different centres in the District, their health in terms of the vitality and viability of the centres, changes in expenditure and shopping patterns and the general physical appearance of the shopping centres themselves.
5. The table below summarises the overall changes in shopping floorspace between 2004 and 2007. The main changes in floorspace have resulted from the development of new retail warehouses at Tindale Crescent (Aldi and Lidl) and a corresponding reduction of floorspace in Bishop Auckland. Tindale Crescent has more retail floorspace than any centre in Wear Valley, except Bishop Auckland.

| <b>Total shopping floorspace (sq. metres net)</b> | <b>2004</b>   | <b>2007</b>   | <b>Changes</b> |
|---|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| Bishop Auckland Town Centre                       | 23,112        | 22,531        | -581           |
| Crook   | 4,892         | 4,840         | -52            |
| Cockton Hill                                      | 354           | 398           | +44            |
| Coundon   | 375           | 375           | nil            |
| Stanhope  | 934           | 1,032         | +98            |
| Tow Law   | 260           | 255           | -5             |
| West Auckland                                     | 431           | 409           | -22            |
| Willington  | 1,661         | 1,488         | -173           |
| Wolsingham  | 569           | 569           | nil            |
| Asda, Bishop Auckland                             | 3,716         | 3,716         | nil            |
| Tindale Crescent                                  | 6,161         | 12,075        | +5,914         |
| <b>Wear Valley TOTAL</b>                          | <b>42,465</b> | <b>47,690</b> | <b>+5,225</b>  |

6. The Study Update investigated the health and attractiveness of the different centres by comparing their indices of “vitality and viability”. Vitality and viability is a commonly used system of analysis for comparing shopping centres. It is based on indicators listed in PPG6; Planning for Town Centres, and developed by retail analysts across the country. Some 42 indicators of town centre performance are measured before being given an overall score of from 1 to 5. There is a good correlation between the vitality and viability score and the physical appearance of a centre, so that a centre that looks prosperous usually is! The change in the health of the shopping centres is summarised below.

| <b>Change in the vitality and viability of centres</b> | <b>2004</b> | <b>2007</b> |
|--|-------------|-------------|
| Bishop Auckland Town Centre                            | 3.3         | 3.4         |
| Crook  | 3.1         | 3.2         |
| Cockton Hill   | 2.8         | 2.9         |
| Coundon  | 2.5         | 2.5         |
| Stanhope   | 2.9         | 3.1         |
| Tow Law  | 2.7         | 2.8         |
| West Auckland  | 2.8         | 2.9         |
| Willington   | 2.7         | 2.6         |
| Wolsingham   | 3.1         | 3.1         |

7. Health check appraisals of centres in March 2007 show that:-
  - The overall vitality and viability index for Bishop Auckland has increased from 3.3 in 2004 to 3.4 in 2007. This is an above average score reflecting Bishop Auckland's role as an important shopping destination for the town and surrounding settlements. Food shopping is particularly good.
  - The overall vitality and viability for Crook has increased from 3.1 in 2004 to 3.2 in 2007. This is an average score reflecting Crooks secondary position to Bishop Auckland as a main shopping centre.
8. The study area had a total convenience goods (food) expenditure in 2004 of £218m of which £125.7m (58%) was spent within Wear Valley. The current study considers that there is a capacity for an additional £19.9m to be spent in the District up to 2021. This increase is based on an assumption in a growth in spending on convenience goods. The study considers that there is little capacity for additional floorspace in the short to medium term but in the longer term such a growth in spending would be equivalent to the building of a 4,000sq.m. superstore.
9. For comparison goods (non food) the study area had a total expenditure of £421m, of which only 35% was spent in the area. This represents significant leakage of expenditure. There is a capacity for additional spend in the area of £57.8m in 2011 increasing to £150m in 2021. This represents a potential new floorspace capacity of up to 5,400 sq.m. net in 2011 and 11,000sq.m. to 36,100sq.m net in 2021. The long term equivalent is similar to a retail warehouse development as large as that at Tindale Crescent plus a substantial amount of additional town centre floorspace.
10. In terms of land requirements the study estimates a need for about 1 hectare of land for food shopping up to 2021 and for between 2 hectares of non food shopping in 2011, rising to 7 hectares in 2016 and 14 hectares in 2021. The study concludes that there is further potential for retail warehouse development at Tindale Crescent in the longer term, as well as potential for new non food shopping development in Bishop Auckland Town Centre.

#### **detailed findings and changes since 2004**

11. The Study considered the following centres. (Listed in descending order in terms of shopping floorspace.  
  
bishop auckland
12. Bishop Auckland has 297 retail and commercial premises, with a floorspace of 22,531 square metres. The study does not include the new Asda foodstore in this total but if it did then food shopping floorspace would account for 30% of the total. A decline in the amount off food shopping floorspace has been experienced with the relocation of Aldi from next to the bus station to Tindale Crescent. The centre contains a good range of non food multiples such as Marks and Spencer, Argos, Woolworths, WH Smith etc.

13. The study considers that the secondary shopping area of Fore Bondgate is in decline but that the Market Place continues to be a pleasant area. The number of vacant units throughout the centre has declined since 2004 and this is a reflection of an improvement in the health of the town centre. The physical appearance of retail and commercial properties is about average and has not changed since 2004.

crook

14. Crook has 110 retail and commercial premises, with a floorspace of 4,840 square metres. Food shopping is dominated by the Co-op supermarket with a floorspace of 1,524 sq.m. Over half of the shops in Crook are given over to food shopping. The physical appearance of the shopping area has improved since 2004, reflecting the improvements carried out as part of the County/District Councils Shopfront Improvement Scheme. The role of and position of Crook in the shopping hierarchy remains unchanged.

willington

15. Willington has 65 retail and commercial premises with a floorspace of 1,487 square metres. A relatively high proportion of premises are food shops (17%) and there is also a relatively high proportion of vacant premises (23%). The physical appearance of retail properties in Willington was considered to be the same as in 2004, at just below average. The appearance of the centre is not enhanced by the number of units which are shuttered during the day and contribute to a "dead" shopping frontage.

stanhope

16. Stanhope has a total of 28 retail and commercial premises with a floorspace of 1,032 square metres. One fifth (21%) of the retail premises are for food shopping, which is a fall from 30% in 2004. Two food shops have changed to non-food use. Non-retail uses (such as banks, hairdressers etc) account for almost 40% of the centres floorspace, reflecting Stanhope's status as a rural service centre. At the time of the survey there were only 3 vacant premises, giving the centre a 10% vacancy rate, which is about the national average. The physical appearance of Stanhope was considered above average.

wolsingham

17. Wolsingham has 8 shops, with a floorspace of 569 square metres. Five of these are for food shopping. The vacancy rate, at 10% is about the same as nationally. The physical appearance of the centre is considered to be well above average. There has been no significant change to shopping in Wolsingham in the past three years.

west auckland

18. West Auckland has six shops, with a floorspace of 409 square metres. Four of the shops are for food shopping, which represents a change of one shop to food retailing since 2004. The vacancy rate is above the national average, at 14%. The physical appearance of the retail properties is judged to be average.

#### cockton hill

19. Cockton Hill is a small local centre mostly comprising of non retail units. It has 8 shops, with 398 square metres of floorspace. The centre is dominated by service uses such as clubs, hairdressers, dentists, financial and professional services. It has a low vacancy rate and a slightly above average appearance. There has been an addition of one food shop since 2004. The predominance of service uses and the proximity of Morrisons and Asda mean that this situation is unlikely to change and Cockton Hill could be considered as a service rather than a retail centre.

#### coundon

20. Coundon has 5 shops with 375 square metres of floorspace. The percentage of service uses such as pubs, hairdressers and hot food takeaway outlets is high. There are 11 vacant units, representing 39% of all retail and commercial premises. This is the highest in Wear Valley and much higher than the national average. The appearance of the centre was considered to be below average. The retail function of Coundon has declined in the last three years. From 8 shops in 2004 there are now only 5 and the number of vacant units has increased from 4 to 11.

#### tow law

21. Tow Law has 8 shops, with 255 square metres of floorspace. Tow Law has a high proportion of food shops and a very low representation of comparison goods shops. The proportion of service uses such as pubs, clubs, cafes and takeaways is high. The vacancy rate is about the same as the national average. The appearance of the retail and commercial premises was regarded as well above average. There has been an increase in one food store and a halving of the vacancy rate since 2004.

#### tindale crescent

22. Tindale Crescent comprises a number of retail warehouse units on land to the south of Bishop Auckland. The area was not classed as a centre for the purposes of the 2007 and 2004 Studies, and so no health check, vacancy rates or comparison studies were made. For the purposes of consistency the "centre" has 10 shops, with a net floorspace of 12,075 square metres. This is approximately half of the floorspace of Bishop Auckland (with both Asda and Morrisons included) and a quarter of all retailing in Wear Valley. The relocation of Aldi from Bishop Auckland town centre and the building of a Lidl foodstore have further reinforced the trading position of Tindale Crescent.
23. The main changes in shopping provision since 2004 have been the development of new retail warehouses at Tindale Crescent. As mentioned above the Aldi foodstore has relocated from Bishop Auckland to Tindale Crescent and a new Lidl foodstore has been built there. Any net loss from Bishop Auckland has been compensated for by the opening of the Asda superstore. Asda and Morrisons, to the south of the main shopping centre account for the bulk of the food retailing within Bishop Auckland. Whilst the Asda store is not classified by the Retail

Study as within Bishop Auckland town centre it is nevertheless functionally part of the centre and attracts shoppers to it.

### **conclusion and implications for the emerging local development framework (ldf)**

24. The study area had a total convenience goods expenditure of £218 m of which 58% was spent in Wear Valley. In contrast total comparison goods expenditure was £421.2m of which only 35% was spent in the area.
25. It is estimated that there is capacity for additional comparison goods spending to increase by £19.9m by 2021. This is the equivalent of a new superstore development of 4,000 sq.m gross floorspace. With a predicted increase in comparison goods spending of £150m by 2021 a further 36,000 sq.m of floorspace could be added. This represents the equivalent of another development the size of the warehouse scheme at Tindale Crescent.
26. The study has demonstrated that the main focus of new retail development has been to the south of Bishop Auckland Town Centre (Asda) and at Tindale Crescent (Aldi and Lidl). This has shown a consolidation of food shopping to the south of Bishop Auckland, where accessibility and car parking are important factors. This locality is therefore a counter-balance to the traditional centre around the Market Place and the Newgate Centre. With the future development of North Bondgate and the refurbishment of the Newgate Centre the town centre should be balanced between the two areas. It will be important to retain this equilibrium, as new development is considered, so that the centre is not split into two sub-centres.
27. Stanhope, Tow Law, West Auckland and Wolsingham have all shown improvement and consolidation in their roles as local centres, with no significant change in their shopping function.
28. Willington, whilst retaining it's position in the shopping hierarchy, has potential for improvement in both shopping provision and physical appearance. It may be with the recent and current housing growth in the area that a wider range of shops will develop. It may be necessary for the Council to consider whether traffic and streetscape improvement measures would be worthwhile.
29. Coundon continues to decline as a shopping centre. The Council's ability to influence this trend may be limited given the villages' closeness and accessibility to Bishop Auckland and Tindale Crescent. New residential development in the area may not, because of the accessibility mentioned, halt or reverse this decline.
30. The England and Lyle Retail Study gives both a "snapshot" of retailing within Wear Valley for 2007 and a useful guide to recent changes in the shopping provision for the District. The findings will be used in the consideration of applications for planning permission and in the preparation of the Core Strategy of the Local Development Framework.



## **considerations**

financial implications/legal implications/human resource implications/health and safety implications

31. None at this stage.

## **RECOMMENDED**

- 1 That Members agree the findings of the Wear Valley Retail Study Update 2007 and to endorse the application of these findings to future LDF production.

## **background information**

Wear Valley Retail Study: Retail Study Update. March 2007  
England & Lyle. Chartered Town Planners Morton House, Darlington.

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### **Officer responsible for the report**

**Robert Hope**

Strategic Director for Environment and Regeneration

Ext 264

### **Author of the report**

Peter Duff

Forward Planning Officer

Ext 539

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## REGENERATION COMMITTEE

12 SEPTEMBER 2007

Report of the Strategic Director for Environment and Regeneration

### **NORTHUMBERLAND MINERALS AND WASTE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK**

#### **purpose of the report**

1. To seek Members' endorsement for the Strategic Director's response to the Consultation by Northumberland County Council on the Northumberland Minerals and Waste Development Framework.

#### **background**

2. Northumberland County Council has consulted this Authority on three Development Plan Documents covering Minerals and Waste in Northumberland. The three documents comprise; the Core Strategy DPD, the Development Framework DPD and the Site Specific Allocations DPD. The Development Framework is accompanied by a Proposals Map, three Sustainability Reports, an Appropriate Assessment Report (linked to the Habitats Regulations) and a Statement of Consultation.

#### **policy context**

3. Wear Valley District Council was consulted on the Framework on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2007 and the period for making representations ended on 10<sup>th</sup> August 2007. Durham County Council, as the Minerals Planning Authority, considered the Northumberland County Council Consultation at their Planning Committee on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2007 and resolved to object to the proposed Framework on the grounds that the proposals were overly restrictive, not compatible with Durham County policies and national guidelines, and could result in pressure from mineral operators to exploit resources in County Durham as a whole and in Wear Valley in particular. I have, therefore, lodged an objection to the proposals on the same grounds as the County Council and seek the Committee's endorsement of this action.

#### **the northumberland county council's minerals and waste development framework**

4. Once it is adopted the Development Framework will set out the County Council's policies to guide decisions on planning applications for minerals extraction and waste management facilities in the period up to 2021. It will also identify specific areas for mineral extraction and new waste management facilities. The Development Framework will replace the existing Northumberland Minerals and

Waste Local Plans, on which it is closely based. The policies of the three DPDs only apply to the area of Northumberland outside the National Park.

5. The Core Strategy policies and proposals which concern mineral aggregates and waste management have no potential implications for Wear Valley, being restricted to Northumberland. It is the issue of opencast coal extraction which has given Durham County Council cause for concern and which could have implications for this authority.

opencast coal extraction

6. Northumberland County Council propose to retain the areas of restraint which are within the existing Minerals Local Plan. These areas of restraint cover most of South Tynedale District and the exposed coalfield in south-east Northumberland. The area of Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty bordering Wear Valley in the North Pennines is also covered by this policy. Within these areas it is proposed that all mineral working will be strongly resisted. Any application for opencast coal extraction will be expected to demonstrate that there is an overall benefit, in terms of environmental, social and economic outcomes.
7. This approach is more restrictive than that adopted by Durham County Council, which seeks to follow national guidance as set out in Minerals Policy Guidance Note 3 (MPG3) Coal Mining and Colliery Disposal. With the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy there is also a need and opportunity to adopt a consistent regional approach to coal extraction.
8. The potential will exist, with an overly restrictive policy towards opencast coal extraction in the neighbouring Minerals Planning Authority area, for additional pressure to be put upon communities and the environment in County Durham as has recently been demonstrated in Wear Valley.

## **conclusion**

9. In response to Northumberland County Council's consultation I have replied, on the Council's behalf, objecting to the proposed policy of restraint because it is considered to be overly restrictive and likely to create additional pressure for opencast coal extraction within Wear Valley, being unnecessary and contradictory in the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and calling for a consistent Regional approach, in keeping with national guidance.

## **RECOMMENDED**

- 1 That Members endorse my action.

## **background information**

Northumberland County Council's Minerals and Waste Development Framework DPD, the Core Strategy DPD, Site Specific Allocations DPD, objection of Durham County Council agreed by Planning Committee on 18 July 2007.

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**Officer responsible for the report****Robert Hope**Strategic Director for Environment and Regeneration  
Ext 264**Author of the report**

Peter Duff

Planning Officer  
Ext 539

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**REGENERATION COMMITTEE**

**12 SEPTEMBER 2007**

Report of the Strategic Director for Environment and Regeneration

**CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2007/8**

**purpose of the report**

1. To update Members of the progress made in the delivery of the 2007/8 Capital Programme at the end of quarter 1.

**introduction**

2. The Environment and Regeneration Department currently has 13 projects operating as part of Wear Valley District Council's Capital Programme. Below is a brief description of the progress made by each project during the first quarter of the 2007/8 financial year. The tables identify the budget and any revisions for each project - both in total and Wear Valley District Council's contribution. They also highlight whether or not the project is receiving any external funding and if this has been secured. The completion date along with any spend incurred during the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter are also shown.

**continuation projects from capital programme 2006-07**

|  |                |                         |                |
|--|----------------|-------------------------|----------------|
| <b>C065 – Wolsingham Business Park</b> |                | <b>Sue Dawson</b>       |                |
| 2007/8 Budget Total                    | <b>£0</b>      | 2007/8 Revised Budget   | <b>£50,000</b> |
| 2007/8 Budget WVDC                     | <b>£0</b>      | 2007/8 Revised WVDC     | <b>£50,000</b> |
| Partly externally funded               | <b>Private</b> | Project Completion Date | <b>2008/9</b>  |
| Funding secured                        | <b>N</b>       | Spend @ 30.06.07        | <b>£0</b>      |

3. Outline planning permission has now been granted for the redevelopment of the steelworks site for residential use together with a small amount of employment land. The planning application for the adjacent site with additional employment land was refused.
4. Although planning permission has been granted there is currently uncertainty over the timescale for the re-development and further discussions need to take place to establish the nature of the proposals in relation to the employment land. Substantial further development work is necessary on this project before delivery can commence.

|                           |                |                         |                 |                   |
|---------------------------|----------------|-------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| <b>C066 – Bracks Farm</b> |                |                         |                 | <b>Sue Dawson</b> |
| 2007/8 Budget Total       | <b>£0</b>      | 2007/8 Revised Budget   | <b>£145,000</b> |                   |
| 2007/8 Budget WVDC        | <b>£0</b>      | 2007/8 Revised WVDC     | <b>£145,000</b> |                   |
| Partly externally funded  | <b>Private</b> | Project Completion Date | <b>2008/9</b>   |                   |
| Funding secured           | <b>Y</b>       | Spend @ 30.06.07        | <b>£0</b>       |                   |

5. As previously reported to Committee, Wear Valley District Council has entered into a legal agreement with Priority Sites to facilitate the development of a first phase of office workspace on this site.
6. Whilst work is on-going on this project delays have been incurred in relation to the purchase of the land further delaying construction. Wear Valley Officers are working to support Priority Sites to ensure this development occurs in 2007/8.

|  |           |                         |                  |                   |
|--|-----------|-------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| <b>C082 – Innovation House Extension</b> |           |                         |                  | <b>Sue Dawson</b> |
| 2007/8 Budget Total                      | <b>£0</b> | 2007/8 Revised Budget   | <b>£0</b>        |                   |
| 2007/8 Budget WVDC                       | <b>£0</b> | 2007/8 Revised WVDC     | <b>£0</b>        |                   |
| Partly externally funded                 | <b>Y</b>  | Project Completion Date | <b>2007/8</b>    |                   |
| Funding secured                          | <b>Y</b>  | Spend @ 30.06.07        | <b>-£101,142</b> |                   |

7. Located on South Church Enterprise Park, Bishop Auckland, the expansion of Innovation House facility to create additional office workspace is complete and going through a period of testing and snagging. The first tenant is in occupation of the extension and a number of other enquiries are also being progressed for both parts of the building.
8. The account balance reflects a small amount of contingencies within the project currently unspent and also the payment of external funding to the Council for this project. It is intended to use this for additional fixtures, fittings and finishings to enhance the building and quality of the offer to potential occupiers.

|  |           |                         |                  |                    |
|--|-----------|-------------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| <b>C087 – Crook Commercial Renaissance</b> |           |                         |                  | <b>Alan Weston</b> |
| 2007/8 Budget Total                        | <b>£0</b> | 2007/8 Revised Budget   | <b>£0</b>        |                    |
| 2007/8 Budget WVDC                         | <b>£0</b> | 2007/8 Revised WVDC     | <b>£0</b>        |                    |
| Partly externally funded                   | <b>Y</b>  | Project Completion Date | <b>2007/8</b>    |                    |
| Funding secured                            | <b>Y</b>  | Spend @ 30.06.07        | <b>-£127,137</b> |                    |

9. This project has been complete for some time, public realm improvements having been completed in 2006/7, although final invoices for the work have only been received from Durham County Council during quarter 2.

|  |           |                         |                  |                    |
|--|-----------|-------------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| <b>C088 – Low Willington Business Park</b> |           |                         |                  | <b>Alan Weston</b> |
| 2007/8 Budget Total                        | <b>£0</b> | 2007/8 Revised Budget   | <b>£0</b>        |                    |
| 2007/8 Budget WVDC                         | <b>£0</b> | 2007/8 Revised WVDC     | <b>£0</b>        |                    |
| Partly externally funded                   | <b>Y</b>  | Project Completion Date | <b>2007/8</b>    |                    |
| Funding secured                            | <b>Y</b>  | Spend @ 30.06.07        | <b>-£177,690</b> |                    |

10. This joint scheme between Durham County Council and Wear Valley District is to provide a suite of 14 offices on Low Willington Industrial Estate, called St Stephen's Court. Construction is scheduled to be completed in late September and work to market the availability of these premises has commenced.
11. The account balance reflects our commitment of resources to this project as a contribution towards the overall costs. This project is on schedule to be financially completed within 2007/8.

**C089 – South West Crook Industrial Extension**

**Sue Dawson**

|                          |            |                         |                 |
|--------------------------|------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| 2007/8 Budget Total      | <b>£0</b>  | 2007/8 Revised Budget   | <b>£249,406</b> |
| 2007/8 Budget WVDC       | <b>£0</b>  | 2007/8 Revised WVDC     | <b>£249,406</b> |
| Partly externally funded | <b>TBC</b> | Project Completion Date | <b>2008/9</b>   |
| Funding secured          | <b>n/a</b> | Spend @ 30.06.07        | <b>-£34,625</b> |

12. Feasibility work is on-going in relation to the provision of additional serviced land available for businesses to grow and expand in the short-term at this site on the outskirts of Crook.
13. Discussions are continuing with a number of private sector developers and businesses to facilitate both speculative office developments on the allocated land, and also bespoke industrial development to enable business growth.
14. The account balance reflects payments not yet made to consultants carrying out the feasibility study for work carried out in the previous financial year.

**C093 – West Auckland Improvement Scheme**

**Sandra Robertson**

|                          |                |                         |                |
|--------------------------|----------------|-------------------------|----------------|
| 2007/8 Budget Total      | <b>£23,000</b> | 2007/8 Revised Budget   | <b>£53,000</b> |
| 2007/8 Budget WVDC       | <b>£23,000</b> | 2007/8 Revised WVDC     | <b>£53,000</b> |
| Partly externally funded | <b>DCC</b>     | Project Completion Date | <b>2008/9</b>  |
| Funding secured          | <b>n/a</b>     | Spend @ 30.06.07        | <b>£9,996</b>  |

15. This scheme is being delivered by Durham County Council with a financial contribution from Wear Valley District Council and additional money from external funding.
16. The revised budget for this project is £53,000. This is due to £30,000 being carried forward from 2006-2007 into this financial year.
17. Progress continues to be made in relation to the improvement of the premises in the area and the offer of premises grants. In addition detailed plans for the public realm improvements in West Auckland have been produced and costed. Unfortunately the extent of the work is more than originally envisaged and additional resources are being sought by Durham County Council to implement the proposed works.

**C126 – Positional Accuracy Tool****Carole Dillon**

|                          |           |                         |                |
|--------------------------|-----------|-------------------------|----------------|
| 2007/8 Budget Total      | <b>£0</b> | 2007/8 Revised Budget   | <b>£17,860</b> |
| 2007/8 Budget WVDC       | <b>£0</b> | 2007/8 Revised WVDC     | <b>£17,860</b> |
| Partly externally funded | <b>N</b>  | Project Completion Date | <b>2007/8</b>  |
| Funding secured          | <b>N</b>  | Spend @ 30.06.07        | <b>£6,309</b>  |

18. Following the successful pilot work the Positional Accuracy project is now in the main implementation stage. Although slightly behind schedule, due to problems with the original mapping format, it is anticipated that the project will be completed before the end of November 2007.

**capital programme 2007-2008****C059 – Contaminated Land****Ian Bloomfield**

|                          |                 |                         |                 |
|--------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| 2007/8 Budget Total      | <b>£100,000</b> | 2007/8 Revised Budget   | <b>£100,000</b> |
| 2007/8 Budget WVDC       | <b>£100,000</b> | 2007/8 Revised WVDC     | <b>£100,000</b> |
| Partly externally funded | <b>N</b>        | Project Completion Date | <b>2008/9</b>   |
| Funding secured          | <b>n/a</b>      | Spend @ 30.06.07        | <b>-£4,148</b>  |

19. This resource is targeted at remediating post-industrial contaminated land across the district. There are some 500 sites to be assessed and prioritised for treatment as part of an action plan for contaminated land.
20. Additional staff resources have now been identified to support the implementation of this work. This has allowed an increase in activity towards prioritising the sites, although it is anticipated that this work will take until early 2008 to complete. Spend of this capital resource on remediation work is therefore expected to commence in the last quarter of the year.

**C109 – Eastgate****Sue Dawson**

|                          |                 |                         |                 |
|--------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| 2007/8 Budget Total      | <b>£917,000</b> | 2007/8 Revised Budget   | <b>£917,000</b> |
| 2007/8 Budget WVDC       | <b>£96,000</b>  | 2007/8 Revised WVDC     | <b>£96,000</b>  |
| Partly externally funded | <b>Y</b>        | Project Completion Date | <b>2008/9</b>   |
| Funding secured          | <b>Y</b>        | Spend @ 30.06.07        | <b>£122,396</b> |

21. Progress is continuing with the work required to submit the planning application for the redevelopment of the Eastgate site. Many of the contracts for this work were started in 2006/7 and are scheduled for completion in either quarter 2 or quarter 3 of 2007/8 to enable the planning application to be submitted in Autumn.
22. The current budget position reflects the claiming of external funding in arrears of it being defrayed.

**C125 – Wear Valley Building Enhancement****Sue Dawson**

|                          |                 |                         |                  |
|--------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| 2007/8 Budget Total      | <b>£286,000</b> | 2007/8 Revised Budget   | <b>£286,000</b>  |
| 2007/8 Budget WVDC       | <b>£86,000</b>  | 2007/8 Revised WVDC     | <b>£86,000</b>   |
| Partly externally funded | <b>Y</b>        | Project Completion Date | <b>2007/8</b>    |
| Funding secured          | <b>Y</b>        | Spend @ 30.06.07        | <b>-£217,313</b> |



23. This scheme offers grants towards improvements to commercial properties to create additional business space in the district. There has been a high demand on this resource and a number of schemes are in development or contracts have been issued. The balance on this account is to enable these commitments to be met.

**C127 – Economic Development Fund**

**Bob Hope**

|                          |                |                         |                 |
|--------------------------|----------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| 2007/8 Budget Total      | <b>£30,000</b> | 2007/8 Revised Budget   | <b>£30,000</b>  |
| 2007/8 Budget WVDC       | <b>£30,000</b> | 2007/8 Revised WVDC     | <b>£30,000</b>  |
| Partly externally funded | <b>N</b>       | Project Completion Date | <b>On-going</b> |
| Funding secured          | <b>n/a</b>     | Spend @ 30.06.07        | <b>£0</b>       |

24. There are no current commitments on this resource, although it is anticipated that requests for utilising this resource will be received during the year.

**C128 – Bishop Auckland Town Centre**

**Alan Weston**

|                          |                 |                         |                 |
|--------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| 2007/8 Budget Total      | <b>£300,000</b> | 2007/8 Revised Budget   | <b>£448,159</b> |
| 2007/8 Budget WVDC       | <b>£300,000</b> | 2007/8 Revised WVDC     | <b>£300,000</b> |
| Partly externally funded | <b>Y</b>        | Project Completion Date | <b>2009/10</b>  |
| Funding secured          | <b>Y</b>        | Spend @ 30.06.07        | <b>£0</b>       |

25. Progress with the implementation of the Bishop Auckland Urban Renaissance Master Plan is subject to a separate progress report. The approval of funding for Phase 0 – Project Management will enable an increase in activity and improve the capacity of WVDC to work with key stakeholder partners to deliver this scheme.

**C149 – Alternative Energy Systems: Public Buildings**

**Ian Bloomfield**

|                          |                |                         |                |
|--------------------------|----------------|-------------------------|----------------|
| 2007/8 Budget Total      | <b>£60,000</b> | 2007/8 Revised Budget   | <b>£60,000</b> |
| 2007/8 Budget WVDC       | <b>£60,000</b> | 2007/8 Revised WVDC     | <b>£60,000</b> |
| Partly externally funded | <b>N</b>       | Project Completion Date | <b>2009/10</b> |
| Funding secured          | <b>N</b>       | Spend @ 30.06.07        | <b>£0</b>      |

26. Work is on-going with the WVDC facilities management team to maximise the impact of this resource in 2007/8. This will potentially be looking at improving the energy efficiency and usage of the lighting system in the Civic Centre, and potential roll-out of these improvements to other key public buildings.

27. Associated with this, a number of training events have been held with staff to make improvements to the energy footprint of leisure buildings and it is intended that some of the available resource may also be spent here on improvements.

**C150 – Renewable Energy – Innovation House**

**Alan Weston**

|                          |                |                         |                |
|--------------------------|----------------|-------------------------|----------------|
| 2007/8 Budget Total      | <b>£45,000</b> | 2007/8 Revised Budget   | <b>£45,000</b> |
| 2007/8 Budget WVDC       | <b>£22,500</b> | 2007/8 Revised WVDC     | <b>£22,500</b> |
| Partly externally funded | <b>Y</b>       | Project Completion Date | <b>2007/8</b>  |
| Funding secured          | <b>N</b>       | Spend @ 30.06.07        | <b>£0</b>      |

28. Feasibility work is on-going to establish the most effective renewable energy source to provide at Innovation House to meet the needs of the building. Some indicative costs have been gathered and substantial progress will be made with this project during quarter 2 to make substantial improvements to both the energy efficiency of the building and the reduction of the energy footprint of the premises. This project will have both an environmental benefit and potentially an economic benefit to both WVDC and the business within the premises.

| <b>C151 – Alternative Energy Grants</b> |                | <b>Ian Bloomfield</b>   |                |
|---|----------------|-------------------------|----------------|
| 2007/8 Budget Total                     | <b>£30,000</b> | 2007/8 Revised Budget   | <b>£30,000</b> |
| 2007/8 Budget WVDC                      | <b>£30,000</b> | 2007/8 Revised WVDC     | <b>£30,000</b> |
| Partly externally funded                | <b>N</b>       | Project Completion Date | <b>2007/8</b>  |
| Funding secured                         | <b>n/a</b>     | Spend @ 30.06.07        | <b>£2,000</b>  |

29. This scheme is to provide grants to private residential premises to support renewable energy schemes. In addition to the amount of money already spent, there are a number of grant commitments totalling in excess of £10,000. This resource will be spent when the scheme is implemented and the necessary evidence of expenditure provided to WVDC.

## **conclusion**

30. At the end of quarter 1, the overall position in relation to the 2007/8 Capital Programme is positive. A number of long-term schemes continue to be implemented having been continued from 2006/7.
31. Further development work is on-going for a number of schemes to ensure that spend is achieved within the year.
32. There are no major concerns in relation to project delivery at this stage of the year, however, close monitoring and concerted effort is required to ensure progress is made with both the Bracks Farm and Wolsingham Business Park schemes.

- RECOMMENDED** 1. That Members note the report and receive a further update at the end of quarter 2.

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**Officer responsible for the report**  
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 Strategic Director for Environment  
 and Regeneration  
 Ext 264

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**Author of the report**  
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## REGENERATION COMMITTEE

12 SEPTEMBER 2007

Report of the Strategic Director for Environment and Regeneration

### **BISHOP AUCKLAND URBAN RENAISSANCE UPDATE**

#### **purpose of the report**

1. To update Members in relation to the Bishop Auckland Urban Renaissance Master Plan and progress towards its implementation.

#### **background**

2. The Bishop Auckland Urban Renaissance Master Plan, produced by Red Box Design Group, outlines a strategic programme of public sector investment to achieve the regeneration of the northern part of the town facilitating increased private sector investment.
3. The plan identifies a long-term public investment programme of over £10.2 million to secure in excess of £30million of additional private investment in key locations within the town providing additional retail floorspace. Overall, this would strengthen the economy of Bishop Auckland town centre and help to ensure retail spend, currently lost to other larger retail centres, (estimated 55% leakage) was captured.
4. From the overall master plan Members agreed key priorities for public sector investment. These being:-
  - Phase 1 - Market Place improvements
  - Phase 2 - North Bondgate improvements
  - Phase 3 - Fore Bondgate improvements.
5. Members also agreed to endorse the inclusion of an additional phase to the project:-
  - Phase 4 - Auckland Castle Park restoration.
6. The overall cost estimate for these phases of the programme was around £8.0million with around £3.0million being sought from the Heritage Lottery Fund for the Park, £3.5million from Single Programme and Wear Valley contributing almost £1.0million over the 4 year period (this is within the Capital Programme for 2007/08 to 2009/10).

Contributions to the scheme were also being sought from Durham County Council.

7. In addition, Members agreed to a preliminary phase of the programme being added to include provision for Project Management to increase the capacity of the Economic Regeneration team to deliver the programme.
8. Since the programme was agreed significant development work has taken place on each of the individual elements and also work has continued with ONE North East and Durham County Council to secure the money required to implement the programme.
9. The following report outlines the progress made in respect of each of the elements.

#### **phase 0 – project management**

10. This phase of the project was identified as a key priority to ensure additional capacity and expertise to deliver the programme and achieve the implementation of the master plan.
11. Working with ONE North East and the County Durham Economic Partnership (CDEP) the funding for this phase has recently been secured. This project will run from August 2007 to March 2010 and will allow the recruitment of a dedicated Bishop Auckland Town Centre Regeneration Project Manager, to co-ordinate the implementation of phases 1 to 4. This project also includes resources to enable initial preliminary design work to commence and project evaluation to be conducted at the end to measure the impact and outcomes of the project. The total approved project cost is:

|                              |                 |     |
|------------------------------|-----------------|-----|
| Single Programme             | £148,159        | 75% |
| Wear Valley District Council | £49,386         | 25% |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                 | <b>£197,545</b> |     |

12. The Wear Valley contribution to this project is from within the existing Capital Programme resources for 2007/08. The recruitment process has started and it is anticipated that the project manager will be in post by mid-November. In the interim, work has commenced to develop the key elements of the programme. In addition the CDEP have provided interim support for the project and are facilitating capacity through the consultants Faithful and Gould to assist project development.

#### **phase 1 – market place improvements**

13. The master plan outlines that the success of the Market Place as a pedestrian friendly environment is central to the Urban Renaissance of Bishop Auckland. The key objective is, therefore, to reclaim road space for pedestrian use, to improve links providing safer pedestrian

connections and reconfiguring the current road layout to control traffic flow density and speed.

14. Working with officers from Durham County Council sketch designs have been produced to meet the objectives of the master plan. Changes proposed to the Red Box indicative scheme includes the retention of some of the existing car parking area, taxi rank and loading bay areas, with increased enforcement and regulation of the traffic. All other aspects of work in relation to the Market Place are in-keeping with the concepts and ideas presented in the master plan document. Indicative drawings will be presented to the committee.
15. Given that any changes to the parking regime will require changes to the existing Traffic Regulation Order (TRO), considerable public and business consultation is required. Early planning of this phase of work is essential to enable time for the TRO and other necessary permissions to be gained.
16. Work is continuing with Durham County Council and ONE North East to ensure that the scheme meets the needs of existing businesses and also facilitate future regeneration and economic growth.
17. In addition to the work to the public realm the master plan also outlines other interventions required to regenerate this area of town including 'Poundstretcher Corner' and Kings Lodge. As with each of the phases these associated interventions have been incorporated into an 'action plan' for the area together with other identified activities. (See Annex 8).

## **phase 2 – north bondgate improvements**

18. North Bondgate is a major entrance and thoroughfare for the northern part of the town centre. Like Market Place the area is dominated by road traffic and the rear elevations of commercial properties in Fore Bondgate
19. The proposals for public sector investment in North Bondgate are to capitalise upon the redevelopment of the Wear Valley District Council car park and adjacent bus-depot site and the proposal for the creation of additional retail floorspace.
20. As reported to previous committees the site has been subject to a development brief and preferred developer status has been awarded to Helios City. Development of their proposal is continuing in consultation with planning and conservation officers and it is currently anticipated that the plans will be available for pre-application consultation in mid/late September.
21. Although initial ideas and sketch plans can be started in relation to the public realm design for this part of the town detailed design and

development work will not commence until the planning application is approved to ensure the complementarity between the two investments.

### **phase 3 – fore bondgate improvements**

22. Like other areas of the town the master plan proposes changes to the traffic arrangement to provide a more pedestrian friendly environment. Serving as a key gateway the need to increase activity in the street by improving linkages and the environment is identified as a key objective.
23. The improvement of the streetscape environment in this area of town has been identified as a potential 'early win'. The existing Traffic Regulation Order limits vehicular use of the street already and although improvements can be sought to further pedestrianise this the proposed work to the streetscape does nothing to either prejudice or pre-empt any traffic changes.
24. Work has been on-going with Durham County Council to produce designs and costings for this part of the scheme with a view to implementation commencing in early 2008. The work to date will be presented at the Committee meeting.
25. In addition to improving the quality of the environment and enhancing the street furniture and lighting within the street, the master plan also outlines other interventions required to regenerate this area of town including work to improve the Finkle Street junction and the proposal to establish an attractive and viable public space at this key entrance point.
26. Further details of these associated interventions have been incorporated into the 'action plan' for the area together with other identified activities. (See Annex 8)

### **phase 4 – auckland castle park restoration**

27. Integral to the improvements to the Market Place the master plan identifies the role of the restoration of Auckland Castle Park as a means of exploiting the visitor potential of the town.
28. Members may recall that work has been on-going since 2005 (with Bureau Veritas as our lead consultants) to develop a proposal for the restoration of Auckland Castle Park as part of the Bishop Auckland Master Plan.
29. Outline proposals and plans for the restoration were presented to Committee in March 2007 and agreement was reached to submit a stage 1 application for Heritage Lottery Funding by the 31<sup>st</sup> March deadline.

30. This deadline was achieved with the submission of an application for £3.7million of Heritage Lottery Funding towards a total project cost of £4.9million over the period 2007/8 – 2017/18, with the indicative balance of funding proposed from Wear Valley District Council and Single Programme.
31. Following preliminary assessment and site visits by the Heritage Lottery Fund assessors, a number of concerns were raised about the detail of the project. In summary the particular concerns were around:-
  - the length and terms of the park lease,
  - the size, scale and lease of land associated with the visitor centre,
  - need to make better linkages to the Castle, the community, and other adjacent land users.
32. In this context it was agreed to withdraw the application to carry out further development work on the project and enable a re-submission to be made for future bidding rounds. This work is now on-going with a view to re-submitting the application at the earliest opportunity.
33. Following further meetings with HLF additional development work is required to address the comments and concerns raised. It is anticipated this additional development will take around 3 months to complete and therefore the aim is to submit a revised HLF application for the March 2008 bidding round.

#### **phase 5 – theatre corner**

34. Although not originally a phase of the urban renaissance programme, as work was already on-going on the project, this has now been included within the programme as an additional phase. The master plan suggests that although the primary focus is Theatre Corner itself, the area should be treated comprehensively across the four corners of Princes Street junction as this is a key intersection in the town.
35. Planning permission has been granted for the erection of the Stan Laurel statue on Theatre Corner, although issues have subsequently arisen concerning the precise location of the statue in relation to underground utility apparatus. Work is on-going to resolve these issues.
36. Initial design work for Theatre Corner was undertaken by Groundwork West Durham and Darlington, incorporating a theatre theme to compliment the statue. These plans have been used by Durham County Council's to further enhance the design and will be available at the Committee meeting having also been discussed at the Town Centre Forum meeting of 28<sup>th</sup> August.
37. In addition to this work, the brief has now been extended to tackle the area comprehensively and include designs for the other corners of

Princes Street junction too. Further designs and costings for these additional elements are being developed.

## **conclusion**

38. Significant progress has been made in relation to the delivery of the master plan. The fruition of this preliminary work is now emerging with the draft plans which will be shown at Committee.
39. Detailed public consultation is an essential part of all the changes being proposed to the town and this will be particularly essential where any changes to the Traffic Regulation Order or other statutory permissions are required. This element has been included in the programme and will commence as each of the phases reach the appropriate stage.
40. Work is continuing with ONE North East, the Heritage Lottery Fund and the County Durham Economic Partnership to ensure that the funding can be secured for each of the individual phases of the project.
41. The recruitment of a dedicated project manager integrated within the regeneration team will ensure that additional resources can be utilised to deliver the programme and ensure the renaissance of the town as proposed by the master plan. This will also allow work to commence on the additional elements of the action plan not yet started. This appointment will also enable a more pro-active relationship to be built with private developers to facilitate other developments suggested by the master plan, e.g. the Newgate Centre extension.
42. Overall, good progress has been with implementation to commence later in 2007/8 on the proposed delivery of both Theatre Corner and Fore Bondgate projects.

## **RECOMMENDED**

1. That Members note the report.
2. That Members endorse, for further consultation, the draft proposals presented for:-
  - a) Market Place
  - b) Fore Bondgate
  - c) Theatre Corner
3. That Members endorse the draft action plan presented and receive quarterly updates on progress.



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**Officer responsible for the report**

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**Author of the report**

Alan Weston  
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## REGENERATION COMMITTEE

12 SEPTEMBER 2007

Report of the Strategic Director for Environment and Regeneration

### **1<sup>ST</sup> QUARTER MONITORING UPDATE**

#### **purpose of the report**

1. To provide 1<sup>st</sup> quarter monitoring information and to update Members on activity within the department during the period April to June 2007 on progress against the Department Service Plan for 2007/08.

#### **background**

2. The Regeneration Committee endorsed the Service Plan on 2 April 2007. In order to inform Members a quarterly review has been undertaken on implementation of the plan in respect of the three main service areas of the department: planning and environmental policy; economic regeneration; and public protection. Summarised in Annex 9 to this report are measures of our performance against key targets and indicators.
3. The indicators show performance against target (where this can be measured) in the quarter and an indication of service improvement.
4. Attached in Annex 10 is a review of planning appeals and complaints received in the quarter.

#### **planning and environment**

##### **development control**

5. All three key performance indicators have been exceeded in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter (1 April - 30 June 2007) of the Service Plan Period.
6. In total 211 applications were determined in the quarter. Over a full year this equates to an average number of applications processed by one case officer of 162. To keep the workload for individual case officers at an acceptable level we continue to employ an agency planner to help with the processing of applications.

7. The performance is as follows:-

|       | 2006/07 | Target<br>(set nationally) | 2007/08<br>Q1 |
|-------|---------|----------------------------|---------------|
| Major | 82%     | 60% in 13 weeks            | 83%           |
| Minor | 81%     | 65% in 8 weeks             | 81%           |
| Other | 90%     | 80% in 8 weeks             | 94%           |

8. The percentage of applications determined in Q1 through delegation to officers was 93%.

**appeals**

9. During Q1, 5 appeal decisions were received (see Annex 10). 3 appeals were allowed and 2 were dismissed.

**enforcement**

10. During the quarter a total of 103 complaints were received. 50 of these complaints have been resolved (48.5%). 98% of all complaints were responded to within 15 working days. No enforcement notices were served.

**complaints**

11. Four Stage 1 complaints were received in Q1. There were no Stage 2 or 3 complaints during the quarter. These are detailed in Annex 10.

**ombudsman cases**

12. In Q1 there was 1 Ombudsman case decided. The Ombudsman decided there was no or insufficient evidence of maladministration. This is detailed in Annex 10.

**building control**

13. In Q1 the building control team determined 94 full applications. 65.9% of full plans applications were vetted and approved within 5 weeks (target 75%). Currently there are two vacant posts. Some applications are being vetted by an approved inspector. The percentage of inspections undertaken in one working day was 100% (target 100%).

**brownfield land**

14. During Q1 117 houses were completed. 80.34% of these were built on previously developed land (target 65%).

## public protection

15. During the quarter the section carried its statutory duties as required by individual policies and in the light of Government guidance. In addition a considerable amount of publicity, group training and individual visits were undertaken to assist businesses in being ready for the National Smokefree implementation on 1<sup>st</sup> July. In addition to on-going programmed work the section responded to complaints from the public as follows:-

| Type of Complaint  | Total      | 1 <sup>st</sup> Response<br>Average (days) |
|--------------------|------------|--|
| Air pollution      | 13         | 1.2  |
| Food complaints    | 17         | 3.8  |
| Noise complaints   | 52         | 1.4  |
| General enquiries  | 10         | 0.0  |
| Licensing          | 12         | 3.8  |
| Animal Welfare     | 2          | 7.0  |
| Dog complaints     | 66         | 1.1  |
| General Complaints | 88         | 2.5  |
| <b>Total</b>       | <b>260</b> | <b>3.0</b>                                 |

16. The section also investigated 41 cases of food poisoning to discover the source and minimise the risk of spread further into the community. Details of enforcement notices are provided at Annex 11.

### licensing

17. The section, in partnership with IT section, successfully brought the On-line Licensing facility to licence applicants, consultees, objectors and anyone wishing to view conditions attached to licences.
18. The licensing section was busy preparing for the implementation of the Gambling Act, providing advice and guidance to potential applicants. In addition they issued 298 licenses in relation to Licensed Premises, Personal Licences, Hackney Carriages, Gaming machines and Animal premises.

### markets and car parking

19. The traditional markets have recovered from the low Winter numbers of stalls and continue to provide valuable focal points for Bishop Auckland and Crook. The section provided stalls, car parking facilities, safety advice and general assistance to the very successful Food Festival at the Castle which attracted over 24,000 visitors to the town and a boost to the local economy.

## **economic regeneration**

20. The key areas of action were:-

- (a) Wear Valley Economic Strategy: During May and June key local and regional stakeholders were formally invited to comment upon the draft strategy and responses have now been received. The responses were generally supportive with comments focussing on points of detail rather than the main thrust of the strategy. Shared Intelligence, the consultants who were involved with the development of the strategy, have been asked to consider whether further work is needed and to incorporate comments made where appropriate. The strategy is to be discussed at a future LSP Board meeting.
- (b) LEGI: The LEGI programme is moving into delivery phase now and a number of further projects are due to be rolled out in the near future. These include the appointment of enterprise coaches additional to those currently funded through NRF. The coaches will also have a new flexible grant fund available. A franchising project has also been approved which will encourage and support people to start businesses using the franchising business model. It will take a proactive approach to overcoming the barriers to starting franchise businesses, and will be 'hands-on' both financially, and in running the business. It will also encourage and support businesses to expand using franchising where appropriate.
- (c) Innovation House: Innovation House Phase 2 has opened for business on the 2nd of July 2007. The new £1.4 million pound business centre development has already enlisted its first business, Verd OS, a local company from Sunnybrow previously working from home who moved into their office in the 2nd week of July. So far there have been enquiries for 9 offices with 2 viewings taking place. This is encouraging as planned marketing activities will begin in full from September to coincide with the end of summer holidays.

## **conservation areas**

- 21. Further to the approval of an application for funding by English Heritage an Environment and Conservation Manager commenced working for the Authority on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2007. Work has commenced on the production of Conservation Area Appraisals (BV219). The AONB Partnership Heritage Officer is to undertake Conservation Area Appraisals for 3 conservation areas in Weardale. Tenders have been invited from consultants to prepare a conservation area appraisal for Bishop Auckland Conservation Area and management plan. Work is underway preparing a conservation area appraisal for West Auckland.

## **financial implications**

22. The Council has been notified, by the Department for Communities and Local Government, about the provisional allocation of Planning Delivery Grant. Wear Valley is to receive the highest award for development control performance for all planning authorities in County Durham (£132,744). In total the aware is £156,680. Proposals for the use of this resource will be report at a future meeting.

**RECOMMENDED**                      1            Members note the progress towards meeting the BVPI's.

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| <b>Officer responsible for the report</b>  | <b>Author of the report</b>  |
|--|--|
| Robert Hope<br>Strategic Director for Environment and<br>Regeneration<br>Ext 264 | David Townsend, Head of Planning<br>& Environment, Ext 270<br>Sue Dawson, Assistant Director<br>Economic Regeneration, Ext 305<br>Tom Carver, Head of Public<br>Protection,<br>Ext 377 |

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**REGENERATION COMMITTEE**

**12 SEPTEMBER 2007**

Report of the Strategic Director of Resource Management

**RISK REGISTER UPDATE**

**purpose of the report**

1. To inform Members of the progress in managing the risks of the Regeneration Department.

**background**

2. Members will see that the Service Plan for the Department includes an analysis of the main risks facing the department. This report seeks to give assurance to Members of the management of those risks.
3. A key line of enquiry within the Use of Resources assessment, relates to the extent to which risks are managed and Members are kept informed of their management. The table in Annex 12 shows the risks as agreed within the Service Plan and progress in managing them. This report will be presented to Members at every other committee cycle to demonstrate ongoing improvement in the area of risk management.

**conclusion**

4. From the above table it can be seen that risks are currently being managed. No real problems exist at present but continued monitoring of service demands will enable the department to respond to any change in circumstances.

**RECOMMENDED**

1. That Members note the report.

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## REGENERATION COMMITTEE

12 SEPTEMBER 2007

Report of the Strategic Director for Environment and Regeneration

### REVENUE BUDGET ACTION PLAN

#### purpose of the report

1. To inform Committee of expected over spends at the end of this financial year, along with action plans and planned reduction in spending elsewhere in the budget to neutralise the effect on the Council's financial position.

#### background

2. At the Central Resources Committee dated 25 July 2007, item 9 – Revenue Budget Monitoring, it was resolved by members that areas of over spend would be examined and action taken and reported back to members at the next relevant Committee meeting.
3. The report shows expected overspends and what action we are taking to attempt to correct the situation. Expected under spends and reductions in spending elsewhere have also been identified. Since the Committee meeting referred to above, figures included in this report have been brought up to date to reflect the current financial position.

#### over spends

4. Current major over spends are listed in Annex 13 together with the reason the over spend has occurred, action plans prepared to attempt to correct the position and the net financial effect on the Authority after relevant action has been undertaken.

#### under spends

5. Despite corrective action being planned, as the total on Annex 13 shows, there are still predicted overspends of £72,000. In order to correct the financial impact on the Authority under spends and areas where our expenditure can be reduced have been examined and identified.
6. These are shown in Annex 14 together with an explanation as to why the under spend has arisen. The total of these items is £62,000.



## **conclusion**

7. After taking both over spends and under spends into account the overall effect is a predicted over spend of £10,000 which can be met from under spends elsewhere in the Department's budget.

## **RECOMMENDED**

1. That Members note the report.
2. That relevant budget holders are instructed to implement the actions included in the report.

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### **Officer responsible for the report**

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Strategic Director for Environment and  
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### **Author of the report**

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## WEAR VALLEY DISTRICT COUNCIL - BEST VALUE REVIEW OF REGENERATION

## IMPROVEMENT ACTION PLAN

| RECOMMENDATIONS   | PLANNED ACTION  | TARGET DATES  | RESPONSIBILITY                                     |
|---|---|---|--|
| <b>Strategic Action</b><br><b>R1</b> To improve the effectiveness of regeneration activity in the county, take steps to strengthen the coherence of regeneration activity and collaboration amongst stakeholders by acting on the recommendations in the county-wide report to:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>start and maintain a public debate on the future of Durham's economy;</i></li> <li>• <i>align regeneration strategies and strengthen collaboration amongst partners to match the pace of external change, without regard to local government boundaries;</i></li> <li>• <i>consider with partners how the importance of skills and aspirations can be embedded in the culture of County Durham;</i></li> <li>• <i>ensure that housing strategies align with economic strategies and opportunities and with transport strategy;</i></li> <li>• <i>strengthen leadership on regeneration activity;</i></li> <li>• <i>provide independent capacity to develop and deliver strategy; and</i></li> <li>• <i>review how resources are used to lever in private funding in order to maximise their impact.</i></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pursue with County Durham Economic Partnership the development of a strategic approach to economic regeneration within County Durham. Pursue the full and open consultation/debate on the resulting County Economic Strategy in accordance with the Audit Commission recommendations.</li> <li>• Seek the alignment of the Strategy with City Region plans.</li> <li>• Ensure the complementarity of Wear Valley Economic Strategy with neighbouring authorities.</li> <li>• Work within the County Economic Partnership to align Coalfield Housing Strategy with economic strategy.</li> <li>• Work within the recently convened Tees Valley City Region arrangements to align District strategy with sub-regional arrangements.</li> </ul> | <p>CDES currently being prepared.</p> <p>Consultation process currently being considered.</p> | Strategic Director of Environment and Regeneration |
| <b>Excluded Groups</b><br><b>R2</b> Ensure that the Council has enough timely information about all groups at risk of exclusion so that their needs can be identified and met in relation to regeneration activities.   | Commission further work through District Council Strategy production to address excluded and potentially excluded groups.   | December 2007   | Assistant Director Economic Regeneration           |
| <b>Skill Needs</b><br><b>R3</b> Work with others to develop a clearer understanding of the likely future skills needs, both specific and generic, and use that to influence local skills delivery appropriately.  | Commission further work through the District Economic Strategy to more fully understand and address issue of skill needs.   | December 2007   | Assistant Director of Economic Regeneration        |

## Scale of Government Consultation

The Planning White Paper is accompanied by a series of documents setting out in greater detail the Government's core proposals and the research on which the proposals are based. The complete set of papers is as follows:

- Planning for a Sustainable Future: Consultation
- Changes to Permitted Development: Consultation Paper 1 - Permitted Development Rights for Householder Micro-generation
- Domestic Installation of Micro-generation Equipment: Final report from a Review of the related Permitted Development Regulations
- Changes to Permitted Development: Consultation Paper 2 - Permitted Development Rights for Householders
- Householder Development Consents Review: Implementation of Recommendations
- Improving the Appeal Process in the Planning System: Making it proportionate, customer focused, efficient and well resourced - Consultation
- Planning Fees in England: Proposals for Change - Consultation
- Planning Costs and Fees: Report
- Planning Performance Agreements: a new way to manage large scale major planning applications – consultation

All consultations **close on 17 August 2007** with the exception of Consultation Paper 1 - *Permitted Development Rights for Householder Micro-generation*, which was released in April and **closes on 7 June 2007**. A summary of responses, and next steps, will be published within three months of close of consultation.

## **SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS MADE IN PLANNING FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE WHITE PAPER**

### **Improving the Planning Policy Framework**

Review of current national planning policy framework

- Ensure national planning policy is more strategic, clearer and shorter and provides context for plan making and local decision taking.
  - Immediate proposals for revision or production of: PPS1, PPS4, PPS6, PPS12 and New PPS on Climate Change
  - All others to be reviewed over a 2 year period with timescales published in Spring 2008

### Climate Change

- Raise importance and significance
- Extend PD rights to include proposals for Micro energy generation (subject to separate consultation).
- Codes for Sustainable Homes – (subject to a separate consultation is currently as to whether this code should be mandatory).

### Economic Development

- Creation of a level-playing field to ensure the advantages and disadvantages of economic development are evenly balanced and considered alongside environmental and social ones. Proposed adoption of new PPS4 in spring 2008; consultation expected in summer 2007.

### Town Centres

- New 'impacts test' for town centre developments to replace current 'needs and impact test', from spring 2008.

### **Place Shaping**

Streamline community engagement tasks within local government.

- Strengthen the role of the LSP to bring local partners together to improve services
- Integrating Sustainable Community Strategy and LAAs Agreement
- LDF Core Strategy to be at the heart of local authority and spatially express sustainable community strategy

Simplify LDFs – transitional arrangements will be clearly set out in summer 2008.

- PDG to incentivise sound DPDs from April 2008.
- Remove requirement for formal consultation on Preferred options – concentrate on final DPD.
- More flexibility on number and type of plans produced. SPDs no longer need to be listed in LDS.
- Clarify role and flexibility of Core Strategy.
- Simplify SA process and remove requirement for SA on SPDs.
- New soundness test relating to infrastructure.

#### Improve performance through LAAs

- Performance management framework is set out in local Government White Paper.
- Replacement to PDG will focus on the speedy and timely delivery of the LDF (will also include a housing delivery aspect).
- Continuing intervention to address poor LPA performance.

#### Planning Performance Agreements (subject to separate consultation)

- Voluntary agreements between LPA and applicant for large scale applications (although they do not constitute a guarantee or indication as to whether the application will be approved).
- Cover all stages of application from initial concept through to determination.
- LPAs may charge a fee for pre-application advice in addition to standard planning fees.

#### Fees (subject to separate and detailed consultation)

- New fees will be in place from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008.
- PDG helped to bridge the gap between cost of running DC and the income generated from DC and contributed to improved performance.
- Average increase of 23% in fees but planning fee expenditure will still only be equal to 0.25% of total construction costs.
- Introduce new fee for the discharge of planning conditions.
- Plans to de-regulate planning fees in the longer term

#### Building capacity in local authorities – planning @ heart of local government

- Extend the scope of ATLAS (Advisory Team for Large Applications)
- Reaffirm PAS, CABE, ASC roles.
- Link student bursaries to 2 years work in the public sector.
- Raise status of planning in local government: Qualified chief planning officer in each LPA (Barker Review highlighted that this should be a Corporate Director).

### **Making the planning system more efficient and effective**

#### Removing minor applications from the system (subject to separate and detailed consultation)

- Proposals seek to remove 25% of householder applications to save time and money
- Allow more development without applications subject to siting and size with some controls.

#### Extending Permitted Development Rights

- Extend impact approach to other development (including commercial and industrial buildings)
- Article 4 Directions to be approved by LPA not by SoS.
- Voluntary agreements between neighbours for minor development (subject to separate and detailed consultation)

#### Streamlining the applications procedures

- Standard Application Form from Oct 200. Review planning application system with the objective of reducing the level of information required at application stage.
- Review General Permitted Development Order
- Relax the approach to amendments to planning permissions without the need for a new application
- Unification of consent regimes for heritage (Conservation Area Consent and SAM consent) – to be discussed in Heritage Protection White Paper
- Reducing the level of applications called in – separate consultation in summer 2007

#### Tree Preservation Orders

- New legislation proposed to deliver:
  - A slimmer and simpler Order ( a couple of pages instead of 12)
  - A single set of rules for all protected trees.

#### Appeals

- Fast track householder appeals
- Minor appeals determined by Local Member Review Bodies
- Planning Inspectorate (PINs) to identify appeal method (which is appropriate to the nature of the application)
- Introduce fees for appeals

#### **National Infrastructure Projects – Proposed Solutions**

Prepare national policy statements (different to national planning policy):

- Set out requirements for infrastructure
- Ease Local Inquiries
- Will be as locationally specific as possible
- Outside planning policy framework but will have to be reflected in LDF and RSS

#### Pre-application consultation

- On behalf of developer/promoter and LA
- Make advice available to promoters and require early and effective engagement with key parties as well as publicly consulting on proposals

Rationalise consent regime.

Create an independent commission to take decisions on nationally significant proposals – in line with national policy statements and with powers to confirm CPOs.

Provide a framework for statutory rights to challenge at national policy statement stage, consultation on scheme itself and IPC decision.

## ANNEX 4

| Consultee                 | Comments  | Action   |
|---------------------------|---|--|
| <b>Environment Agency</b> | <b>Document Review</b><br>Additional guidance to be included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy</li> <li>• Catchment Flood Management Plan</li> <li>• Wear Valley District Contaminated Land Strategy (if available)</li> <li>• Contaminated Land Report 11: Model Procedures for the Management of Land Contamination (CLR11)</li> <li>• Ground Water Protection: Policy and Practice (GP3)</li> <li>• Report entitled 'Climate Change Adaptation on the Wear'</li> </ul> | Consider these documents and incorporate any emerging issues or objectives into the Sustainability Appraisal Framework.  |
|                           | <b>Baseline data</b><br>EA provided us (in November 2006) with a CD Rom containing a set of baseline data for the district which will help establish baseline characteristics within the district.<br><br>Recommended that, if resources permit, we create a biodiversity spatial plan which would assist in the identification of areas for potential enhancement.   | Incorporate this data into the evidence base, identifying any emerging issues. Baseline information will be used during the appraisal and monitoring stages.<br><br>Given the timescales set out in the LDS and the requirement for the SAF to be finalised in mid September, it is not possible to prepare a biodiversity spatial plan in sufficient time to inform the SAF.<br><br>Consideration will be given to undertaking such a commitment in time to inform the Core Strategy. |
|                           | <b>Objectives and Indicators – Ground and River Water</b><br>Identify that there are no water quality related indicators within the framework and suggest one for inclusion.<br>Also recommend the inclusion of an indicator relating to ground water quality, however they would not be able to provide the Council with this data so another source would have to be sought.  | Include the indicator in the SAF.<br><br>This data is difficult to obtain without privately resourcing the collection of the data. Including the indicator into the SAF could, at this point in time, result in us being unable to collect indicator results on a regular basis.   |
|                           | <b>Contaminated Land</b> – consider this to be a key issue in the district given its historic coal and metal mines.   | Ensure this issue is appropriately identified in the sustainability issues and SAF.  |

| Consultee                        | Comments   | Action   |
|----------------------------------|--|--|
| <b>Environment Agency (cont)</b> | <p><b>Water Quantity</b> is a key issue within the district given the level of small scale private water suppliers. Maintenance of groundwater quality is also of importance for the same reason.</p> <p>Minewater issues should also be addressed to ensure the quality of minewater is maintained and improved. Also note that this issue should be addressed in forthcoming DPDs</p>  | <p>Two options are available:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amend objective 7 to ensure issues pertaining to water are better dealt with; or</li> <li>• Include an additional objective relating to water quantity and quality.</li> </ul> <p>Ensure minewaters (and the quantity of water in general) are appropriately addressed at Preferred Options stage in the Core Strategy.</p>                                 |
|                                  | <p><b>Climate Change</b><br/>Consider flood risk to be a major issue which should be reflected in the SA, although flooding is sporadic in the district. Suggest the inclusion of '...and improve its ability to adapt to and mitigate against its effects' to objective 8.</p> <p>Recommend the inclusion/substitution of an indicator to allow the Council to monitor the use of SUDs.</p> <p>Recommend the inclusion of an indicator to reflect the mitigation should be the last resort as we should not be developing in the flood plains (PPS25) – however do not suggest wording of an indicator.</p> <p>Suggest an indicator which monitors CO2 emissions in the district.</p> | <p>Review the wording of objective 8 and strengthen to reflect the need to mitigate and adapt to climate change.</p> <p>Replace indicator as recommended.</p> <p>Develop an indicator which looks at the proportion of new development in the floodplain and the level of development the Council has resisted in the flood plan.</p> <p>Research to see if there is a data source available and develop an appropriate indicator.</p> |
|                                  | <p><b>Objective 12</b><br/>Suggest repeating an indicator under Objective 4 to monitor objective 12. Also suggest amending the indicator/adding an extra indicator which specifies a level in relation to the design standards such as very high or excellent.</p> <p>Also suggest inclusion of a target into the indicator relating to renewable energy under objective 12.</p>   | <p>Incorporate these suggestions into the SAF.</p> <p>It may not be appropriate to develop a target until the targets in the Core Strategy/DC Policies documents are established to ensure targets are effective and meaningful.</p>   |
|                                  |  |  |



| Consultee               | Comments   | Action   |
|-------------------------|--|--|
| <b>English Heritage</b> | <p>Have provided a series of notes relating to the Scoping Stage of the SEA.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies a number of omissions from the document review; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Historic Environment: a force for our future (2001)</li> <li>MPS1: Planning and Minerals – Annex 4 re natural building and roofing materials.</li> <li>Regional Environmental Strategy</li> <li>Regional Cultural Strategy</li> <li>Regional Tourism Strategy</li> <li>Streets for all</li> </ul> </li> <li>Highlights problems relating to baseline data for the historic environment and directs us to data sets;</li> <li>Provides some appropriately worded objectives;</li> <li>Recommends the use of decision making criteria &amp; provides a list of potential questions;</li> <li>Highlights the different roles of indicators at the various SA stages &amp; provides a list of potential indicators which they collect annually.</li> </ul> | Look through and incorporate any omissions into the SAF and its components.  |
|                         | Raises concern that the historic environment is not approached in a holistic manner. Would also like to see listed buildings and scheduled ancient monuments to be awarded a higher ranking. Disagrees with the use of the term significant on Objective 14.   | Consideration should be given to this approach and the SAF be amended appropriately.   |
|                         | <p>Surprised to see that Sustainability Objective 14 (re built heritage) is not identified in table 8 as integrating with the environmental objectives of the SEA.</p> <p>Objectives 11 and 15 also relate to the Cultural Heritage Issues in the SEA – table 9 does not demonstrate this.</p> <p>Does not agree with compatibility test in table 10. Community activity and cohesion (objective 6) can benefit from the built and historic environment (14) and landscapes and townscapes (15). Also makes similar comments in relation to the compatibility tests in relation to objectives 9, 11 and 12.</p>  | <p>This is an oversight - amend accordingly.</p> <p>Amend accordingly and note for future use.</p> <p>The use of decision making criteria could have provided the consultee with an insight into the thought process behind this compatibility test. Recommended that these comments are borne in mind when finalising the SAF which should include such decision making criteria.</p> |

| Consultee                      | Comments   | Action   |
|--------------------------------|--|--|
| <b>English Heritage (cont)</b> | Makes comment in relation to the wording of the draft spatial objectives for the Core Strategy.  | No action required in relation to the SAF however these comments will be borne in mind during the finalisation of the spatial objectives.  |
|                                | Raises comment about the word 'new development' in relation to the Generic Policy objectives- they consider it should relate to all development which includes the alteration and extension to buildings.  | No action required in relation to SAF. However, by new development the Council means anything which requires planning permission and therefore would include alteration and extension to existing buildings – this definition should be made clear in the documents. |
|                                | Disagree with Appraisal of DC objectives in Table 17.  | Reconsider this assessment. Decision making criteria could assist in addressing these considerations during the appraisal stages of plan preparation.  |
|                                | Disagree with comment in table 18 which implies that all impacts are negative and provides examples.   | Agree. Decision making criteria would clarify this and ensure consideration is provided to the positive impacts.   |
|                                | Emphasises the importance of gathering information on the extent and condition of the district's historic environment – they have provided a set of indicators to enable the Council to do this effectively.   | Look at the indicators and incorporate appropriate ones into the SAF. Collect the remaining indicator results to inform the evidence base in the longer term.  |
| <b>Natural England</b>         | Have provided additional information relating to the Scoping Stage of the SEA.   | Look through and incorporate any omissions into the SAF and its components.  |
|                                | <b>Document Review</b><br>Additional guidance to be included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation on Planning and Climate Change (PPS26)</li> <li>• Code for Sustainable Homes</li> <li>• Making Space for Water (DEFRA)</li> <li>• Government Circular Biodiversity and Geological Conservation</li> <li>• Regional Housing Strategy for the North East</li> <li>• Building in Sustainability: A Guide to Sustainable Construction and Development in the North East (DCC 2003)</li> <li>• Draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan (DCC 2007)</li> </ul> | Read these documents and incorporate any emerging issues or objectives into the SAF.   |

| Consultee              | Comments  | Action  |
|------------------------|---|---|
| Natural England (cont) | <b>Sustainability Issues</b><br>Suggest re-wording the key message relating to landscape to emphasise its importance.   | Incorporate suggestions and reflect in the SAF where appropriate.   |
|                        | Raise concern that the AONB should be identified as a separate issue to landscape quality – furthermore the AONB appears to have been identified under biodiversity not landscape. Geological conservation should be included either in S97 or in a separate sustainability issue.  | Incorporate suggestions and reflect in the SAF where appropriate.   |
|                        | <b>Sustainability Objectives</b><br>Suggested rewording of Objective 15 to include character as well as quality.  | Amend objective to accommodate this concern.  |
|                        | Table 8 – highlight that biodiversity and geological conservation (objective 1) also integrate with economic aspects. Objective 14 integrates with environmental aspects.   | The use of decision making criteria during the compatibility test and the appraisal would provide an explanation of the thought process and results emerging and ensure all relevant considerations are taken into account. |
|                        | In the compatibility test (table 10) disagree with 5 results relating to objective 1.   |   |
|                        | Highlight that it would be useful to explain the variable outcomes to ensure the relevant aspects are recognised and can be addressed.  | The use of decision making criteria would assist with this concern.   |
|                        | <b>Indicators</b><br>Raises concern over the use of the number of planning refusals as an indicator. A refusal (or modification to an application/permission) could result in the protection of biodiversity. Not clear whether the ‘number’ would reflect good or bad performance. | Revisit the indicators in light of these concerns and amend if considered appropriate.  |
|                        | Table 12: Objective 2 – include rights of way improvement into the first indicator.   | Incorporate into the SAF  |
|                        | Table 12; Objective 13 – suggest new indicator relating to proximity of new housing to green infrastructure.  | Incorporate into the SAF.   |
|                        | <b>Spatial Objectives</b><br>Make comments relating to amendments to spatial objectives 11 and 14   | No action required in relation to SAF. Consider in the preparation of the preferred options report.   |

| Consultee                     | Comments  | Action  |
|-------------------------------|---|---|
| <b>Natural England (cont)</b> | <b>Appropriate Assessment</b><br>Raise concern that we have not undertaken the first stage of the AA alongside the preparation of the scoping report which they consider to be best practice.   | ?   |
| <b>Highways Agency</b>        | Set out their Strategic Aim and commitment to working with local authorities.   | Ensure sustainability objectives do not conflict with their strategic aim.  |
|                               | <b>Document Review</b><br>Reinforced its position in relation to development in sustainable locations and reducing the need to travel – as set out in Guidance on Transport Assessments 2007 and circular 02/2007.  | Check document review to ensure that these documents are included and include if omitted. Issues and objectives may need to be amended to reflect content of these documents. |
| <b>North East Assembly</b>    | Welcomes the preparation of the SAF but are not required to assess its conformity with regional planning policy and have therefore not submitted a formal response.   | N/A   |
| <b>ONE North East</b>         | Confirm that they have no comments & confirm that they are looking forward to receiving other documentation in relation to progressing the LDF.   | N/A   |
| <b>GONE</b>                   | No comments in relation to approach taken, but note that this does not prejudice the SoS role in assessing the soundness of the plan.   | N/A   |
| <b>The Theatres Trust</b>     | Set out their main objective and its relationship with culture & cultural facilities.   | Ensure sustainability objectives do not conflict with their overall objective.  |
|                               | Support Objective 14 but query the term ‘built cultural heritage’ – and seek clarification as to whether this relates to solely Listed Buildings or whether theatres are deemed to be built cultural heritage.<br><br>Also recommend that the draft spatial objective 15 be aligned with sustainability objective 14 to ensure culture is considered appropriately. | It is considered that this could be clarified through rewording or punctuating the objective – amend SAF accordingly.   |

| Consultee                                    | Comments   | Action  |
|--|--|---|
| <b>Noel Jackson<br/>Durham Bat<br/>Group</b> | Consider the document to be well designed and easy to follow despite the complexity of SA.   | Comment welcomed  |
|  | The Durham BAP is currently being revised, however a draft has been published. This can therefore be incorporated into the document review and baseline evidence.  | Update document review and baseline evidence. Amend SAF where appropriate, although the detail of the protected/priority species will not affect the sustainability objectives.   |
|  | Raises concern that biodiversity is not listed as a key message emerging from the document review.   | The requirement to conserve and enhance biodiversity is covered by the second bullet point in the list of key messages.   |
|  | Identify a number of sources of information which could inform the evidence base: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DBG bat database for Wear Valley</li> <li>• Durham Wildlife Trust have data sets on otters, water voles, red squirrels and species on their nature reserves.</li> <li>• DCC have/have access to data sets on all species identified in the Durham BAP.</li> <li>• Butterfly Conservation have information about butterflies and moths at a county level.</li> </ul> | Gather relevant information and enhance evidence base. Given the level of detail provided through these datasets the information may not result in the amendment to the SAF. This evidence base would however be useful during the appraisal and monitoring stages and LDF preparation. |
|  | Disagree with the assumption in the Scoping Report that habitat creation results in species protection – species and habitat protection must be tackled to make progress.  | Amend sustainability issues to reflect this concern and look at SAF to ensure we address habitat and species protection and not just habitat creation.  |
|  | Highlight that there will not always be conflict between economic development and species protection – for example ecotourism.   | Decision making criteria could assist in addressing these considerations during the appraisal stages of plan preparation.   |
|  | Identify that there is conflict between biodiversity objective (1), climate change (8) and energy (12) and provide examples and therefore disagree with our compatibility test of the SA objectives.   | Decision making criteria could assist in addressing these considerations during the appraisal stages of plan preparation and also provide a means of determining the thought process behind the compatibility test.   |
|  | Wind turbines and bats is the biggest concern of the DBG and are concerned about the Council's approach to this issue.   | Ensure that the implications of renewable energy and biodiversity are awarded due priority in the appraisal.  |

| Consultee                     | Comments  | Action  |
|-------------------------------|---|---|
| <b>Steve Kempka<br/>- DCC</b> | Identified that the LTP2 had not been included within the document review.  | Incorporate into document review and ensure objectives are covered by sustainability issues and objectives – amend SAF where appropriate.                               |
|                               | Disappointed that the car park monitoring work we are piloting at the moment is not included in the baseline evidence or as an indicator – links to objectives 8 and 16.                      | Incorporate into the SAF for monitoring purposes.   |
|                               | Disagree with the conflict identified in relation to objective 8 (climate change) and working towards a prosperous and viable economy. These two objectives are not necessarily incompatible. | Give more thought to the conflict identified. Decision making criteria could assist in addressing these considerations during the appraisal stages of plan preparation. |

SCHEDULE OF WEAR VALLEY DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN CONTAINED IN THE DIRECTION AND THEREFORE SUCCESSFULLY SAVED BEYOND 27<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2007

## SCHEDULE

### POLICIES CONTAINED IN WEAR VALLEY DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN (1997)

|       |   |
|-------|---|
| GD1   | Generic Development Criteria                                      |
| ENV1  | Protection of the Countryside                                     |
| ENV2  | The North Pennines Area of Outstanding natural beauty             |
| ENV3  | Area of Landscape Value   |
| ENV4  | Historic Parkland Landscapes                                      |
| ENV5  | Landscape action areas  |
| ENV6  | Reclamation   |
| ENV10 | Sites of Special Scientific Interest                              |
| ENV11 | Sites of nature conservation importance and local nature reserves |
| ENV16 | Community Forests   |
| BE1   | Protection of Historic Environment                                |
| BE4   | Setting of a Listed Building                                      |
| BE5   | Conservation Areas  |
| BE6   | New development and alterations in Conservation Areas             |
| BE8   | Setting of a Conservation Area                                    |
| BE10  | Roller shutters in Conservation Areas                             |
| BE14  | Open spaces within built up areas                                 |
| BE15  | Scheduled Ancient Monuments                                       |
| BE16  | Education and Archaeology   |
| BE17  | Areas of Archaeological Interest                                  |
| BE19  | New Agricultural Buildings  |
| BE20  | Conversion of buildings in the Countryside                        |
| BE21  | Farm Diversification  |
| BE22  | Environmental Improvements  |
| BE23  | Provision of Public Art   |
| H3    | Distribution of development                                       |
| H5    | Allocated sites in the main towns                                 |
| H12   | Removal of Occupancy Condition                                    |
| H15   | Affordable Housing  |
| H16   | Exceptions Policy   |
| H17   | Housing for the elderly, handicapped and disabled                 |
| H18   | Sub-division of premises  |
| H19   | Living over the shop  |
| H20   | Alternative uses within residential areas                         |
| H21   | Public Open Space Within Residential Areas                        |
| H22   | Community Benefit   |
| H23   | Taxi businesses within residential areas                          |
| H24   | Residential Design criteria                                       |
| H25   | Residential Extensions  |
| H26   | Backland Development  |
| H27   | Residential caravans and Mobile Homes                             |
| H28   | Gypsy Sites   |

|      |   |
|------|---|
| I1   | Availability of land for industry                               |
| I2   | New Industrial Allocations                                      |
| I3   | Business/Office Sites   |
| I4   | Prestige Industrial Sites                                       |
| I5   | General Industrial Sites  |
| I6   | Local Industrial Sites  |
| I7   | Office/Workshops in Crook                                       |
| I8   | Bulky Goods Retailing   |
| I9   | Service Industrial Sites  |
| I10  | Commercial Sector   |
| I13  | Extensions to Industrial Premises in the Countryside            |
| I15  | Notifiable Installations  |
| TM1  | Criteria for Tourist Proposals                                  |
| TM2  | Tourism within the AONB   |
| TM3  | New Tourist Facilities  |
| TM4  | Hotel Allocation  |
| TM6  | Redevelopment of Caravan Parks                                  |
| S1   | Town Centres  |
| S2   | Newgate Street North Shopping Area                              |
| S6   | Retailing in Crook  |
| S7   | Growth Areas  |
| S8   | Local Shopping Areas  |
| S9   | Cockton hill Local Shopping Area, Bishop Auckland               |
| S11  | Hot Food Takeaways  |
| S12  | Retailing from Industrial Estates                               |
| S13  | Shops in the Countryside  |
| S14  | Petrol Filling Stations, Garden centres and Car Showrooms       |
| S15  | Shop Fronts   |
| S16  | Expansion of Existing Retail Properties                         |
| RL1  | New Provision   |
| RL2  | Protection of existing provision                                |
| RL5  | Sport and Recreation Target                                     |
| RL6  | Recreation Allocations  |
| RL7  | Dual Use of Existing Recreational Areas                         |
| RL8  | Improvement to existing open spaces                             |
| RL9  | Allotments  |
| RL11 | Opportunities for recreation provision                          |
| RL13 | New Recreational Routes   |
| C2   | Health Centres  |
| C3   | St Cuthbert's School, Crook                                     |
| T1   | General Policy  |
| T4   | Land Safeguarded for Road Proposals                             |
| T5   | Road Haulage  |
| T6   | Land safeguarded for railway purposes                           |
| T7   | Taxi ranks  |
| T8   | Development of Car Parks  |
| T9   | New Parking Provision   |
| T12  | Non-operational parking provision in Bishop Auckland and Crook  |
| T13  | Parking Opportunities in the commercial sector, Bishop Auckland |



|     |                               |
|-----|-------------------------------|
| T15 | Garages                       |
| MW2 | Development on Landfill Sites |
| MW4 | Renewable Energy Allocation   |

## ANNEX 6

| Site   | Size (Ha)    | Land Remain-ing | Available Short-Term <sup>a)</sup> | Available Long-Term <sup>b)</sup> | Substantial Barriers To Delivery <sup>c)</sup> | Proposed for De-allocation |
|--|--------------|-----------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| <b>Bishop Auckland Sub-Area</b>                              |              |                 |                                    |                                   |  |                            |
| South Church Enterprise Park                                 | 28.7         | 4.7             | 4.7                                |                                   |  |                            |
| Bracks Farm  | 9.4          | 8.4             |                                    | 8.4                               |  |                            |
| Fylands  | 3.0          | 3.0             | 3.0                                |                                   |  |                            |
| Coundon Industrial Estate East                               | 9.3          | 9.3             |                                    |                                   | 9.3  |                            |
| Greenfield Industrial Estate & Extension (Serviced)          | 24.7         | 14.1            |                                    |                                   | 14.1 <sup>d)</sup>                             |                            |
| St Helen Auckland Industrial Estate & Extension              | 22.1         | 2.2             | 2.2                                |                                   |  |                            |
| West Auckland Industrial Estate & Extension                  | 14.8         | 8.2             |                                    |                                   | 8.2 <sup>e)</sup>                              |                            |
| Coundon Industrial Estate West                               | 8.2          | 0               |                                    |                                   |  |                            |
| Fieldon Bridge   | 10.3         | 8.8             |                                    | 8.8                               |  |                            |
| Romanway   | 9.1          | 4.5             |                                    | 4.5                               |  |                            |
| Romanway East  | 5.1          | 5.1             |                                    |                                   | 5.1  | 5.1                        |
| Chester St / Railway St / Peel St                            | 1.9          | 0               |                                    |                                   |  | 1.9 (currently occupied)   |
| Laurel Way   | 0.4          | 0               |                                    |                                   |  |                            |
| Witton Park  | 1.1          | 1.1             |                                    | 1.1                               |  | 1.1                        |
| Auckland Park  | 1.2          | 1.2             |                                    | 1.2                               |  | 1.2                        |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>149.3</b> | <b>70.6</b>     | <b>9.9</b>                         | <b>24.0</b>                       | <b>36.7</b>                                    | <b>9.3</b>                 |
| <b>Crook / Willington Sub-Area</b>                           |              |                 |                                    |                                   |  |                            |
| Low Willington   | 18.9         | 8.0             | 5.0                                | 3.0                               |  |                            |
| Beechburn / Thistleflat Industrial Estate & Extension I & II | 28.3         | 7.4             | 4.9                                | 2.5                               |  | 2.5                        |
| High Hope Street   | 1.0          | 0               |                                    |                                   |  |                            |
| Dunelm   | 2.0          | 1.4             |                                    | 1.4                               |  |                            |
| Inkerman   | 1.7          | 1.7             |                                    | 1.7                               |  |                            |
| Adjacent to Pulverite Plant                                  | 1.5          | 1.5             |                                    | 1.5                               |  |                            |
| Dan's Castle and Extension                                   | 2.2          | 1.2             |                                    | 1.2                               |  | 0.6                        |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>55.6</b>  | <b>21.2</b>     | <b>9.9</b>                         | <b>11.3</b>                       | <b>0</b>                                       | <b>3.1</b>                 |
| <b>Weardale Sub-Area</b>                                     |              |                 |                                    |                                   |  |                            |
| Eastgate   | 2.0          | 2.0             |                                    | 2.0                               |  |                            |
| Wolsingham Industrial Estate                                 | 1.1          | 0               |                                    |                                   |  |                            |
| Wolsingham Sawmills  | 4.6          | 4.6             |                                    | 4.6                               |  |                            |
| Wolsingham Industrial Estate East                            | 0.6          | 0.6             |                                    | 0.6                               |  |                            |
| Wolsingham Steelworks  | 6.0          |                 |                                    |                                   |  |                            |
| St Johns Chapel & Extension                                  | 1.0          | 0.7             | 0.7                                |                                   |  | 0.7                        |
| Castle Gardens - Dales Centre                                | 0.8          | 0               |                                    |                                   |  |                            |
| Bond Isle  | 1.9          | 0               |                                    |                                   |  |                            |
| East of Blairs   | 3.2          | 3.2             |                                    |                                   | 3.2  | 3.2                        |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>21.2</b>  | <b>11.1</b>     | <b>0.7</b>                         | <b>7.2</b>                        | <b>3.2</b>                                     | <b>3.9</b>                 |
| <b>GRAND TOTAL</b>   | <b>226.1</b> | <b>103.0</b>    | <b>20.5</b>                        | <b>42.5</b>                       | <b>39.9</b>                                    | <b>16.3</b>                |

Note: Subtracting the land remaining from the total developable land does not leave 117ha but 123ha. This is because the future for the 6ha at Wolsingham had not been determined. However, the has planning approval for mixed use including 1ha for employment (B1 & B8) use with the remaining 5ha now not being available for employment land use (subject to a S106 agreement).

- a) 'Short-Term' may be defined as being serviced sites with highway infrastructure and utilities including gas, electricity, water and drainage, already in place ready for construction.
- b) 'Long-Term' may be defined as considered suitable for development, but restricted or requires full servicing or completion of servicing.
- c) Barriers to development please refer to paragraph 19 above.
- d) Landowner advises that the barriers to development should not be an issue.
- e) The opening of the bypass may remove the accessibility barrier, however, any planning application would still be subject to comments by highway engineers.

**Recommendation 1 (2007/8):** The Council should adopt the principle of a **pipeline approach** to the provision of employment land and premises. This requires the Council to use its planning powers and land ownership to maintain a **balance between supply and demand**, sufficient to **stimulate developer interest** without swamping the market.

**Recommendation 2 (2008/9):** In order to meet the shortfall of premises, the District and County Councils should consider the scope for pooling some of their land holdings at South Church and Low Willington, and enter into a **joint venture** with a developer to build follow-on workspace units (of 1,000- 5,000 sq ft). Establishing links with existing workspace will reduce risk to the developer by improving occupancy and therefore potentially reduce levels of gap funding required by the public sector. Creating a **package of sites for disposal** to the private sector should enable the authority to enter a joint venture with a partner of suitable calibre to ensure a successful development. These units should be constructed to **high standards of eco-efficiency**, in order to chime with the objectives of the Wear Valley Economic Strategy to foster development of the renewable energy sector in the district.

**The Council should adopt a sequential approach to recommendations 3, 4 and 5.**

**Recommendation 3 (2007/8):** The Council should explore any scope for **expanding the capacity of South Church** (for example by allowing B1 development closer to the residential area).

**Recommendation 4 (2007/8):** There are a number of allocated sites in the sub-area that can potentially meet the requirements of spill-out from South Church, but several of these sites have not come forward during the current plan period for a variety of reasons. These reasons include land ownership barriers, (**Coundon East**) and access difficulties (**Greenfield Extension and West Auckland**).

It is imperative that one or more of these sites comes forward in the near future. The Council should **commission a feasibility study** on each of these sites to:

- Identify land ownerships and planning issues;
- Explore the nature of any technical barriers to development; and
- Examine options for bringing forward each of these sites.

These options may include establishing ownership and potentially entering a CPO process with a developer on sites that are constrained by accessibility issues, or investigating the potential for a residential-led **mixed-use development** at Coundon East.

**Recommendation 5 (2008/9):** Although successfully addressing the above recommendation will address shortages in the short to medium term, there is also a need to allocate a **new prestige employment site** within the Bishop Auckland sub-area through the LDF. If one of the above sites can be brought forward, the new site may not be required for the next 10 years, although work to identify a potential new site needs to **begin now**. We understand that two potential sites have been considered at this stage, including one to the **south west of Fieldon Bridge**, behind St Helen Auckland, although there are some issues to resolve regarding drainage. The extent and nature of the planning and technical barriers on this site (and any others considered) needs to be investigated as a priority, as does the marketability of the site. The newly allocated prestige site should be at least **10-20ha** in order to establish developer confidence, and allocated for **B1 and B2 uses**. The site would meet the requirements of **higher value manufacturing businesses** that form a key priority of the District's Economic Strategy, as well as meeting **spill over need from South Church**. The new site needs to have been identified in time for the first review of the LDF.

**Recommendation 6 (2010/11):** The Council should, in partnership with a private sector development partner, look to **relocate businesses** based at the **Chester St/ Peel St/ Railway St** Commercial Centre to bring forward redevelopment of the town centre. There is available land at Greenfield Industrial Estate, West Auckland and St Helens for industrial use.

**Recommendation 7 (2007/8):** A number of general and local industrial sites in the sub-area are **under pressure from alternative uses**, particularly the Greenfield site. The LDF should confirm the allocation of these sites and should strengthen the development control policies creating a **presumption against residential development** on these sites, in anticipation of future demand.

**Recommendation 8 (2007/8):** **Witton Park** should be **de-allocated** given its location in a small residential satellite village, and the fact that evidence of demand is limited (it is currently unoccupied).

**Recommendation 9 (2007/8):** Substantial barriers exist to development of Romanway East- there are issues with subsidence and significant work would be required to open-up the site. In addition, further land for dirty neighbour uses is available at Romanway itself. Therefore, **Romanway East** should be **de-allocated**. No other sites in the sub-area should be de-allocated.

**Recommendation 10 (2009/10):** Although Bracks Farm is anticipated to meet demand for office premises in the District over the next 8-10 years, the LDF will need to **identify sites** for further **B1 development** in the **post 2016** period. The success of Bracks Farm will determine whether the new site should be solely for **B1** or **accommodate a mix of B1 and B2**. This task should be incorporated within the site search undertaken as part of recommendation 5.

**Recommendation 11 (2008/9):** The **Low Willington** site offers significant potential for the District to capitalise on **spin-out demand from Durham**, and provides an important element of the District's drive to **promote knowledge-based** activity. As proposed in recommendation 2, the Council should consider pooling land at South Church and Low Willington to enter into a joint venture with a private developer to build **further move-on office premises** on-site. As part of the Council's pipeline approach to sites and premises, this development should be timed to come forward once the existing Low Willington office development is taken up. The Council will also need to decide at what point to **open up access** to the rest of the site.

**Recommendation 12 (2007/8):** The **Thistleflat Extension 2** at Beechburn should be retained, and, as part of the pipeline approach, it should be **opened up** as part of the adjoining housing development over the course of the next **3-5 years**. However, **rationalisation of the existing developed area** should be encouraged, potentially through the use of some public sector gap funding to improve the **appearance and connectivity throughout the site**. **Thistleflat extension 1** (the 2.5ha plot to the north of the existing Beechburn extension) should be allocated as a **landscape buffer** between the existing industrial and residential areas, given its relatively narrow aspect.

**Recommendation 13 (2007/8):** **Dan's Castle** is currently underutilised and does not receive high levels of demand. However, it should be retained in order to provide vital opportunities to diversify the economy in an area the remains heavily dependent on 2-3 vulnerable heavy manufacturing employers. As recommended by the Tow Law ADF, LEGI or NRF funds should be used to **improve the appearance** of the site and **improve its connectivity** with surrounding areas. The **Dan's Castle Extension** should be **de-allocated** given current levels of under-utilisation, low demand and access difficulties. The **Inkerman site** should be retained- despite low demand for employment premises, the area remains vulnerable to further structural changes in the economy, and opportunities to instigate business growth should be protected. **Dunelm**, while experiencing relatively low demand, should remain **allocated as a bad**

**neighbour site** for the sub-area. This situation can be reviewed at the LDF review stage and if existing businesses had relocated from the site and there was demand for other uses, it would make sense to de-allocate at that stage. Land adjacent to the **Pulverite plant** is allocated for a bad neighbour use- demand for such use is likely to be limited, and there is availability at Romanway, the District's bad neighbour site, and Dunelm. However, if demand is not likely to be forthcoming from other uses for this site, it may make more sense to retain until the next LDF review.

**Recommendation 14 (2007/8):** The **East of Blairs site** should be **de-allocated** as it is not likely to be viable for development by the market and there is only limited evidence of demand.

**Recommendation 15 (2007/8):** The **Wolsingham Sawmills** site should be retained, and efforts to bring it forward through a **developer agreement linked to an adjacent housing development** should be pursued. The site, if it comes forward, would **meet future demand** by local businesses, and, looking further to the future, **meet spin-out demand** from Eastgate.

**Recommendation 16 (2007/8):** **Wolsingham Industrial Estate East** site should be retained, as there is evidence of some demand. Once the Sawmills site is developed however, local demand is likely to be met adequately, and the allocation of Wolsingham Industrial East can be reviewed. Wolsingham Industrial East should therefore be retained as a **substitute site should Sawmills falter**.

**Recommendation 17 (2008/9):** The planning process should ensure that, if the **Wolsingham Steelworks** site is allocated for housing, **suitable mitigation** is provided by the housing developer in terms of the **provision of industrial units**.

**Recommendation 18 (2007/8):** The **unoccupied part of St. Johns Chapel** should be **de-allocated**, reflecting low demand in this rural location.

**Recommendation 19 (2008/9):** The Council should ensure that the **Eastgate development** makes provision for **flexible workspace** units of a range of sizes that allow for the needs of business expansion. These units should be constructed to **high standards of energy-efficiency**, and be **proactively marketed** to businesses in environmental technology and related sectors.

## Bishop Auckland Renaissance – Action Plan

| <b><u>Phase 0 – Project Management</u></b>                             |  |                           |                         |   |
|--|--|---------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| <b>Key Actions</b>   | <b>Key Tasks</b>   | <b>Lead</b>               | <b>Timescale</b>        | <b>Progress</b>   |
| Increase capacity, experience and knowledge to deliver the master plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secure ONE Single Programme resources to employ Project Manager and carry out preliminary work</li> </ul> | WVDC Regeneration Manager | Complete by August 2007 | Funding secured £148k Single Programme, £49k WVDC   |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruit Project Manager</li> </ul>  | WVDC Regeneration Manager | Commence August 2007    | Recruitment process underway – interviews scheduled for early September   |
| Carry out preliminary design and enabling works                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Carry out topographical survey of proposed work areas</li> </ul>  | DCC Urban Renaissance     | Completed August 2007   | Topographical survey completed and being used to informing draft designs and the development of detailed engineering drawings |

| Key Actions   | Key Tasks   | Lead                         | Timescale                  | Progress         |
|---|---|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------|
| Establish baseline of the programme to enable effective project evaluation at the end of the project. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence base for key output / outcome indicators including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vacant buildings</li> <li>Rental levels</li> <li>Qualitative condition</li> <li>Expenditure leakage</li> <li>Visitor numbers</li> <li>Footfall</li> <li>Market stalls</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | WVDC<br>Regeneration Manager | Commence<br>September 2007 | Not due to start |



| <b>Phase 1 – Market Place</b>                                  |  |  |  |   |
|--|--|--|--|---|
| <b>Key Actions</b>   | <b>Key Tasks</b>   | <b>Lead</b>  | <b>Timescale</b>                           | <b>Progress</b>   |
| Design and implement public realm and streetscape improvements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Design improvements to Market Place in line with master plan principles.</li> </ul> | WVDC<br>Regeneration Manager /<br>DCC<br>Urban Renaissance | Completed by<br>September 2007             | Development work is on-going and on schedule to be completed early September. |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public consultation on draft design</li> </ul>                                      | WVDC<br>Regeneration Manager                               | Completed by<br>September 2007             | Not due to start  |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finalise designs and produce detailed costings</li> </ul>                           | DCC<br>Urban Renaissance /<br>Service Direct               | Completed by<br>December 2007              | Not due to start  |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek TRO approval and other statutory permissions</li> </ul>                        | DCC<br>Highways /<br>WVDC<br>Project Manager               | Completed by<br>October 2008               | Not due to start  |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek ONE Single Programme resources to implement</li> </ul>                         | WVDC<br>Regeneration Manager /<br>Project Manager          | Commence<br>implementation<br>January 2009 | Not due to start  |
| Facilitate redevelopment of 'Poundstretcher Corner'            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish ownership and discuss future intentions</li> </ul>                        | WVDC<br>Project Manager                                    | Commence<br>ASAP                           | Not started   |
| Facilitate development on Kings Lodge site                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish ownership, future intentions and existing planning status</li> </ul>      | WVDC<br>Project Manager                                    | Commence<br>ASAP                           | Not started   |

| Key Actions                                    | Key Tasks  | Lead  | Timescale                            | Progress         |
|--|--|---|--------------------------------------|------------------|
| Facilitate buildings and premises improvements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify key target buildings within the area.</li> </ul>   | WVDC Conservation and Environment Manager   | Commence September 2007              | Not due to start |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish ownership, future intentions and existing planning status</li> </ul>                                  | WVDC Regeneration Manager / Project Manager | Commence October 2007                | Not due to start |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Design, establish and operate buildings / premises improvement scheme</li> </ul>                                | WVDC Regeneration Manager / Project Manager | Commence January 2008                | Not due to start |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek ONE Single Programme resources to implement</li> </ul>   | WVDC Regeneration Manager / Project Manager | Commence implementation January 2009 | Not due to start |
| Establish future requirements for market       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review arrangements for provision of stalls (stall holder provision / WVDC provision / other method)</li> </ul> | WVDC Head of Public Protection              | Commence October 2007                | Not due to start |

## **Phase 2 – North Bondgate**

| <b>Key Actions</b>   | <b>Key Tasks</b>  | <b>Lead</b>   | <b>Timescale</b>  | <b>Progress</b>              |
|--|---|---|---|------------------------------|
| Facilitate redevelopment of car park / bus depot site          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with preferred developer to progress the development of the scheme and support the submission of planning application for the site</li> </ul> | WVDC<br>Director of Environment & Regeneration /<br>Conservation and Environment Manager /<br>Project Manager | Ongoing   | Development work is on-going |
| Facilitate redevelopment of Wilkinson Yard site                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with developer to ensure high quality scheme and links to new retail development</li> </ul>   | WVDC<br>Senior Planning Officer /<br>Project Manager  | Ongoing   | Ongoing                      |
| Design and implement public realm and streetscape improvements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Design improvements to North Bondgate in line with master plan principles.</li> </ul>  | WVDC<br>Regeneration Manager /<br>DCC<br>Urban Renaissance  | Commence after outcome known of planning application for the car park / bus depot site<br>Estimated August 2008 | Not due to start             |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public consultation on draft design</li> </ul>   | WVDC<br>Project Manager /<br>Regeneration Manager   | Completed by September 2008   | Not due to start             |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finalise designs and produce detailed costings</li> </ul>  | DCC<br>Urban Renaissance /<br>Service Direct  | Completed by October 2008   | Not due to start             |

| Key Actions   | Key Tasks   | Lead  | Timescale                                  | Progress         |
|---|---|---|--|------------------|
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek TRO approval and other statutory permissions</li> </ul> | DCC<br>Highways /<br>WVDC<br>Project Manager      | Commence<br>October 2008                   | Not due to start |
| Cont'd  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek ONE Single Programme resources to implement</li> </ul>  | WVDC<br>Regeneration Manager /<br>Project Manager | Commence<br>implementation<br>January 2009 | Not due to start |
| Improve linkages between North Bondgate and Fore Bondgate | See Fore Bondgate below   |   |  |                  |

**Phase 3 – Fore Bondgate**

| <b>Key Actions</b>   | <b>Key Tasks</b>   | <b>Lead</b>  | <b>Timescale</b>  | <b>Progress</b>   |
|--|--|--|---|---|
| Design and implement public realm and streetscape improvements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Design improvements to Fore Bondgate in line with master plan principles.</li></ul>                    | WVDC<br>Regeneration Manager /<br>DCC<br>Urban Renaissance | Completed by<br>August 2007   | Development work<br>is on-going and on<br>schedule to be<br>completed early<br>September. |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Public consultation on draft design</li></ul>  | WVDC<br>Project Manager /<br>Regeneration Manager          | Completed by<br>September 2008  | Not due to start  |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Finalise designs and produce detailed costings</li></ul>   | DCC<br>Urban Renaissance /<br>Service Direct               | Completed by<br>October 2007  | Not due to start  |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Seek ONE Single Programme resources to implement</li></ul>   | WVDC<br>Regeneration Manager /<br>Project Manager          | Completed by<br>October 2007<br>Implementation to<br>commence<br>January 2008 | Not due to start  |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Seek improvements to the TRO to increase pedestrianisation and enforcement of traffic regime</li></ul> | WVDC<br>Project Manager                                    | Commence<br>October 2007  | Not due to start  |

| Key Actions  | Key Tasks  | Lead   | Timescale   | Progress  |
|--|--|--|---|---|
| Create new public square at western end of Fore Bondgate | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Design improvements to this part of Fore Bondgate in line with master plan principles.</li> </ul> | WVDC<br>Regeneration Manager /<br>DCC<br>Urban Renaissance | Commence<br>August 2007   | Development work is on-going and on schedule to be completed early September as an additional element to the existing proposed work to Fore Bondgate. |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public consultation on draft design</li> </ul>  | WVDC<br>Project Manager /<br>Regeneration Manager          | Completed by<br>September 2008  | Not due to start  |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finalise designs and produce detailed costings</li> </ul>   | DCC<br>Urban Renaissance /<br>Service Direct               | Completed by<br>October 2007  | Not due to start  |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek ONE Single Programme resources to implement</li> </ul>                                       | WVDC<br>Regeneration Manager /<br>Project Manager          | Completed by<br>October 2007<br>Implementation to<br>commence<br>January 2008 | Not due to start  |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek amendments to the TRO to create public space</li> </ul>                                      | WVDC<br>Project Manager                                    | Commence<br>October 2007  | Not due to start  |

| Key Actions   | Key Tasks   | Lead  | Timescale                            | Progress         |
|---|---|---|--------------------------------------|------------------|
| Facilitate buildings and premises improvements            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify key target buildings within the area.</li> </ul>                        | WVDC Conservation and Environment Manager   | Commence September 2007              | Not due to start |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish ownership, future intentions and existing planning status</li> </ul>   | WVDC Regeneration Manager / Project Manager | Commence October 2007                | Not due to start |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Design, establish and operate buildings / premises improvement scheme</li> </ul> | WVDC Regeneration Manager / Project Manager | Commence January 2008                | Not due to start |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek ONE Single Programme resources to implement</li> </ul>                      | WVDC Regeneration Manager / Project Manager | Commence implementation January 2008 | Not due to start |
| Improve linkages between North Bondgate and Fore Bondgate | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify key target buildings within the area.</li> </ul>                        | WVDC Project Manager                        | Commence November 2007               | Not due to start |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish ownership, future intentions and existing planning status.</li> </ul>  | WVDC Project Manager                        | Commence November 2007               | Not due to start |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider acquisition options</li> </ul>  | WVDC Project Manager                        | Commence November 2007               | Not due to start |

#### **Phase 4 – Auckland Castle Park**

| <b>Key Actions</b>  | <b>Key Tasks</b>  | <b>Lead</b>   | <b>Timescale</b>        | <b>Progress</b>  |
|---|---|---|-------------------------|--|
| Develop outline restoration proposal for Auckland Castle Park   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Carry out feasibility and associated work including initial costings to restore the Park and to form the basis of a Heritage Lottery Fund stage 1 funding application</li> </ul> | WVDC<br>Regeneration Manager                                    | Completed by March 2007 | Deadline achieved, application assessed and subsequently withdrawn to allow further development following discussion with the funder |
| Revise proposal in the light of feedback and re-submit stage 1 funding application to Heritage Lottery Fund | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Renegotiate with Church Commissioners the lease agreement for the park.</li> </ul>   | WVDC<br>Regeneration Manager / Legal                            | Commence August 2007    | Further project development in conjunction with HLF ongoing  |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review the proposals in relation to the business case for the visitor centre and the facilities required</li> </ul>  | WVDC<br>Regeneration Manager / Project Manager / Bureau Veritas | Commence August 2007    | Further project development in conjunction with HLF ongoing  |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider further integration of the project with future proposals for the development of Auckland Castle as a tourism asset</li> </ul>   | WVDC<br>Regeneration Manager / Project Manager / Bureau Veritas | Commence August 2007    | Further project development in conjunction with HLF ongoing  |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure further consultation and involvement of the community and private sector in the further development of the project</li> </ul>   | WVDC<br>Regeneration Manager / Project Manager / Bureau Veritas | Commence August 2007    | Further project development in conjunction with HLF ongoing  |



**Phase 5 – Theatre Corner**

| <b>Key Actions</b>  | <b>Key Tasks</b>  | <b>Lead</b>   | <b>Timescale</b>               | <b>Progress</b>   |
|---|---|---|--------------------------------|---|
| Improvements to all corners of Princes Street / Newgate Street junction to compliment Theatre Corner improvements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Design improvements Princes Street / Newgate Street junction to compliment Theatre Corner improvements.</li></ul> | WVDC<br>Regeneration Manager /<br>Senior Engineering<br>Officer<br>DCC<br>Urban Renaissance                     | Completed by<br>August 2007    | Development work<br>is on-going and on<br>schedule to be<br>completed early<br>September. |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Consultation on draft design</li></ul>  | WVDC<br>Regeneration Manager /<br>Senior Engineering<br>Officer   | Completed by<br>September 2007 | Not due to start  |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Finalise designs and produce detailed costings</li></ul>  | DCC<br>Urban Renaissance /<br>Service Direct  | Completed by<br>October 2007   | Not due to start  |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Secure funding and implement the scheme</li></ul>   | WVDC<br>Regeneration Manager /<br>Senior Engineering<br>Officer<br>DCC<br>Urban Renaissance /<br>Service Direct | Completed by<br>March 2008     | Not due to start  |

| <b><u>Other Phases / Key Actions</u></b>   |   |  |                  |                              |
|--|---|--|------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Key Actions</b>   | <b>Key Tasks</b>  | <b>Lead</b>  | <b>Timescale</b> | <b>Progress</b>              |
| Facilitate redevelopment of bus station and extension of Newgate Shopping Centre | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with shopping centre owner to promote this scheme and try to encourage further progression of the proposal</li> </ul> | WVDC<br>Director of Environment & Regeneration / Project Manager | Ongoing          | Development work is on-going |

# **PERFORMANCE AGAINST BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE AND LOCAL INDICATORS**

## **Development and Building Control / Planning and Environmental Policy**

| Indicator | Description  | Target<br>2007/08 | Performance |                          | Achievement 2007/08 |     |     |     | Variance from<br>target/comment |   |
|-----------|--|-------------------|-------------|--------------------------|---------------------|-----|-----|-----|---------------------------------|---|
|           |  |                   | 2005/6      | 2006/7                   | Q-1                 | Q-2 | Q-3 | Q-4 |                                 |   |
| BV109(a)  | Major applications determined within 13 weeks  | 60                | 60.71       | 86.6                     | 83                  |     |     |     |                                 | ☺ |
| BV109(b)  | Minor applications determined within 8 weeks   | 70                | 72.42       | 80.4                     | 81                  |     |     |     |                                 | ☺ |
| BV109(c)  | All other applications determined within 8 weeks   | 80                | 88.35       | 86.5                     | 94                  |     |     |     |                                 | ☺ |
| BV111     | Percentage of applicants/agents satisfied with the service received  | 85                | 66          | Triennial survey results | No Survey           |     |     |     |                                 | ☺ |
| BV204     | Percentage of appeals allowed against the authority's decision to refuse planning applications   | 25                | 44.44       | 66.67                    | 60                  |     |     |     |                                 | ☹ |
| BV205     | Quality of service check list  | 88                | 88          | 88                       | 88                  |     |     |     |                                 | ☺ |
| BV106     | Percentage of new homes built on previously developed land.  | 70%               | 55%         | 74.62                    | 80.34               |     |     |     |                                 | ☺ |
| BV200(a)  | Has a development plan been adopted in last 5 years or proposals on deposit to adopt in next 3 years?  | No                | No          | No                       | No                  |     |     |     |                                 |   |
| BV200(b)  | If 200(a) is "no" are there proposals on deposit for an alteration or replacement, with a published timetable for adopting those alterations or the replacement plan within three years? | Yes               | No          | No                       | No                  |     |     |     |                                 |   |
| LP-R5     | Percentage of householder applications determined within 8 weeks   | 85                | 90.67       | 90.54                    | 94.06               |     |     |     |                                 | ☺ |
| LP-R8     | Percentage of industrial/economic applications determined within 8 weeks   | 80                | 77.78       | 76.47                    | 77.78               |     |     |     |                                 | ☹ |
| LPI 6     | Percentage of applications vetted and approved within 5 weeks  | 85                | 59          | 58.9                     | 65.9                |     |     |     |                                 | ☹ |
| LPI 7     | Percentage of inspections undertaken in 1 working day  | 100               | 100         | 100                      | 100                 |     |     |     |                                 | ☺ |
| LP-R12    | Percentage of alleged breaches responded to within 15 working days   | 100               | 83.47       | 100                      | 98                  |     |     |     |                                 | ☺ |

## Public Protection

| Indicator | Description   | Target 2007/08 | Performance |        | Achievement 2007/08 |     |     |     | Variance from target/comment                           |   |
|-----------|---|----------------|-------------|--------|---------------------|-----|-----|-----|--|---|
|           |   |                | 2005/6      | 2006/7 | Q-1                 | Q-2 | Q-3 | Q-4 |  |   |
| BV166     | Score against a checklist of enforcement best practice for environmental health trading standards.      | 100%           |             | 100%   | 100%                |     |     |     |  | ■ |
| BV217     | The percentage of pollution control improvements to existing installations that were completed on time. | 100%           |             | 100%   | 0%                  |     |     |     | * see para at foot of table.                           |   |
| LP-CS11   | Percentage of food premises due to be inspected that were inspected                                     | 100%           |             | 100%   | 82%                 |     |     |     | ** of resources to deal with smokefree implementation. |   |
| LP-CS12   | Percentage of health and safety premises due to be inspected that were inspected                        | 100%           |             | 100%   | 79%                 |     |     |     |  |   |
| LP-CS13   | Percentage of authorised processes due to be inspected that were inspected                              | 100%           |             | 100%   | 12%                 |     |     |     | Annual figure  |   |

- \* Improvements to existing installations have been identified for completion during the 2007/08 financial year. However, they did not have to be completed by the end of the first quarter and the premises in question have not been inspected yet. A nil return, therefore, does not necessarily indicate that the outstanding works have not been completed, only that they have not been checked yet and do not need to be by the end of the first quarter.

## Economic Regeneration

| Indicator  | Description   | Target 2007/08 | Performance |        | Achievement 2007/08 |     |     |     | Variance from target/comment                    |   |
|------------|---|----------------|-------------|--------|---------------------|-----|-----|-----|---|---|
|            |   |                | 2005/6      | 2006/7 | Q-1                 | Q-2 | Q-3 | Q-4 |   |   |
| BV-EC2     | Proportion of the working population who are unemployed and claiming benefit  | 2.6%           | 3.3%        | 3.3    | -                   | -   | -   |     | Reviewed Annually                               |   |
| BV-EC17(a) | Total number of investment enquiries dealt with per annum   | 120            | 158         | 131    | 34                  |     |     |     |   | 😊 |
| BV-EC17(b) | Number of re-locations and re-investments annually as a result of "inward investment"   | 12             | 8           | 7      | 0                   |     |     |     | 4 projects in development                       |   |
| BV-EC17(c) | Number of jobs created and safeguarded from firms moving to or re-locating within the area following "inward investment" enquiries  | 70             | 78.5        | 832    | 0                   |     |     |     | Above project, if successful, would meet target |   |
| BV-EC19    | Number of new business start-ups assisted/receiving financial assistance  | 18             | 20          | 26     | 3                   |     |     |     |   | 😊 |
| BV216(a)   | Number of 'sites of potential concern' within the local authority area, with respect to land contamination.   | 520            |             | 519    |                     |     |     |     |   |   |
| BV216(b)   | Number of sites for which sufficient detailed information is available to decide whether remediation of the land is necessary, as a percentage of all 'sites of potential concern'. | 5%             |             | 0%     |                     |     |     |     |   |   |
| BV219(a)   | Total number of conservation areas in the local authority area.   | 20             | 20          | 20     |                     |     |     |     |   |   |
| BV219(b)   | Percentage of conservation areas in district with an up-to-date character appraisal.  | 20             | 0%          | 0%     |                     |     |     |     |   |   |
| BV219(c)   | Percentage of conservation areas with published management proposals.   | 10             | 0%          | 0%     |                     |     |     |     |   |   |
| LPI 1      | Responded to workspace enquiries within 3 working days  | 100%           | 100%        | 95     | 100                 |     |     |     |   | 😊 |
| LPI 2      | Process grant applications within 8 weeks   | 100%           | 100%        | 100%   | 100                 |     |     |     |   | 😊 |
| LPI 3      | Jobs created through business grants and other assistance   | 70             | 110.5       | 116    | 24                  |     |     |     |   | 😊 |
| LPI 4      | Occupancy rates of WVDC (or jointly owned) factory units & workshops  | 95%            | 85%         | 85%    | 85%                 |     |     |     |   | 😊 |
| LPI 5      | Issue at least 10 press releases  | 20             | 23          | 29     | 5                   |     |     |     |   | 😊 |

## QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE MONITORING

### APPEALS

| Appeal  | Decision  | Reason  |
|---|-----------|---|
| 3/2006/0193<br>Land at Thistleflat Farm, High West Road, Crook.<br>Proposed demolition of No. 10 Heather Lane and residential development comprising 38 detached houses and garaging. | ALLOWED   | The Inspector concluded that the site is previously developed land within the definition given in Annex B of PPS3. The site has the highest priority as a location for development, in accordance with the sequential approach described in policy DP1 of RPG1. There is no sequentially preferably site. The Inspector considered the proposed scheme against policies of the Wear Valley District Local plan and considered it to be consistent with the Local Plan. He did not consider the density of the development would undermine any established policy objectives.  |
| 3/2005/0281<br>Land at Thistleflat Farm, High West Road, Crook.<br>Proposed demolition of No. 10 Heather Lane and residential development comprising 49 detached houses and garaging. | ALLOWED   | The Inspector concluded that the site is previously developed land within the definition given in Annex B of PPS3. The site has the highest priority as a location for development, in accordance with the sequential approach described in policy DP1 of RPG1. There is no sequentially preferably site. The Inspector considered the proposed scheme against policies of the Wear Valley District Local plan and considered it to be consistent with the Local Plan.<br><br>He noted that this scheme would entail a more efficient use of land than the proposal under application 3/2006/0193.  |
| 3/2006/0645<br>Proposed erection of stables for two ponies on land at the rear of 5 Ascot Court, Leeholme.  | ALLOWED   | The Inspector considered the width of the existing access to the land to be adequate and the development would not result in harm to highway safety conditions. He noted that ponies could continue to be kept on the site and therefore the provision of stables for their shelter would not increase the current use of the access. He considered the stables to be very modest in scale and noted they would be positioned 50 metres away from the nearest dwelling. He considered the risk of smells and nuisance for the proposed stable position would be minimal provided suitable conditions were imposed. Accordingly he allowed the appeal subject to appropriate conditions. |
| 3/2006/0249<br>Proposed single residential dwelling house at Mowbray House, High Hope Street, Crook.  | DISMISSED | The Inspector observed that the only route out of the site is via a road which severely restricted in width with only a narrow footpath along one site for half of its length. Also visibility onto High Hope Street was severely restricted. In his opinion any additional use of this substandard road and junction would be seriously harmful to highway safety conditions.  |

| Appeal   | Decision  | Reason   |
|--|-----------|--|
| 3/2006/0586<br>Proposed change of use from dwelling to form children's nursery at Red Cottage, High Road, Stanley, Crook | DISMISSED | The Inspector concluded the proposed development would lead to unacceptably increased risks to the safety of all highway users, including pedestrians. He expected a substantial number of children would arrive by private car and several vehicles would arrive at a similar time. The access road does not have good visibility around the corner and is not adequate for allowing several vehicles to stop or turn simultaneously. There is no formal footway. Vehicles would be likely to park on High Road which would impede the free movement of traffic and make it difficult for neighbouring residents to enter/exit their properties. High Road also has not footway. The Inspector expected the use would result in significantly increased noise and disturbance to all neighbouring residents from comings and goings, and the substantial numbers of children who would use the outdoor play area. |

## COMPLAINTS

| Origin of Complaint | Allegation   | Response  |
|---------------------|--|---|
| 1. Stage 1 Resident | The Council allowed the applicant to change approved plans without appropriate paperwork/ considerations. This has resulted in an unacceptable appearance and water flowing into the complainant's yard. | It was not accepted that changes were agreed without following the correct procedures. An application for planning permission was received. The complainant was notified and they had objected to the proposal. The case officer had assessed that the development was acceptable. A Building Control Officer was asked to visit the site and he sorted out the drainage problem. |
| 2. Stage 1 Resident | Failure of the Council to remove an unauthorised fence. Disagreed with a proposal to move the fence back and plant a screen hedge.   | The Council has tried to secure the removal of the fence. Negotiations took place with the developers and the house owner but these failed to rectify the situation. The developers had moved the fence and undertaken the planting of shrubs at their own risk. An application for planning permission is awaited.   |
| 3. Stage 1 Resident | Attempted to speak to the case officer following the grant of planning permission. Left messages but the case officer has not returned calls.  | Apology made. The case officer contacted the complainant and supplied the information requested.  |
| 4. Stage 1 Resident | The failure of the Council to enforce the completion of a boundary wall adjoining the complainants' property.  | The neighbour had agreed to complete wall in August 2006. The enforcement officer was not aware that the work has not been done. The enforcement officer has spoken to the neighbour who has agreed to complete the wall within the next 3 months.  |

## OMBUDSMAN COMPLAINTS

|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| Applicant<br>Riverside,<br>Bishop Auckland | The Council gave wrong advice about a planning application for a garage. The complainant was not initially informed the land is designated "protected open space". The complainant had been informed the proposed development would never be granted. The complainant would not have wasted time, money and effort in preparing and resubmitting plans for the site had he been told this. | No or insufficient evidence of maladministration.<br><br>The Ombudsman could not see that he could hold the Council liable for any of the complainant's legal costs. There is no expectation or requirement for legal representation in the planning or appeal process. It was agreed the designation had not been revealed initially but it was stated in a temporary Stop Notice and the second refusal of planning permission. |
|--|--|---|

| Public Protection |             |                                   |
|-------------------|-------------|-----------------------------------|
|                   | 1 withdrawn | Readvertising of premises licence |



## ANNEX 12

| COUNCIL PLAN ACTION         | RESPONSIBLE OFFICER(S)               | RISKS  | RISK MANAGEMENT ACTIONS  |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| 1. Economic                 | R Hope<br>S Dawson                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduction in resources available to service.</li> <li>Availability of external funding.</li> <li>Reduction in economic performance of District leading to reduction in demand on service (building rates).</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scale back programme, seek partners.</li> <li>Pro-active approach to external funding regimes.</li> <li>Robust financial planning/ management.</li> </ul>   |
| 2. Political                | R Hope                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduction/change in priority accorded to tasks</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure complementarity of action in relation to Council Plan objectives.</li> <li>Have contingency work programme available.</li> </ul>   |
| 3. Social                   | All Heads of Service                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ageing population.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Need to ensure flexibility of response in relevant service delivery areas to accommodate changing demographics.</li> <li>Re-evaluate access to service and consider alternative options for parts of the district.</li> </ul> |
| 4. Technological            | All Heads of Service                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Computer failure</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No current problems (paper system remains relevant)</li> </ul>  |
| 5. Managerial/ Professional | D Townsend/<br>T Carver/<br>S Dawson | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loss of staff/no replacement.</li> <li>Loss/reduction middle management capacity.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use Planning Delivery Grant constructively.</li> <li>Seek to provide appropriate developmental/training opportunities for staff.</li> </ul>   |
| 6. Financial                | D Townsend/<br>T Carver              | Reduction in resources<br><b>Revenues</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Failure of revenue bids to fund additional staff/reduction in income</li> <li>Environmental resources limited.</li> <li>Reliance on external funds to support mainstream service activity.</li> <li>Car parking staff</li> <li>Licensing</li> </ul> | See "Economic" above.  |
|                             | S Dawson                             | <b>Capital</b><br>Scale of projects reduced.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use of Planning Delivery Grant.</li> <li>Monitoring of income and expenditure and action to tackle potential shortfalls/deficits.</li> <li>Maintain staff levels.</li> <li>Seek external assistance.</li> </ul>               |
|                             |                                      |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identification of alternative funding sources.</li> <li>Re-evaluation of project input/outputs.</li> <li>Re-evaluation of office.</li> </ul>  |

| DEPARTMENTAL RISKS          | RESPONSIBLE OFFICER(S)  | RISKS   | RISK MANAGEMENT ACTIONS  |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|---|--|
| 7. Physical                 | R Hope                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of office accommodation/cramped working conditions.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Space requirements.</li> </ul>  |
| 8. Legislative / Regulatory | D Townsend/<br>T Carver | <p>Within the department there are a number of areas of service delivery which are affected by legislative and/or regulatory requirements or industry standards of best practice, for example, the inability to fill some posts (for various reasons) compromises the ability of the department to discharge its responsibilities in the areas affected. Examples of areas of service delivery affected in this way are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase in demand on strategy planning/building control facilities leads to more complaints.</li> <li>Car parking</li> <li>Licensing duties, etc.</li> </ul> | <p>Judgements will be made as to priorities. On the basis of such judgements responsibility for ensuring that the department meets its obligations and responsibilities in areas of legislative and regulatory requirement will be allocated to appropriate officers within the department. In particular attention is given to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use Planning Delivery Grant to ensure effective service delivery.</li> <li>Monitor complaints and implement service delivery improvements.</li> <li>Implement customer care training.</li> </ul> |
| 9. Environmental            | D Townsend              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flood risk assessment more onerous</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow National Planning Policy Statements and set procedures (with Environment Agency).</li> <li>Carry out Strategic Flood Risk Assessment of District and for individual proposals (e.g. Eastgate).</li> <li>Development of policies to be included in LDF.</li> </ul>  |
| 10. Competitive             | D Townsend              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completion from external Building Control providers which could reduce demand for Council service.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Market the Building Control services. Cut back in non-fee activities if service demands decrease.</li> </ul>  |

## ANNEX 13

| Cost Centre and over spend  | Reason   | Action Plan  | Net over spend after action plan of savings |
|---|--|--|---|
| <b>INDUSTRIAL ESTATES/BUSINESS CENTRES (Land and Property) -£12k</b><br>South Church Industrial Estate (50%)<br>Crook Business Centre (17.5%)<br>Low Willington Industrial Estate (24.4%) | These are owned jointly with Durham County Council and agreed portions (shown in brackets in column 1) of the running costs and income are passed to the Council.<br>Durham County Council take the leading role in managing these estates in terms of finance and operations. Costs are rising over historic levels which are not communicated to our officers in a timely fashion to be agreed and included in our budgets | Pressure is being applied to Durham County Council to organise regular periodical meetings to discuss activities and improve information flows.                      | <b>£12k</b>                                 |
| <b>DURHAM DALES CENTRE (Castle Garden Units) -£32k</b>  | This is owned jointly with Durham County Council and agreed portions of the running costs and income are passed to the Council. Durham County Council take the leading role in managing this unit in terms of finance and operations. Costs are rising over historic levels which are not communicated to our officers in a timely fashion to be agreed and included in our budgets  | Although periodic meetings take place appropriate information is not made available. Pressure is being applied to Durham County Council to improve information flows | <b>£32k</b>                                 |
| <b>PLANNING FEES -£36k</b>  | Fall in activity compared to previous years. This is reflected in the fall in applications received in the year to date of 374 this year compared to 440 last year   | Current vacant senior planner post (PO9-12) will not be advertised whilst demand situation is kept under review  | <b>£6k</b>                                  |

| <b>Cost Centre and over spend</b>  | <b>Reason</b>  | <b>Action Plan</b>  | <b>Net over spend after action plan of savings</b> |
|------------------------------------|--|---|--|
| <b>BUILDING CONTROL FEES -£49k</b> | Fall in activity compared to previous years. This is reflected in the fall in applications received in the year to date            | Current vacant principal building control officer post (PO 6-9) will not be advertised whilst the demand situation is kept under review | <b>£2k</b>   |
| <b>CAR PARKS -£20k</b>             | Introduction of car park fees in Crook may not occur this financial year. It was included in the budget from October 2007 onwards. | A decision on charging is required. If it is not introduced this financial year overspend on budget will occur.                         | <b>£20k</b>  |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                       |  |   | <b>£72k</b>  |

## ANNEX 14

| <b>Cost Centre</b>                       | <b>Reason for under spend</b>                           | <b>£</b>    |
|--|---|-------------|
| <b>TOURISM</b> –Grants and Contributions | Reduction in grant payments                             | <b>£5k</b>  |
| <b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUND</b>         | Reduction in grants and contributions from £40k to £10k | <b>£30k</b> |
| <b>TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT</b>            | Anticipated delay in filling vacant post                | <b>£15k</b> |
| <b>ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS</b>        | Delay in filling vacant post                            | <b>£12</b>  |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                             |   | <b>£62</b>  |