

CORE STRATEGY AND DEVELOPMENT
MANAGEMENT
Preferred Options Report

Easington Local Development Framework



District of **easington.**

8th April 2008

Foreword

CORE STRATEGY AND DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

PREFERRED OPTIONS

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The main towns and villages of Easington are well located in a corridor of economic potential, centred on the A19 trunk road and containing the main employment and commercial centres of East Durham.

1.2 Initiatives to restore prosperity to the District have maintained a focus on stimulating employment in areas linked to this corridor. This has been achieved through national initiatives such as the National Coalfield Programme and Enterprise Zones and newer local initiatives are helping to create a more competitive, diverse and entrepreneurial economy which can deliver the considerable potential of the East Durham area and its regionally significant assets.

1.3 The long term vision and strategy for physical regeneration, economic development and place-making across East Durham will be delivered through continuing work in four interlinked spatial dimensions. Collectively these activities are the drivers for the regeneration of Easington to create a place that contributes to the potential of the north east:

- the A19 corridor, to develop strategic economic opportunities;
- delivery of the initiatives to revitalise the main towns of Seaham and Peterlee;
- the coalfields housing renewal programme, to regenerate existing communities;
- coastal improvements, to develop the whole of the Durham coastline as a visitor attraction of regional significance.

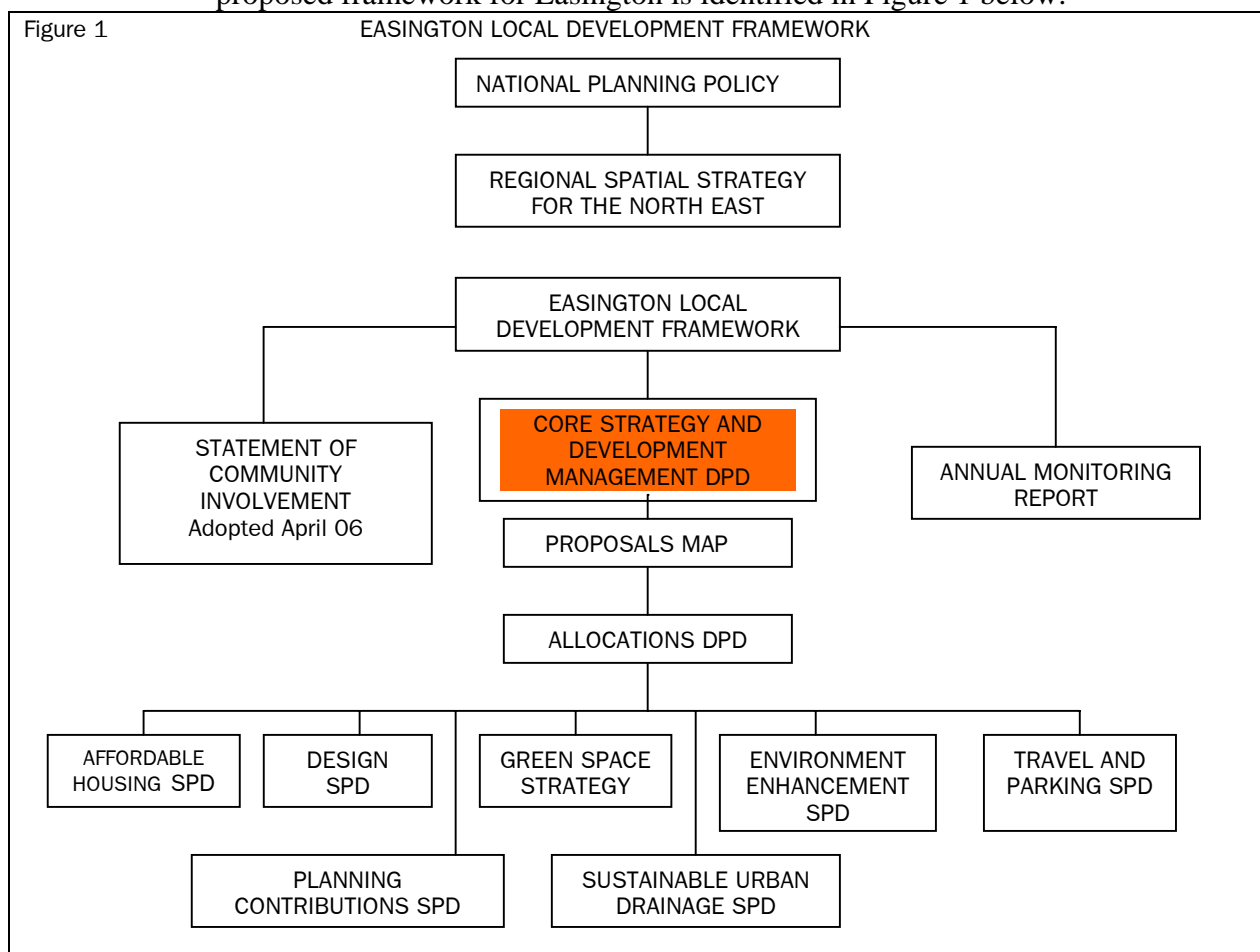
1.4 The new A182 link road and its proposed extension beyond Murton has brought forward the potential for development of further employment sites:

- Seaham port has doubled turnover in the past 3 years and established a niche market in mid sized freight handling capacity due to the high quality road/rail freight interchange facilities and warehousing;
- Spectrum Business Park is providing high quality business space offering a range of sub divisible buildings;
- a strategic employment site to the south of Seaham to accommodate proposals that would underpin a regional growth sector;
- Hawthorn Business Park, a high quality business location aimed at research and specialist professional services;
- Dalton Park retail outlet;
- Murton Colliery site promoted as an exemplar mixed use development supporting small businesses

- 1.5 Maximising these economic opportunities, underpins the strategies and programmes developed to revitalise the heart of the main towns in East Durham. Opportunities to create vibrant, mixed use centres will be delivered through investment for housing renewal and growth.
- 1.6 The Peterlee Regeneration Area Framework and the Seaham Strategy compliment the coalfield housing renewal programme and the County Durham Growth Bid. These and other spatial strategies help to support other programmes in East Durham designed to address historic problems of deprivation and create attractive sustainable neighbourhoods villages and towns.
- 1.7 A planning framework is needed to manage future development over the next 15 to 20 years and deliver the aims and objectives of these initiatives coming forward in that period.

WHAT IS A LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK?

- 1.8 The Council is preparing a new type of development plan to be called the Easington Local Development Framework (LDF). This will replace the Easington Local Plan adopted in 2001.
- 1.9 The LDF will consider how the District will develop and provide a spatial framework for the plans and programmes prepared by the Council and other bodies including the East Durham Local Strategic Partnership. The proposed framework for Easington is identified in Figure 1 below:



1.10 The Core Strategy lies at the heart of the Local Development Framework and will determine the overall direction of the plan. Once determined, all subsequent documents in the Framework must be in conformity with the Core Strategy. The Core Strategy also needs to be in general conformity with the Regional Spatial Strategy and reflect national planning policy. It includes:

- a spatial vision and strategic objectives for the LDF;
- a preferred spatial strategy for Easington;
- strategic policies divided into 3 themes derived from the East Durham Community Strategy¹:
 - delivering a stronger diversified economy;
 - delivering sustainable communities;
 - delivering an improved protected environment.
- a key diagram

SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL AND HABITAT REGULATIONS ASSESSMENT

1.11 The options in this document have been selected after having considered the public's views on issues and options through consultation on the 'Have Your Say' documents. All the alternatives have been appraised to assess their likely social, economic and environmental impacts, the outcome of which is in a Sustainability and Environmental Report published alongside this document.²

*Information box:
Preferred options must be underpinned by the principles of sustainable development, measured against 'sustainability matrix' agreed in the LDF Scoping Report³.*

1.12 The Core Strategy preferred options have also been subject to an Appropriate Assessment as required by Article 6(3) and 6(4) of Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of wild Flora and Fauna (the Habitats Directive) and emerging regulations to ensure that any proposals which may have adverse impacts on the integrity of any sites designated as being of international or European importance for biodiversity are properly addressed.

¹ Prepared by the East Durham Local Strategic Partnership, 2001

² see Preferred Option Sustainability and Environmental Appraisal report published in conjunction with this document

³ LDF Sustainability Technical Appendices, 2006

- 1.13 Annex A provides a summary of the issues and options we looked at, what you told us and what other options were proposed, how the options performed in the sustainability appraisal, and which ones we propose to take forward as the preferred options.

DELIVERY AND MONITORING OF THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

- 1.14 The new LDF must be capable of being implemented and monitored to assess how well the plan is performing. A Monitoring and Implementation Framework included in Annex B of this document identifies who is responsible for implementing the policies and proposals, by when, and what resources are to be used. This framework will be used to identify any need for review of policies or documents. Core outputs and indicators for each policy in this, and each subsequent LDF document, will be reported in the Annual Monitoring Report⁴.
- 1.15 As the LDF documents are adopted, the policies in them will replace corresponding policies in the Local Plan. Annex C indicates those Local Plan policies which would be replaced if this document were carried through to adoption.

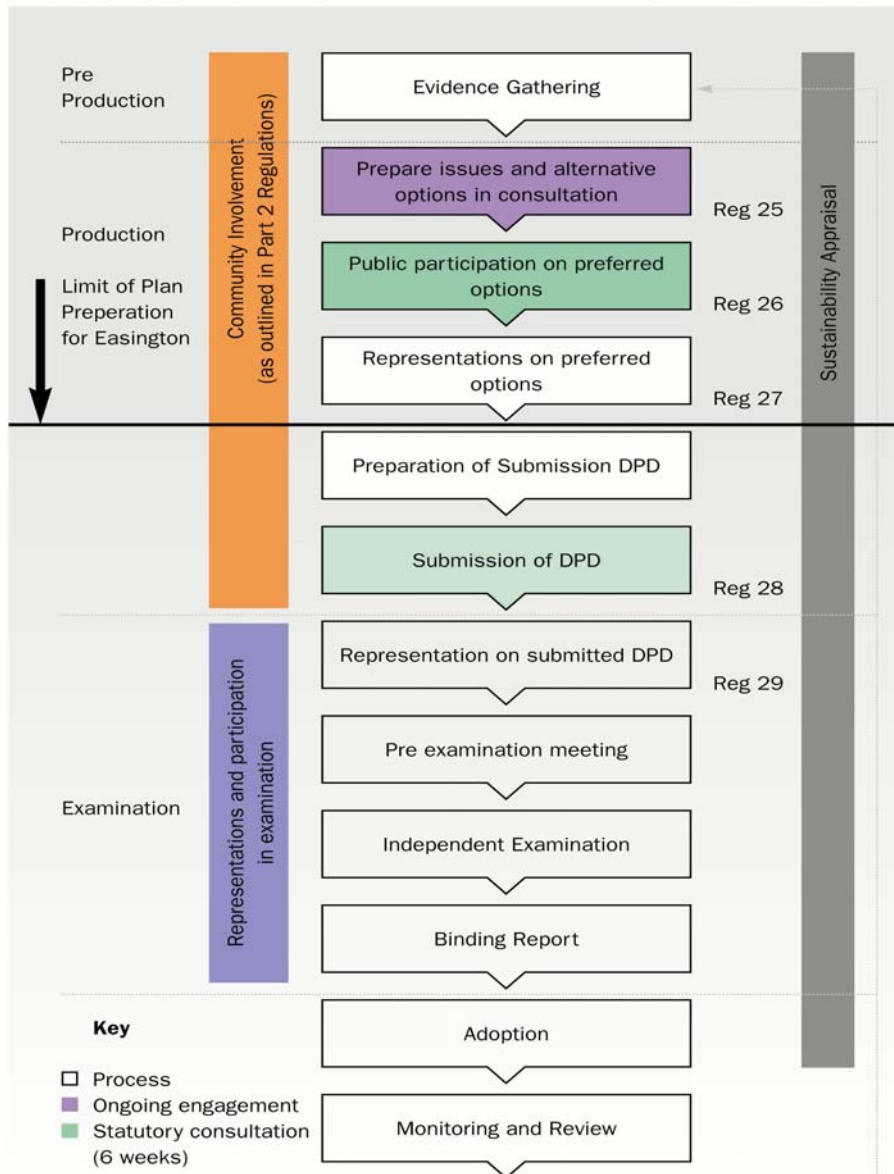
HOW WILL THE EASINGTON LDF BE TAKEN FORWARD THROUGH LOCAL GOVERNMENT REVIEW?

- 1.16 This document is the Council's Preferred Option for a Core Strategy for Easington. Preparation of the Easington LDF commenced in 2006, the policies and proposals have been drawn up in response to feedback we received from initial consultation on Issues and Options documents. 'Have Your Say - Planning the Future of Easington District' and 'Have Your Say - how Planning Applications will be Decided' were discussed widely through consultation with the East Durham Local Strategic Partnership, town and parish councils and the wider community through Area Forums, the Youth Forum, a targeted citizens panel representing a cross section of the community, and the general public through correspondence and publicity.
- 1.17 Since then, the Council has been concerned to address issues identified where further work was needed, such as on housing needs and the housing market, and on the housing and employment land supply available to deliver the planned development. This has helped to determine the preferred approach for a planning framework for the area.
- 1.18 The transition to a Unitary Council for Durham in April 2009 will require a review of the priorities for plan preparation for the County as a whole. The Preferred Option is only the first stage of plan preparation, as indicated in the Figure 2 below, and it will be for the

⁴ AMR for 2006/07 published December 2007.

new authority to determine how and when it will be completed. However, work on the first stage of a Core Strategy will establish the key principles and priorities for Easington, which can be taken forward by the new Council. Your views at this stage of plan preparation are important to confirm that the policies and proposals it contains are the right approach, and that the District Council has identified appropriate planning objectives to shape the future of the area for the next 15 years, to leave as a legacy for the new authority.

Figure 2



1.19 We want to know if you agree with our preferred options, or if you have a preference for any other option, including those we have rejected at this stage (see Annex A), or even if you want the Council to consider a different option.

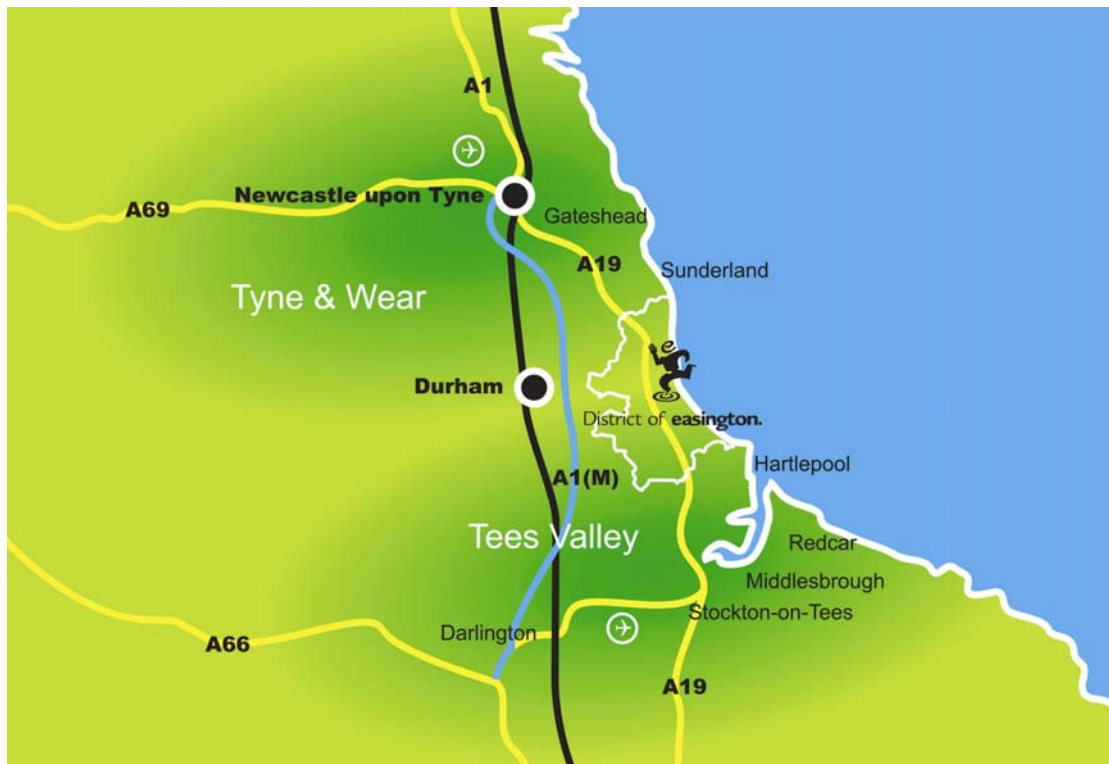
1.20 Enclosed is a comments form which you are encouraged to use to record your views, this is also available on the Council's website at www.easington.gov.uk (*check link*). The form should be returned to the Planning Unit to reach us by ?th

2. THE SPATIAL VISION AND OBJECTIVES

Easington today – the context for the Core Strategy

- 2.1 Easington covers an area of 56 square miles situated on the North East coast of England, some 10 miles to the east of Durham City. It is the second smallest of the seven Districts in County Durham but has the largest population: 93,993 in 2001. Easington occupies a strategic location in the North East's two City Regions, with Tyne & Wear to the north and Teeside to the south. The A19 trunk road provides a bridge between the conurbations and creates a corridor of economic potential that contains the main employment and commercial centres of East Durham. The Durham coast rail route also passes through the District but with only one halt, in Seaham. The coastal area of East Durham provides linkages for tourism, amenity and recreation for the wider region as well as international trade, logistics and rail, road and sea freight movement.
- 2.2 Easington is a mixture of urban and rural areas landscapes. There are two main towns, Peterlee and Seaham, each with a population of around 22,000; a number of large urban villages; and smaller, traditional villages in a more scenic rural setting.

Figure 3



- 2.3 There are 11 miles of largely undeveloped coastline with sandy beaches to the north of Seaham and at Crimdon in the south. The

quality of the coastal environment was transformed through the 'Turning the Tide' Millennium programme. This award winning, £10 million programme resulted in the reclamation of more than 80 hectares of land for public open space, the creation of more than 50 kilometres of footpaths and cycle paths and the improvement of wildlife habitats. The programme culminated in the designation of the area as a Heritage Coast and underlies the creation of a tourist industry in the District. Castle Eden Dene nature reserve links to the coast and is the District's other internationally recognised natural feature.

- 2.4 Peterlee is the District's main retail, administrative and employment centre. It was amongst the first generation of new towns characterised by low rise, low density and open plan development. Seaham serves as a secondary shopping centre but is the primary visitor destination with a factory outlet centre at Dalton Park and the region's premier luxury hotel at Seaham Hall. The Port of Seaham was established in 1831 and is now a modern transport and distribution centre with high quality road/rail freight interchange facilities and warehousing. It has a niche market in mid sized freight handling facilities, having doubled its cargo handling in recent years to around 600.000 tons of freight including aggregates and timber.
- 2.5 Manufacturing is still a major employer, accounting for 25% of the District's jobs in 2004 and significant economic growth has been achieved with the establishment of new employment parks accessible to the A19 trunk road with good linkage to the city regions and beyond. The A19 corridor contains the main employment centres in the District, with three business parks at Peterlee, North East, North West and South West; and two sites in Seaham, at Spectrum Business Park and Seaham Grange. Most of the larger villages have small industrial sites providing local employment.
- 2.6 Easington's housing stock is dominated by terraced housing and the range of housing choices can no longer meet the aspirations of its residents. Nevertheless, more than a decade of regeneration activity has helped to provide a supply of good quality housing sites which are being used to increase the quality and choice of housing provision. The Easington housing market is subject to a major resurgence, with house prices increasing rapidly and new build at record levels. However, the buoyancy of the housing market is creating concerns over housing affordability.
- 2.7 Development of the evidence base necessary to underpin the Core Strategy together with evidence from accumulated community engagement work, has identified a number of issues that need to be addressed by the LDF. These are summarised below:
- *Population:* after a period of rapid decline in the 1980's and 90's, population levels have stabilised. Overall there has been a substantial reduction in the number of people aged 30-44 and an

increase in those over retirement age, which has implication for employment, skills and housing provision. The pattern of out-migration by younger, better educated residents is now giving way to population growth and we need to ensure this progress continues.

- *The economy.* Easington was historically reliant upon a narrow employment base with employment rates considerably lower than regional and national averages. Whilst productivity is improving, there is still a gap between District and Regional productivity levels, contributing to below average levels of household income. Access to learning, skills and secure, well paid jobs needs to be widened and the fabric of some employment sites and premises needs improvement. Opportunities to support economic growth and diversity will continue to be exploited.
- *Town and Local Centres:* town centres play an important role in the economic, cultural and social life of the community. Peterlee town centre is underdeveloped given its role as a major town. The Peterlee Regeneration Area Framework includes proposals to widen the town centre's retail, administrative and leisure services offer, linked to the Co. Durham Growth Point bid. The Seaham Regeneration Strategy has revitalised the retail and civic core of the town. Further improvements are now being developed to maintain the regeneration impetus and help the town to achieve it's potential to be a coastal visitor resort. We need to sustain demand for higher order retail, leisure and cultural facilities in the towns and develop a network of local centres to offer a better shopping and leisure experience, accessible to everyone.
- *Deprivation:* levels of deprivation have improved but still remain high including, joblessness, poor health, poverty, high level of benefits dependency and poor educational attainment. The District has risen from 4th to 7th in the IMD rankings⁵ since 2002, but further work is needed to address the legacy of Easington's industrial past to provide investor confidence and ensure the health and future prosperity its residents.
- *Housing:* the range of housing provision needs to be widened to increase the quality and choice of available housing. Recent housing developments have increasing the supply of family housing including 3 and 4 bedroom detached properties; and are beginning to address the need for affordable home. We need to continue to restructure the housing stock with the right type of housing to meet people's aspirations and which residents can afford.
- *Transport:* Easington benefits from good access to the strategic highway network via the A19; east-west road links across the

⁵ IMD

District are less well developed, with poor linkage between the A19 and A1. This could be addressed by improving the A182 and by maximising potential of the A181 route to Durham. Car ownership in the District remains below national rates – 37% have no access to a car compared with 27% nationally. Enhanced public transport would help to address the needs of isolated communities and a further rail halt on the Durham coast rail line would widen the range of sustainable transport options in the District.

- *Built and natural environment:* the quality of the urban environment is poor in many neighbourhoods. Work is progressing to make use of the abundant supply of previously developed land and buildings to meet our housing and employment needs. We need to set higher standards of design to create attractive, healthy places to live, work and invest, in a framework of quality, accessible green space.

The LDF Spatial Vision

- 2.8 We are making progress towards transforming Easington into a vibrant and successful place. This LDF Core Strategy will be a key component in delivering the vision of the Sustainable Community Strategy prepared by the East Durham Local Strategic Partnership:

*‘ to create a sustainable future for East Durham, with a thriving economy, an improved environment, a learning culture and strong, safe, healthy communities’.*⁶

- 2.9 The Core Strategy will be at the centre of the LDF, setting out a planning framework to encompass other strategies and programmes such as the Regeneration Statement, the Housing Strategy, and local elements of the Regional Spatial Strategy. It will define a spatial vision for the District which seeks to ensure it’s economic, social and environmental transformation up to 2024.

The Council’s preferred spatial vision for the District is a place where:

- development meets the needs of our residents without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs;
- the District is outward looking, making a distinctive contribution to the economic, social and cultural life of the region;

⁶ East Durham 2010 – a great place for everyone, East Durham LSP 2001

- a competitive and entrepreneurial economy attracts investment and jobs which are accessible, providing equality of opportunity for all;
- the population is diverse, young people and working age families remain in the District, and residents enjoy an improved quality of life;
- there is a wide choice of housing in safe and attractive communities with quality schools;
- more journeys to work, school or college are made by public transport, and fast train services from Peterlee and Seaham enable visitors to access Easington's retail, leisure and tourism assets;
- Peterlee and Seaham are prosperous centres with varied shopping, leisure and cultural facilities;
- the villages are successful, mixed tenure communities which offer a choice of quality affordable housing;
- The natural and built environment is protected and enhanced, with a framework of quality, accessible green space for the benefit of all.

2.10 Parts of this vision may be aspirational, but significant progress can be achieved within the plan period. Realising this vision will be achieved by focusing on the following inter-related strategic objectives to address the key issues identified earlier:

Strategic Objectives

1. To strengthen and diversify the local economy

This objective will focus on the development potential of existing business parks and industrial areas; maximising their connectivity; investing in employment sites and premises to sustain competitive and attractive locations for business; providing opportunities to develop other sectors of the economy such as tourism, knowledge-based and creative industries; developing the assets of the town and local centres; and increasing the economic participation of residents.

2. To create sustainable attractive communities

This objective will focus development where it creates the best opportunities for work, housing, shopping, education, culture and leisure, in order to meet social and community needs, to sustain

vibrant town and local centres, and to secure attractive, safe and healthy places which improve the quality of life for residents.

3. To provide enough good quality housing to ensure residents have access to a suitable and affordable home

This objective seeks to rejuvenate and renew the housing stock to offer a choice of tenure, price and type to a range of households, particularly young families and the elderly, in attractive places where people would want to live.

4. to improve accessibility throughout and beyond the District

At the local level, this objective will focus on improving connection between places to maximise opportunities for residents to access work, training and education; and on reducing the need to travel, particularly by car. At a wider level, it seeks better and faster connectivity with regional and national markets, maximising east-west linkages provided by the A181 and A182 with the A19.

5. to protect and enhance the District's natural and built environment

This objective seeks to deliver higher quality development and green space, to safeguard the countryside, the coast and the District's heritage, to ensure the sustainable use of natural resources and to address energy conservation and climate change.

Relationship with other strategies and programmes

- 2.11 The links between the Core Strategy and the other key strategies are identified in Annex D
- 2.12 These strategic objectives of the Core Strategy articulate the spatial elements of the East Durham Community Strategy as shown in figure 4, below:

Figure 4 LDF Objectives to support Sustainable Community Strategy

COMMUNITY STRATEGY PRIORITIES	PREFERRED CORE STRATEGY OBJECTIVES	ASSOCIATED POLICIES
To create more wealth through the development of a thriving economy, to the benefit of everyone	i. To strengthen and diversify the local economy; iv. To improve accessibility throughout and beyond the District	CS2 Providing for Employment, CS3 Tourism and Visitor Attractions, CS7 Town and Local Centres, CS8 Sustainable Travel and Accessibility
To protect and improve the environment to ensure it continues to provide the resources we need	v. To protect and enhance the District's natural and built environment; ii. To create sustainable attractive communities; iv. To improve accessibility throughout and beyond the District	CS8 Sustainable Travel and Accessibility CS9 Green Space and Recreation CS10 Promoting High Quality Design CS11 Sustainable Development and Renewable Energy CS12 Protection and Enhancement of Landscape Character and Local Heritage CS13 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation
To create a culture where learning is valued, where there is equality of opportunity and the workforce has the skills and qualifications to compete in a modern working environment	i. To strengthen and diversify the local economy; iv. To improve accessibility throughout and beyond the District	CS2 Providing for Employment CS8 Sustainable Travel and Access
To develop our communities as safe and healthy places, ensuring residents are able to influence improvements in their quality of life	ii. To create sustainable communities; iii. To provide enough good quality housing to ensure residents have access to a suitable and affordable home	CS1 The Spatial Strategy CS4 Meeting Housing Requirements CS5 Affordable Housing CS6 Gypsies and Travellers CS7 Town and Local Centres CS9 Green Space and Recreation CS10 Promoting High Quality Design CS11 Sustainable Development and Renewable Energy CS12 Protection and Enhancement of Landscape and Local Heritage

3. THE SPATIAL STRATEGY

3.1 The Core Strategy needs to define how much development is anticipated in the District over the plan period, the broad locations for its distribution, and when and how it will be delivered. The distribution of development must be informed by an integrated approach to land use and transport so a balance needs to be found between meeting the social and economic needs of all sectors of the community, reducing the need to travel, and minimising the use of resources. With many of our communities suffering problems of poor housing and environment, and needing improved access to employment opportunities and services, this is a difficult balance to strike.

The issues and options

3.2 In terms of an overarching planning framework for Easington over the next 15 years, options are confined by the long term strategies for regeneration which are being progressed by the Council and its partners to deliver significant development over and even beyond this plan period. Strategic options considered in the 'Planning the Future of Easington' document were to:

- a.) prioritise development in the two main towns – this implied that the towns, supported by linked adjacent settlements, would improve their viability as employment and service centres to drive regeneration of the whole district;
- b.) support limited development in the villages where it provided for local needs – this implied development outside of the main town spheres would be limited to where it met local housing and employment needs or improved choice;
- c.) permit dispersed development across all of the District's settlements – this implied that the market would define where development would be spread throughout the District.

3.3 Consultation on the issues and options has informed this stage of plan preparation and the responses to the questions we asked have helped shape the options now being discussed.

The preferred option

3.4 At this stage, the preferred option is a combination of support for the main towns but with an appropriate level of development in the other larger settlements to sustain their services and facilities as this best meets the Core Strategy objectives. This approach has the advantage that it supports on-going regeneration commitments, it is consistent with national and regional policy, it will focus development on priority areas and will maximise the use of previously developed sites. Risks of this approach are that development in the villages will be dependent on the supply of previously developed sites and implementation of a program of housing clearance to deliver residential development.

Preferred POLICY CS1. THE SPATIAL STRATEGY

The district of Easington comprises the following types of place:

the main towns of **Peterlee** and **Seaham**
the **larger villages**
the **rural areas**

The Spatial Strategy for Easington, as shown on the Key Diagram, is to:

- achieve the objective for growth by focusing the majority of development to regenerate the main town of **Peterlee** and the linked settlements of **Holden, Easington** and **Shotton**;
- support development that reflects the function and scale of a main town in **Seaham** and the linked settlements of **Dawdon** and **Murton**;
- promote opportunities for economic growth along the A19 corridor;
- support development commensurate with their role as local service centres, and particularly utilising previously developed land capacity, in the larger former colliery villages at **Blackhall, Station Town, Wheatley Hill, Wingate, South Hetton, Haswell, Hesleden, Thornley** and **Trimdon**;
- limit development in the smaller villages and hamlets at **Castle Eden, Dalton-le-Dale, Granthouses, Hawthorn, High Hesleden, Hutton Henry, Littlethorpe, Seaton** and **Sheraton** to meet local needs.

Justification

3.5 The preferred spatial strategy has been formulated with regard to national and regional planning policy and in the context of other strategies and plans for the area. In 'Planning the Future of Easington District'⁷ we identified a sphere of influence for each town, defined by their location on the A19 trunk road and the opportunity for economic growth this provides, exploiting the connectivity to the rest of the region and nationally. Significant development opportunities around the main towns are key drivers for the renaissance of the District as a whole.

3.6 The main focus of development will be the main towns of Peterlee and Seaham. Both have extensive business parks, benefiting from excellent access to the A19 trunk road and being close to centres of population. Further opportunities for economic development will be encouraged on these parks to maximise the use of available land and premises.

Peterlee

⁷ Planning the Future of Easington District, Core Strategy Issues and Options, 2006, pg 17

- 3.7 The Regional Spatial Strategy defines Peterlee as a main town in the Durham coalfield regeneration area. It has a wide range of services including employment, retail, leisure, education and health. Facilities at Peterlee include further education provision at East Durham and Houghall College and a Community Hospital. It has a high proportion of the District's jobs, the best public transport links and is well connected with its location on the A19 trunk road.
- 3.8 The town is a successful employment location of sub-regional importance with three business parks located near to the residential neighbourhoods. Economic growth potential will be further exploited through land assembly and the recycling of land and buildings on in existing business parks. The Employment Land Review will assess the need for further economic development sites and these will be identified if required.
- 3.9 The town is an increasingly important public transport hub, which support the intensification of the town centre for retail, leisure and service delivery, and further housing development in the town and the adjacent settlements. Population growth would help to sustain a more vibrant centre but the town is constrained by its geographical location and a limited supply of previously developed land. The Peterlee Area Regeneration Framework⁸ has identified a three-pronged approach to deliver more housing involving: urban intensification within the existing built up area; suburban expansion using previously developed land; and using urban capacity in the linked villages. The spatial strategy provides a framework to manage this development including the comprehensive redevelopment of significant proportion of the North East Industrial Estate, where existing businesses would be relocated from outdated premises to more appropriate business locations within the District, thereby enabling residential and associated development.
- 3.10 Land for residential development will be allocated within existing residential neighbourhoods surrounding the town centre, where opportunities have been identified for intensification of built development, and in the town centre itself which is identified for major remodelling to introduce mixed use development. Increasing the population will support proposals to revitalise the centre, to expand and improve it's retail and commercial offer, to reconfigure the centre to improve it's legibility, and to develop an evening economy.
- 3.11 Significant urban capacity is also available within the sphere of linked settlements which are reliant on the town for higher order services but which also have employment sites with further economic potential to sustain growth. These are the adjacent settlements of Shotton, Easington Colliery and at Horden. These have areas identified for housing renewal, a good supply of previously developed land, and other sites within the urban

⁸ Peterlee Regeneration Framework, GVA Grimley 2006

boundaries which could be allocated for residential use. Easington Colliery is identified in the Durham Coalfield Housing Renewal Initiative with strategic opportunity to support the growth and development of Peterlee, with Horden as a medium term priority⁹. The programme anticipates the demolition of terraced stock and replacement with a mix of private and social housing.

Seaham

- 3.12 Seaham is identified for development to secure its role as a main service centre for retail, employment, education and leisure and to exploit its potential as a visitor destination. It is a main town identified in RSS, with good links to the A19 trunk road, access to the east coast rail line and important cargo handling facilities at the Port of Seaham.
- 3.13 Seaham has two major employment parks located on the periphery of residential neighbourhoods, well linked to the A19 trunk route, with capacity for further consolidation of employment uses. A further large site south of Seaham, adjacent to the A19 link road, is identified as a prestige employment site and is currently the subject of a proposal to develop the site for a cluster of uses associated with the creative industries, significantly widening the town's employment basis. Smaller general industrial sites are located within the town.
- 3.14 It provides a significant proportion of the District's jobs, and its historic harbour and access to the Heritage coast provide capacity to further diversify as a visitor and tourist centre. It has capacity for development on previously developed sites to sustain continued implementation of the Seaham Regeneration Strategy¹⁰, with a new shopping centre and civic square, scope to further increase the retail and commercial offer and to develop it's infrastructure, service provision and port facilities. Further visitor and tourism accommodation and facilities will be encouraged. The older residential neighbourhoods have capacity for further housing renewal, particularly in the vicinity of Dawdon.
- 3.15 The town is further supported by major development opportunities on previously developed sites to the west of the A19, for mixed use development at Murton colliery; for further investment in the Dalton Retail Park to complement the retail offer of the main town; and for prestige employment uses on the reclaimed Hawthorn Business Park where the focus will be on developing a centre of excellence in geothermal and other technologies designed to reduce carbon emissions. Murton is consequently identified for further development to support the economic and retail functions of the main town of Seaham.

⁹ Area Development Framework for Easington and Dawdon, Llewelyn Davis Yeang, 2006; Area development framework for Horden, GVA Grimley, 2006

¹⁰ Seaham Regeneration Strategy, 1996

Larger Villages

- 3.16 The priority for the larger settlements is to support ‘place shaping’ development with a focus on renewal and improvement to create villages where people want to live. Investment is needed in these village centres to restructure the retail core, and to provide the infrastructure for local jobs, services and community facilities. All of these villages have significant capacity for development on previously developed sites and land will be allocated for residential use to support housing renewal. Development will be encouraged which is commensurate with their size and function.
- 3.17 Development will focus on improving their viability as service centres to meet the needs of the local population, utilising capacity within the existing urban areas. Development should be of an appropriate scale and not undermine the role of the two main towns. Blackhall, Station Town, Wheatley Hill and Wingate have small local centres for shopping and other service provision, and along with South Hetton also have small employment sites providing local job opportunities. These, and the other former colliery villages of Haswell, Hesleden, Thornley, and Trimdon Station, have an oversupply of terraced housing where further renewal will be encouraged. There is an acute need in these larger villages to restructure the housing supply utilising cleared sites to deliver residential development that provides a better range and mix of housing choice.
- 3.18 There is scope through this approach for future development to re-shape these villages, to establish viable and attractive places, to enhance the residential environment, to improve the quality of life for residents.

Rural Areas

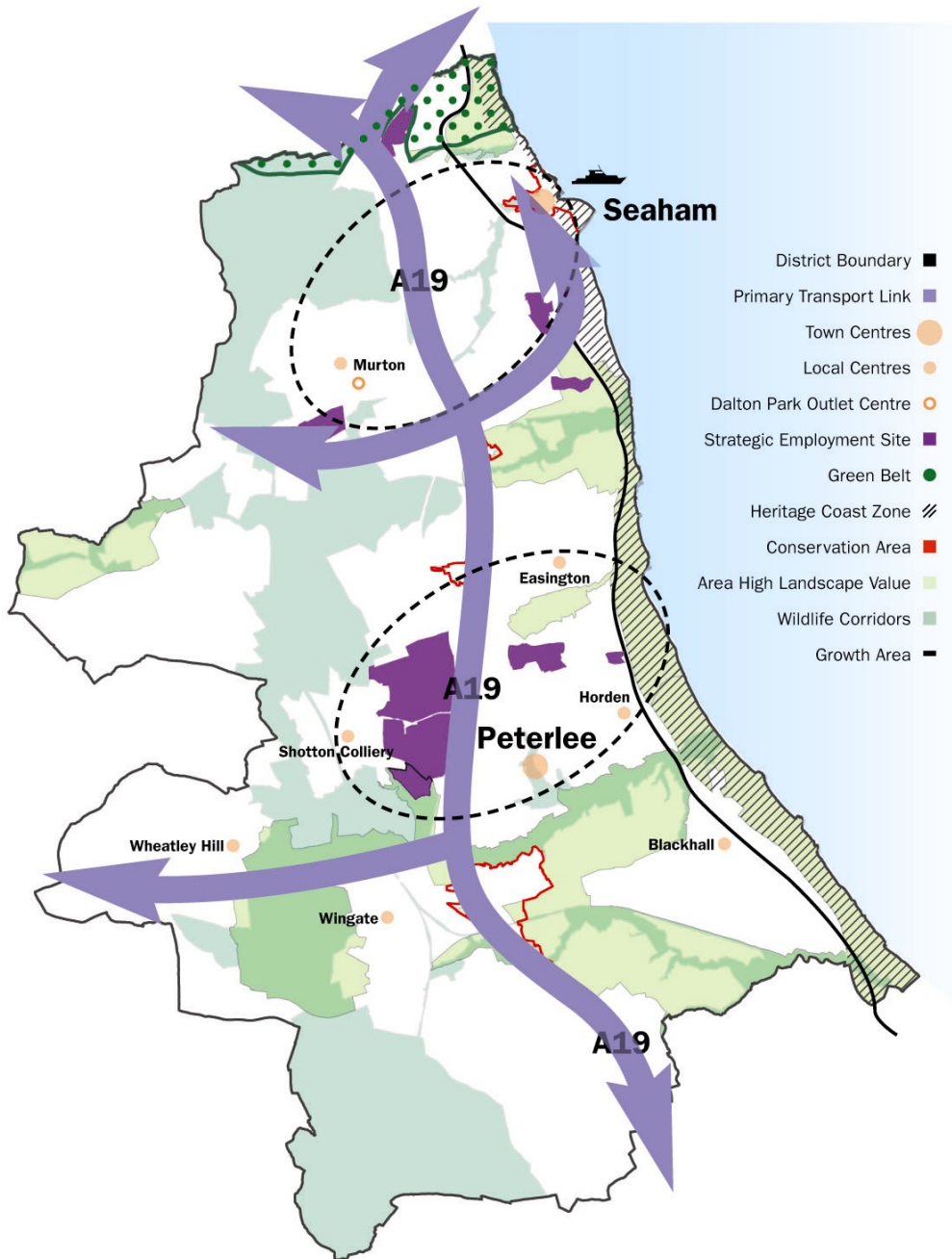
- 3.19 The rural areas contain seven smaller villages and hamlets with limited services, employment provision or transport links. These are Castle Eden, Dalton-le-Dale, Granthouses, Hawthorn, High Hesleden, Hutton Henry, Littlethorpe, Seaton and Sheraton, where only minimal development will be allowed to meet the needs of local communities and where it respects conservation and environmental objectives.
- 3.20 This sequential approach to development supports the Council’s vision for the District, and provides a planning framework to support the Council’s regeneration and renewal programmes with public and private partners. This preferred approach to development also minimises any flood risk¹¹. By targeting development opportunities on priority communities, this strategy seeks to ensure that the most deprived wards in the District are afforded the opportunity to recover in the future and move Easington in a positive direction in the IMD rankings.¹²

¹¹ LDF Core Strategy Flood Risk Assessment, 2008

¹² EDF Annual Monitoring Report 2005/06, Quality of Life indicator

- 3.21 The Council, in conjunction with its coalfield partners of Sedgefield and Wear Valley in County Durham, is pursuing a bid to become a 'Growth Point' to accelerate economic and housing growth to 2016, under a program to be determined nationally. The bid is based around the main towns in two growth corridors in the County, one of which is the A19 trunk road in East Durham with the focus on Peterlee. If this bid is successful, it will support measures to deliver this spatial strategy for Easington in a reduced timeframe than that of the plan period. Appropriate monitoring as a result of this initiative will identify the impact of development and any need for policy review.

Easington LDF Core Strategy & Development Management Plan Key Diagram



4. DELIVERING A STRONGER AND DIVERSIFIED LOCAL ECONOMY

Introduction

4.1 It is important that there is a continuous supply of land to provide a variety of choice of employment sites in terms of size, quality and location in order to deliver sustainable communities. Easington needs to diversify it's economic base to a more competitive, diverse, creative and entrepreneural economy.

4.2 In pursuit of a stronger and diversified economy, the Council's main objectives are to:

- deliver a portfolio good quality employment sites and premises to cater for a range of business needs;
- secure necessary investment to maximise the development potential of employment sites;
- improve connectivity between settlements, particularly by public transport;
- improve transport and access, particularly to the trunk roads;
- encourage investment in tourism, leisure and hospitality;
- encourage investment in transport, logistics, distribution and communications;
- establish energy, micro-generation and geothermal technologies;
- develop a creative industries sector;
- encourage further investment in public administration, education and health;
- continue to support port related activities at Seaham;
- tackle deprivation and worklessness and increase access to employment;
- improve the skills level of the workforce by encouraging training opportunities;
- improve the image and quality of the local employment sites to encourage entrepreneurial activity and investment;
- expand office provision and develop the economic potential of the town and local centres;
- provide a range of accessible educational, community, leisure and retail facilities in vibrant town and local centres;
- develop the night time economy of the main town centres;
- support rural economic regeneration.

4.3 The following sites are currently identified for employment use:

Strategic Employment Sites

- Hawthorn Business Park, Murton
- Seaham Grange Industrial Estate
- Spectrum Business Park, Seaham
- South of Seaham site
- Brackenhill Business Park
- Fox Cover Industrial Estate

- North West Industrial Estate, Peterlee
- South West Industrial Estate, Peterlee
- Whitehouse Business Park, Peterlee
- Sea View Industrial Estate, Horden

Local Employment Sites

- North East Industrial Estate
- Blackhall Industrial Estate
- Cold Hesledon Industrial Estate, Murton
- George Street Industrial Estate, Seaham
- Kingfisher Industrial Estate, Seaham
- Shotton Colliery Industrial Estate
- South Hetton Industrial Estate
- Thornley Station Industrial Estate
- Wheatley Hill Industrial Estate
- Wingate Grange Industrial Estate

The issues and options

4.4 In 'Planning the Future of Easington' we considered how to develop the economy to improve job opportunities:

- a.) supporting the continuing growth and development of the manufacturing sector along with the development of smaller business units to provide facilities for local entrepreneurs;
- b.) promoting further growth and development in the business parks and industrial estates of Peterlee and Seaham which are accessible to more residents;
- c.) encouraging growth and development of employment uses in the larger colliery villages to support some of the regeneration initiatives;
- d.) supporting the development of further education and training facilities, and their joint use to encourage public access to training;
- e.) either reserving some employment land for manufacturing and warehousing or considering greater use of employment sites for a mix of uses, including retailing of bulky goods;
- f.) supporting the diversification of the economy, including the growth of the tourism sector.

The preferred option

4.5 The responses to the questions we asked have helped shape the approach in the preferred option. This sets the priorities to best meet the key objective to strengthen and diversify the economy, through a strategy of maximising use of the existing employment

sites, supporting development and growth in a broader range of economic sectors, and strengthening the role of town centres.

- 4.6 In the draft Regional Spatial Strategy, Easington is required to make provision for up to 110 hectares of general employment land in the LDF to meet economic needs in the District¹³.

Preferred POLICY CS2. PROVIDING FOR EMPLOYMENT

110 ha of general employment land will be brought forward to 2024 to meet economic development requirements identified in the Regional Spatial Strategy:

- i. 70 hectares of land south of Seaham is identified for employment, particularly for proposals associated with the creative and related industries, and generating significant employment opportunities;
- ii. 20 hectares of land is identified for employment at Hawthorn Business Park, proposals associated with geothermal energy and other micro-generation technologies will be particularly encouraged;
- iii. 20 hectares of employment land will be identified through regeneration of land on existing strategic and local employment sites and in the town and local centres;
- iv. any additional land required to supply a broad range of employment needs identified in an Employment Land Review will be allocated in accordance with the spatial strategy;
- v. the quality of land and premises on strategic employment sites will be safeguarded;
- vi. economic development proposals should prioritise the reuse and renewal of previously developed land, particularly within the town and local centres and on employment sites;
- vii. town centres will be promoted for office development;
- viii. the necessary infrastructure should be co-ordinated with new development proposals;
- ix. developments which may have adverse environmental impacts such as noise or visual intrusion will be encouraged to locate at Thornley Station;
- x. proposals for economic or mixed use development outside of allocated employment sites will be supported where they contribute to regeneration objectives and are well served by public transport.

¹³ excludes land developed as of June 2005.

Investment in education and training will also be encouraged at existing facilities, and to develop new facilities at accessible locations, in order to encourage people to develop qualifications and skills.

Justification

- 4.7 A portfolio of land and premises is required to cater for varying growth needs. The District has a chronic lack of high quality office accommodation in the lower size floorspace bands that can assist small business growth. Manufacturing and engineering, along with contact centres, will continue to be significant to the local economy, primarily based on existing sites. Seaham and Peterlee are well located on the strategic corridor of the A19 to provide a range of opportunities to cater for business growth in other economic sectors.
- 4.8 Capacity from new sites identified at Hawthorn and at the site South of Seaham, and intensification of existing business parks and local employment sites¹⁴ will accommodate the proposed RSS provision for employment land in Easington. All of these sites have been allocated in the development plan to meet identified long term employment provision. The effects of Enterprise Zone incentives on outstanding vacancies will be closely monitored.
- 4.9 A high quality site of some seventy hectares to the south of Seaham, on the edge of the main town, adjacent to the A182/A19 link road with good access to the road and rail networks and is being considered for development associated with the creative industries, with campus facilities linked to education and training. The proposal is a unique opportunity to deliver major benefits to the local and regional economy, and has potential to generate further cluster development.
- 4.10 A large new prestigious business site of twenty hectares will become available at Hawthorn Business Park near Murton with reclamation of the former Cokeworks. The site will provide over 68,000 sq. metres of floorspace and is the preferred location for the proposed GREAT institute to create an international centre of excellence in the research and development of geothermal energy and other micro-generation technologies designed to reduce carbon dioxide emissions. It will be also available to meet particularly small and medium sized businesses requiring an accessible location.
- 4.11 The Council is exploring ways of bringing vacant premises on employment sites back into use. A major project is identified at North East industrial estate at Peterlee to improve investment potential and encourage business growth. Part of the site, suffering deterioration from outdated premises, will be released for residential

¹⁴ see Annual Monitoring Report

use to facilitate the provision of new, high quality workshop space on a 1.5 ha site along Stephenson Road with the potential to provide 1,100 sq m of new accommodation. Elsewhere, proposals to re-use, subdivide or redevelop premises no longer suitable for current employment needs will be encouraged. The strategy will be to recycle available employment land and premises to ensure they remain 'fit for purpose', in accordance with the outcome of the Employment Land Review.¹⁵

- 4.12 The Employment Land Review will establish a portfolio of appropriate sites and premises to meet local employment needs, and identify any shortfall in provision for particular sectors of the economy. The Local Development Framework Allocations document will respond to any further identified needs. An innovative mixed-use project is currently proposed on former colliery land in Murton, involving the development of a managed business centre, workspace units and live/work units alongside new residential development.
- 4.13 Improved public transport is essential to cater for the increased movements that these developments will create, to maximise accessibility for local residents. Making land and premises available to employers must be also undertaken in tandem with giving residents and employees relevant training and skills to meet the needs of an expanding economy. Any such proposals will be supported in accessible locations.
- 4.14 There are a number of 'bad neighbour' uses like scrap yards which have demanding impacts relating to noise, visual intrusion etc. Such proposals are best situated on employment sites away from residential environments. The most appropriate location for this type of business in Easington is at Thornley Station where a number of similar uses have successfully located.
- 4.15 Retailing on employment sites is inappropriate where it will undermine existing shopping centres and take up industrial land. However, small scale retail developments, such as newsagents, banks and hot food shops, may be appropriate on strategic industrial estates to meet the daily needs of employees. The development of such retailing on the smaller industrial estates cannot be justified as there is unlikely to be enough custom generated by existing employees to support such facilities.

Enhancing the vitality and liveability of town and other centres

- 4.16 The LDF vision is to enhance the social and cultural life of residents through the development of vibrant town centres which are the focus for a wide range of activities and uses, which encourage investment and support sustainable development. The type and scale of development needs to be appropriate to the role of the town and

¹⁵ Employment Land Review under preparation, report by April 2008.

local centres, and the network of local centres across the District should be sufficiently balanced to provide for people's everyday needs.

4.17 In accordance with Annex A of PPS 6, a hierarchy of retail centres for the district has been defined. PPS 6 identifies four types of centre, City, Town, District and Local Centres. Easington as a district does not have a recognised 'City' centre within its boundaries, this role being met by Sunderland and Durham. The two major retail centres to be found at Peterlee and Seaham are defined as Town Centres. Outside of these areas, retailing within Easington is found in seven identified Local Centres, classified in accordance with the PPS6 description. Unique in this hierarchy for Easington is Dalton Park, a specialist factory outlet shopping and leisure centre located on the edge of Seaham's linked settlement of Murton, on the A19 trunk road, with potential for further investment. The retail hierarchy for Easington is:

Town Centres: Peterlee,
Seaham,

Local Centres: Blackhall, Middle Street
Easington Colliery, Seaside Lane
Horden, Blackhills Road
Murton, Woods Terrace
Shotton, Potto Street
Wheatley Hill, Front Street
Wingate/Station Town, Front Street

Out of Centre retail and leisure outlet: Dalton Park

Preferred POLICY CS3. TOWN AND LOCAL CENTRES

The Council and its partners will aim to revitalise the centres of Peterlee and Seaham by allocating land within or adjacent to the centres to:

- make better use of existing land and buildings;
- deliver intensification of development;
- introduce quality civic space;
- introduce a greater mix of uses including residential accommodation;
- improve the quality of retail offer;
- create at least 11,800 sq. metres of new retail floorspace in Peterlee;
- improve permeability and access;
- improve pedestrian circulation.

Development proposals within the town centres will contribute to an appropriate mix of uses including retailing, offices, education, leisure facilities, arts, culture, tourism and social and community facilities. Evening and night-time uses for leisure, culture and tourism will be particularly encouraged.

In the Local Centres, the scale and type of development will reflect the centre's existing and proposed function and its capacity for new development. The provision of local services and facilities will be maintained and improved to better serve the local community. Individual shops and small supermarkets (usually less than 1000sq.metres floorspace) that are appropriate to the scale and character of these centres will be encouraged.

Development proposals for factory outlet retail and leisure uses at Dalton Park will be supported within the context of its location in the urban area of Seaham and on the A19 economic corridor in the spatial strategy .

Neighbourhood shops located outside of the centres will be protected where they are important to the daily needs of adjacent communities.

4.18 In the Regional Spatial Strategy, Newcastle is identified as the Regional Centre for the Tyne and Wear city region; Sunderland is a Sub-regional Centre and Durham City has an important role serving the surrounding settlements; Easington District is designated as a regeneration area¹⁶. Within regeneration areas, town centres such as Peterlee and Seaham should be given particular priority for retail led regeneration. Retail and leisure development may, consequently, be allowed above the scale that would be required for the centre to maintain its role in order to support sustainable regeneration of the centre.

4.19 Most residents of Easington spend their disposable income out of the area and have tended to travel to the major services centres of

¹⁶ RSS Submission draft, policy 25 and para 2.22

the region. This is more significantly reflected in relation to activity in the evening economy.

- 4.20 Peterlee centre is currently focused upon lower order retailing, with only 4 of the top 20 retailers present in the town¹⁷. The three factors contributing towards this situation are: lack of critical mass as the catchment population is limited; disposable income is limited; and the built environment is of relatively poor quality. The town centre lacks cultural and entertainment facilities and evening economy is weak to non-existent. The range of shops, services and leisure facilities on offer must be raised significantly if Peterlee is to retain and attract new residents and contribute to the regional economy.
- 4.21 The strategic growth agenda for Peterlee seeks to secure its core functions as a centre for employment, a centre for retail and leisure, a key centre for service delivery, and to capitalise on its location as an important transport hub in East Durham. Proposals to regenerate the town centre reflect forecast population levels from housing growth. The Peterlee Master Plan¹⁸ proposes remodelling the centre to cater for mixed use, with a transport strategy that will improve the legibility and coherence of the town centre pedestrian network, and reduce the severance caused by the ring road.
- 4.22 The relocation of the Port of Seaham is enabling the development of a new town centre in Seaham which will provide retailing in the Byron Place shopping centre and new public services, including facilities for the Primary Care Trust, Town Council and County Council¹⁹ at St John's Square. The town's increasing popularity as a residential location is being driven by the development of significant sites at East Shore Village and Dawdon Farm for new housing.
- 4.23 The villages of Blackhall, Easington, Horden, Murton, Shotton, Wheatley Hill and Wingate have Local Centres which provide a limited range of local shops and services catering for the day-to-day needs of residents. There is a high level of vacancy and dereliction in the retail core of these villages, which need restructuring to enable them to provide better retail and public services in their role as local centres. Viable local service centres are essential to the LDF vision for villages with attractive environments in which people want to live.
- 4.24 Dalton Park is a specialist factory outlet shopping and leisure centre developed in 2001, bringing a retail focus to East Durham of regional significance. The concept was derived to facilitate a family experience of leisure and shopping, the leisure element set in an environment that could facilitate intensification of use and additional outdoor activities. The centre provides 11,241 sq metres of retail

¹⁷ GVA Grimley, Peterlee regeneration Framework, 2004

¹⁸ Peterlee Master Plan, GVA Grimley 2007

¹⁹ St John's Square Master Plan, 2005

floorspace in outlets selling discounted high street brands, cafes and restaurants, 1,200 car parking spaces and 22.25 hectares of parkland. The centre serves an extensive catchment which extends beyond the District supported by its location on the A19. It is proving to be one of the North East's most successful factory retail outlets and proposals to extend or enhance the facilities offered on the site will be supported within the context of its role in the spatial strategy to deliver the economic potential of the A19 growth corridor and supporting the main town of Seaham.

4.25 Tourism and visitor attractions

Preferred POLICY CS4. TOURISM AND VISITOR ATTRACTIONS

Proposals for new hotel and tourist accommodation, and visitor attractions, will be encouraged, particularly within the main towns. Development proposals will be focused and promoted in Seaham and on the coast where there is further potential at:

- Seaham Hall and Serenity Spa;
- Seaham North Dock;
- Dalton Park;
- Caravan and visitor facilities at Crimdon

Proposals which capitalise on the unique features of the Coast will be required to have regard to protecting its special qualities.

In larger villages and the countryside, proposals for tourism and visitor attractions of an appropriate scale and type will be supported.

4.26 Easington has a wealth of natural, historic and cultural assets for which the vision is to create further leisure and recreation opportunities for both visitors and residents, supporting the objective to diversify the economy. There are almost 15 million day trips to County Durham each year. The North East Tourism Strategy²⁰ recognises many of the Region's coastal areas and market towns in particular are key attractions in their own right. In 2004, Easington attracted almost 18% of visitors (2.6million), and tourism was worth almost £40 million to the district economy. Although the District hosts the Region's most exclusive 5 star hotel, there is a shortage of business accommodation locally and the local business community are required to use accommodation provided outside the District.

²⁰ North East Tourism Strategy, 2005/2010, Interim Regional Tourism Forum and the North East Tourism Advisory Board

- 4.27 Seaham is the District's main tourism destination and has the potential to become a significant and distinctive coastal resort, building on the success of Seaham Hall and the town's distinctive character. The town could exploit several markets, including 'traditional' resort visitors, walkers, extreme water sports activity and visitors to Seaham Hall, provided its offer is managed carefully. Any tourism development must protect and reflect the character of the town and its coastal environment to maximise and build on the areas existing strengths.
- 4.28 The reclamation of the coastal environment has laid the foundation for further tourism growth, with access to a continuous coastal footpath and Route 14 of the National Cycle Network, the existing 750 berth caravan park at Crimdon to cater for the revival of the traditional seaside holiday, and a number of golfing facilities. The District also contains two historic parks and gardens, Passmore Pavilion in Peterlee and the grounds of the Castle at Castle Eden. Effective marketing strategies and a dynamic programme of events and activities are key to the success of any tourism strategy for the District and will be actively pursued.

Improving transport connections

- 4.29 The impact of the proposals on sites identified for future economic development is potentially significant in sub-regional and regional terms for business, freight movement and tourism. Good connectivity within and beyond the District is essential to meet the needs of a thriving economy. It is important that the Local Development Framework manages a pattern of development and growth which makes the best use of transport provision. A key objective is to ensure that jobs, facilities and services are accessible by public transport, walking and cycling, particularly in Easington where levels of car ownership are low (37% of the population have no access to a car) and some communities isolated.
- 4.30 As the Highway authority, the County Council in partnership with local organisations including Easington District Council, has prepared a revised Local Transport Plan for County Durham²¹. The LTP2 sets out a transport strategy for the sub-region to manage the growing demand for transport and provide a transport infrastructure that meets regional and local needs. Within this context, and in accordance with the policies in LTP2, the Council's transport objectives are to;
- ensure good connectivity between Easington and its wider regional and national markets, particularly east-west highway links, including the extension of the A182 East Durham link road beyond Murton to the A690;

²¹ Local Transport Plan 2, 2006-2011, Durham County Council

- secure appropriate capacity on the A19 junctions to accommodate further growth at the District's main employment locations;
- improve public transport provision, particularly to the main towns with Peterlee as a transport hub, in order to provide better access to services and facilities, employment and training for residents of the District;
- locate new development in accessible locations to reduce the need to travel;
- ensure the design of new development facilitates safe and convenient movement by all modes of transport, in particular on foot and by cycle and public transport;
- secure increased access to the national rail network.

Preferred POLICY CS5. SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL AND ACCESSIBILITY

The Council will work with transport providers and support public transport, walking and cycling initiatives that maximise accessibility. Development and services should be located so as to minimise the need to travel.

Improving accessibility within and beyond the district will focus on:

- i.) supporting the completion of the A182 (A1(M)-A19) East Durham Link Road;
- ii.) supporting improvements to the A19 junctions to ensure continuing development of the main towns;
- iii.) improving accessibility between the major employment sites along the A19 corridor and the larger villages;
- iv.) supporting the improvement of public transport to employment destinations;
- v.) ensuring safe and adequate access and parking, capable of serving the amount and nature of traffic to be generated in accordance with Highway Authority Parking and Accessibility Guidelines;
- vi.) the integration between different modes of transport to improve linkages between residential and other areas, particularly for walking and cycling;
- vii.) providing measures to exclude or reduce the impacts of motor traffic in residential areas, particularly through the reduction of vehicle speeds;
- viii.) making appropriate access provision for disabled people and those with restricted mobility;
- ix.) providing facilities and/or a design capacity that enables the provision of public transport; and

x.) encouraging multi-user routes.

Development proposals for major development that generate significant additional journeys will require Travel Plans and Transport Assessments which meets the requirements of *DfT Circular 02/2007 'Planning and the Strategic Road Network'*. This will be to demonstrate that the strategic road network will be no worse off as a result of the proposed development.

- 4.31 The growth strategy put forward by the Council in a joint bid for Easington to be part of the East Durham Growth Point proposes to strengthen the transport infrastructure in order to ensure that physical development implications are mitigated and integrated with wider place-making actions. The locations for housing and employment are assessed in terms of the impact on the road network. With regard to transport, the bid has four overarching aims which this policy seeks to support:
- to ensure that there is no increase in net 'out-commuting' from the growth point;
 - to seek to achieve a modal shift towards sustainable transport modes;
 - to focus the spatial strategy on main settlements and key public transport corridors to make best use of existing infrastructure;
 - to align housing growth with current and future employment areas in order to reduce the length of average journeys to work.
- 4.32 Development proposals should be designed to encourage alternative forms of transport to the private car. This may include access to public transport facilities, and links to footpath and cycle routes. Where they are likely to have significant travel implications, development proposals will be expected to provide new or improved links to public transport networks.
- 4.33 Travel plans can help to reduce the number of regular journeys made by car, particularly journeys with a single occupant through car-sharing, and introduce other sustainable and health promoting transport choices such as greater use of public transport, cycling and walking. Travel Plans should help to reduce the impact of traffic on the road network and on the environment by reducing congestion, minimising energy consumption and focusing on a more sustainable approach to the use of resources. They can also help organisations save costs, reduce the need for parking space, and support employee travel requirements.

DELIVERING SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

5.1 Introduction

Some of our communities continue to suffer from problems of severe economic decline and neighbourhoods are still in need of improvement and investment. The East Durham Local Strategic Partnership is committed to creating strong, safe, healthy communities, and strategies and programmes are aiming to meet the diverse needs of all our residents, promote well-being and social inclusion. It is essential that the Local Development Framework is complementary and supportive of these initiatives.

5.2 The Council has embarked on an ambitious investment programme in conjunction with East Durham Homes, it's Arms Length Management Company (ALMO), to meet District housing needs and improve the housing and environmental conditions of many of it's neighbourhoods. Priorities in the Council's Housing Strategy²² include the delivery of new affordable housing for rent and sale, the restructuring and regeneration of a number of local housing markets through replacement and restructuring of housing in the villages, the provision of housing for some of our most vulnerable residents. The Strategy covers the period up to 2011.

5.3 The Council is also a partner in the Durham Coalfield Housing Market Renewal Programme, which is building on the Coalfield Settlement Study²³ to intervene in housing markets and restructuring the housing stock to meet social needs, provide the right type of housing to attract and retain new people and align with other regeneration and economic strategies for these communities. These programmes will be active throughout the plan period and are centred on communities initially at Dawdon in Seham, and at Easington Colliery, and subsequently Horden, to support the regeneration of Peterlee. Each of these settlements are the subject of local development action plans,²⁴ and are to be undertaken in associated with the regeneration of Peterlee through the Peterlee Master Plan²⁵.

5.4 Durham County Council has been successful in securing funding to rebuild or remodel secondary schools in East Durham. School rolls in Easington are in decline and fewer primary and secondary school places will be required in the short/medium-term. All secondary schools within Easington are to be retained and up to six schools will benefit from the programme; three schools are likely to be rebuilt and the others improved. Building work is expected to start in 2008-2009 and take 10 years to complete. This programme will

²² Housing Strategy, 2008 to 2011

²³ J Babbie, Coalfield Settlement Study, 2005

²⁴ Area Development Frameworks for Easington and Dawdon, Llewellyn, Davis, Yeang, 2006; Area Development Framework for Horden, GVA Grimley, 2006

²⁵ Peterlee Master Plan, GVA Grimley, 2007

review land held for education use and may create further urban capacity for residential or other uses.

5.5 In pursuit of delivering sustainable communities, the Council's key objectives are to:

- diversify the housing stock to provide choice and quality;
- ensure we have the right type of housing in attractive environments to meet the needs of all our residents and particularly the elderly;
- focus regeneration on those parts of the District which have obsolete and failing housing;
- support investment to tackle deprivation and ill health;
- secure re-use of derelict land and buildings;
- phase development to ensure the housing market remains stable;
- maintain population growth;
- promote balanced communities by ensuring a supply of mixed housing, in locations with access to employment, education and community services;

The Issues and options

5.6 Options for future development are confined by on-going long term strategies for regeneration being progressed by the Council and its partners. In 'Planning the Future of Easington District' we considered how to improve the quality of life for residents to encourage population stability, with options to improve the residential environment and attract new investment:

- a.) the appropriate level of demolition in those areas identified for renewal and support for intervention in other locations;
- b.) the appropriate balance between re-use of sites to meet housing needs and choice and to create quality environments;
- c.) the appropriate amount and type of affordable housing;
- d.) the use of settlement limits to direct new development to more central and accessible locations, away from village boundaries, or restrict development in rural villages.

5.7 The responses to the questions we asked have helped shape the approach in the preferred options. The preferred options seek to restore community cohesion through a phased approach to demolition and housing renewal in our most deprived communities, whilst also meeting the spatial strategy for growth. This provides guidance as to where investment in infrastructure should be made. This approach has the advantage that on-going regeneration programs can be delivered within the national and regional policy framework, it meets the vision for the area, community housing

needs will be addressed and Easington will contribute significantly towards regional targets for the re-use of brownfield land.

Preferred POLICY CS6. MEETING HOUSING REQUIREMENTS

The LDF will allocate, as a minimum, sufficient housing land to meet provision for Easington identified in the Regional Spatial Strategy for the following annual average net additions to the dwelling stock:

	dwellings per annum
2004 – 2011	370
2011 – 2016	215
2016 – 2021	70
2021 – 2024	235
Equivalent to total new dwellings, 2004 to 2024:	4720

Accordingly, land will be distributed and phased to meet housing need and to support growth in the main town areas and regeneration of the villages as follows:

	2004-11	2011-16	2016-21	2021-24
Peterlee	1000	1000	1000	200
Seaham	2200	200	100	50
<u>Villages</u>	<u>1000</u>	<u>150</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>50</u>
Total	4200	1300	1000	400

Total new dwellings, 2004 to 2024: 7000

The Council will seek to ensure that about 870 of this provision will be homes for local people at affordable prices, divided equally between housing for social rent and intermediate housing.

Release of land for new housing will be consistent with the prioritisation and assessment of suitability of sites through the County Durham Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. The priority order for the sequential release of sites is:

- i.) suitable previously-developed sites and buildings within urban areas;
- ii.) other suitable urban locations;
- iii.) suitable sites adjoining urban locations; followed by
- iv.) suitable sites outside the urban areas.

Land may be released more quickly in response to housing need identified in the County Durham Strategic Housing Market Assessment.

Identified urban capacity on brownfield sites will contribute towards a District target of 80% of new housing on previously developed land.

New housing development will contribute to creating and sustaining mixed, balanced and inclusive communities by having regard to the following:

- i.) the composition of house types will aim to diversify from terraced provision to provide a better range and choice of housing within the neighbourhood;
- ii.) new housing development will be expected to achieve a minimum density of 30 dwellings per hectare. Lower densities maybe considered in locations where it is accepted that there is a need to rebalance housing provision.
- iii.) redevelopment of the North East Industrial Estate for residential use will be a priority to support the growth strategy for Peterlee, subject to the relocation of existing businesses.

Justification

- 5.8 The LDF should deliver sufficient land to enable continuous delivery of housing for at least 15 years from the start of the plan period in 2009. The phasing of housing development will ensure that sites are released in conjunction with priorities in housing and regeneration strategies. The housing numbers defined in the policy relate only to strategic sites anticipated to be allocated in the plan period. No allowance has been made for unplanned, or windfall, development. Housing provision anticipated to be delivered through release of public sector land in the villages, in accordance with the Council's Housing Strategy for housing renewal and identified in the later phases of provision, will be closely monitored to assess the impact of release on the housing trajectory.
- 5.9 The Regional Spatial Strategy housing provision is for the period to 2021, the annual average has been extrapolated to project housing provision for Easington to 2024 in order to meet national planning requirements for a 15-year housing land supply from the anticipated date of adoption of the plan.
- 5.10 Housing provision for Easington equates to a total of 7000 dwellings to 2024, of which 6500 are anticipated to be delivered within the period to 2021. Although this is about 1000 dwellings above the accepted variance of 20% of RSS provision for Easington, Further Proposed Changes to the draft revision Regional Spatial Strategy²⁶ advise that Local Development Frameworks may make the case for higher figures where appropriate. Figure 5 provides more detail to explain the provision for new housing identified to meet regeneration and housing renewal programmes in Easington over the plan period to 2024, with a base date of 31st March 2007:

²⁶ published February 2008

Figure 5

	RSS PHASE	2004-11	2011-16	2016-21	2021-24	TOTAL* 2004-2024
AREA	RSS provision	2590	1075	350	705	4720
Peterlee Area	Already built/under construction	318				
	With planning permission	99				
	Proposed	700	1070	1020	200	3000
	Total*	1000	1000	1000	200	3200
Seaham Area	Already built/under construction	1035				
	With planning permission	263				
	Proposed	890	230	100	50	1000
	Total*	2200	200	100	50	2500
Larger Villages	Already built/under construction	610				
	With planning permission	310				
	Proposed	150	150	100	50	500
	Total*	1000	150	100	50	1300
Rest of District	Already built/under construction	51				
	With planning permission	23				
	Total*	70				
Total proposed in phase		4200	1300	1200	300	7000

* totals figures rounded

5.11 The Council's preferred approach to new housing development is driven by the need for regeneration and housing renewal identified through the East Durham coalfields programme and the Council's housing strategy to target interventions on the most deprived areas.

5.12 Building on the Coalfield Settlement Study, Area Development Frameworks have been drawn up to manage housing growth and renewal in settlements targeted for intervention at Dawdon, Easington Colliery in the first instance, and Horden²⁷ as a later priority. Development in the latter two settlements will contribute to the ambitions for housing growth in the Peterlee Master Plan²⁸. This identifies sites within the town to accommodate 2700 dwellings, including around 600 at the North East Industrial estate, and 850 new dwellings through residential intensification on green spaces in later phases to 2021. Proposals at Easington Colliery utilise land released through housing clearance and the former colliery site to

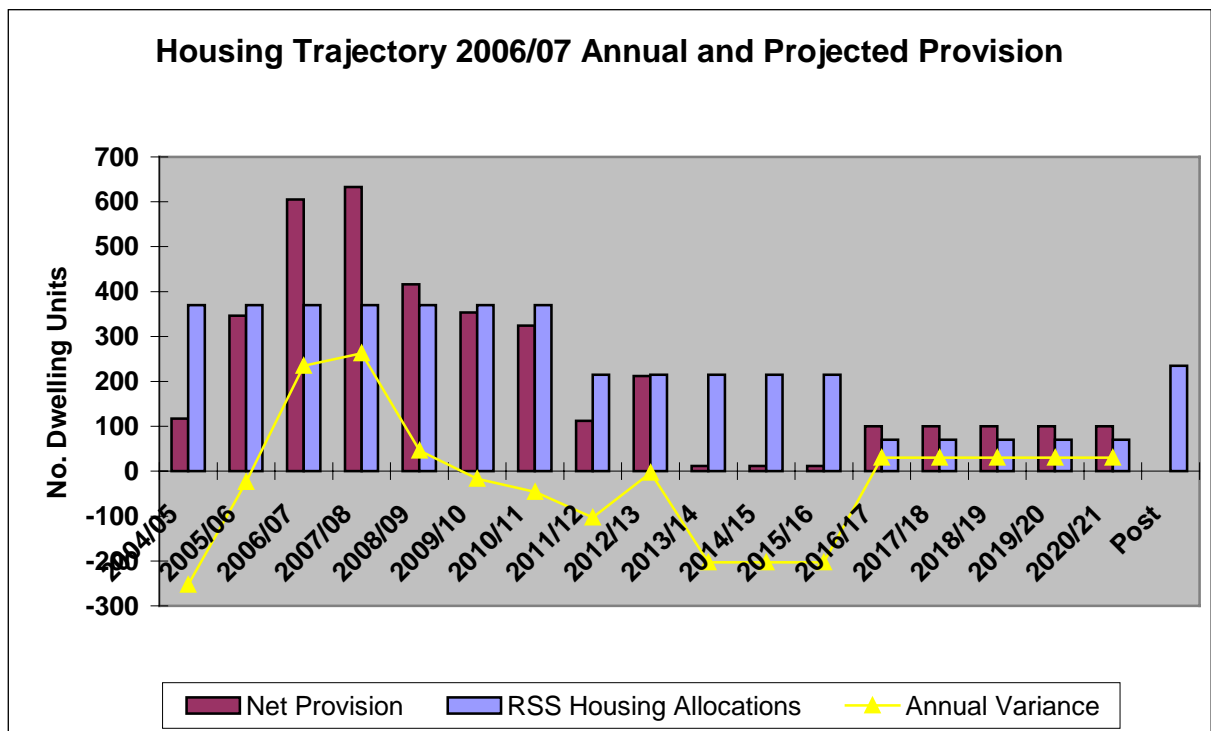
²⁷ ADFs for Easington and Dawdon, Llewelyn davies yang, 2006; and Horden, GVA Grimley, 2006

²⁸ Peterlee Master Plan, GVA Grimley, 2007

deliver over 200 dwellings in the first phase and nearly 350 dwellings in later phases. Previously developed land at Dawdon will contribute a further 180 dwellings, the remaining new homes will be delivered on cleared sites in neighbourhoods targeted for renewal in the towns and villages.

5.13 The Council’s approach is defined in the following housing trajectory for the plan period, which takes into account the RSS Further Proposed Changes housing data. As the approach is plan led, no allowance has been made for unplanned, or windfall, development. In considering such proposals, the Council will take into account the impact on the housing and previously developed land trajectories in accordance with regional policy. The deliverability assessment of the housing sites is updated annually in the Annual Housing Monitoring Report.²⁹

Figure 6



5.14 The Council, in conjunction with the all the Districts in the Durham sub-region, has prepared a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment³⁰ to identify it’s 15 year developable housing land supply. This will be updated annually in the Annual Monitoring Report to ensure a 5-year rolling programme of deliverable sites to meet national planning requirements. This ‘plan, monitor, manage’ approach to housing land release will ensure that land in

²⁹ Easington LDF Annual Monitoring Report 2007

³⁰ Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment for County Durham, 2008

sustainable locations is developed ahead of less sustainable sites and these will be brought forward for consideration in the Local Development Framework Allocations document.

- 5.15 In order to respond to rapidly changing circumstances, an investigation into the needs and demands for housing in the Durham sub-region, a Strategic Housing Market Assessment³¹, is being undertaken. This will inform the level of housing provision required in Easington, and the requirement for affordable homes. Should this study identify an increased need for housing than that identified in this Preferred Options document, the Council will consider bringing forward the rate of housing delivery identified in the housing trajectory.
- 5.16 The rate of housing delivery has been determined in consideration of the coalfield housing renewal programme and the Peterlee Regeneration Framework³², as well as the Council's Housing Strategy³³ and land disposal proposals in the Council's Asset Management Plan³⁴. However, if the East Durham Growth Point bid is successful, the rate of housing delivery will be increased over a shorter time frame and the phasing of housing development will be reconsidered in the next phase of plan preparation.
- 5.17 Much housing in the District does not meet modern aspirations or needs. Terraced housing and one-bed aged persons accommodation are the predominant house types. Demand in the District is greatest for family houses, affordable homes, and accommodation for the elderly. Need for the latter is particularly acute in Wheatley Hill, Murton, Wingate, South Hetton, Shotton and Peterlee.³⁵
- 5.18 The RSS identifies that tackling low demand is crucial in alleviating pressure on areas of high demand. This requires a significant increase in demolition rates³⁶. Replacement housing will create an opportunity for 'place shaping', to create villages where people will want to live. The level of development will depend upon housing demand and need defined in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment³⁷ and the capacity of the existing settlements to absorb new development.
- 5.19 The Derelict Land and Buildings programme³⁸ identifies significant urban capacity in the coalfield villages and in Seaham, ensuring that the District will contribute significantly above the regional target of 75% new housing on previously developed land by 2016. Residential development on the identified housing land supply will achieve a

³¹ Durham Strategic Housing Market Assessment, 2008

³² Peterlee regeneration Framework, GVA Grimley 2006

³³ Easington Housing Strategy, 2008

³⁴ District of Easington Asset Management Plan, 2003

³⁵ Older Persons Housing Strategy, 2006

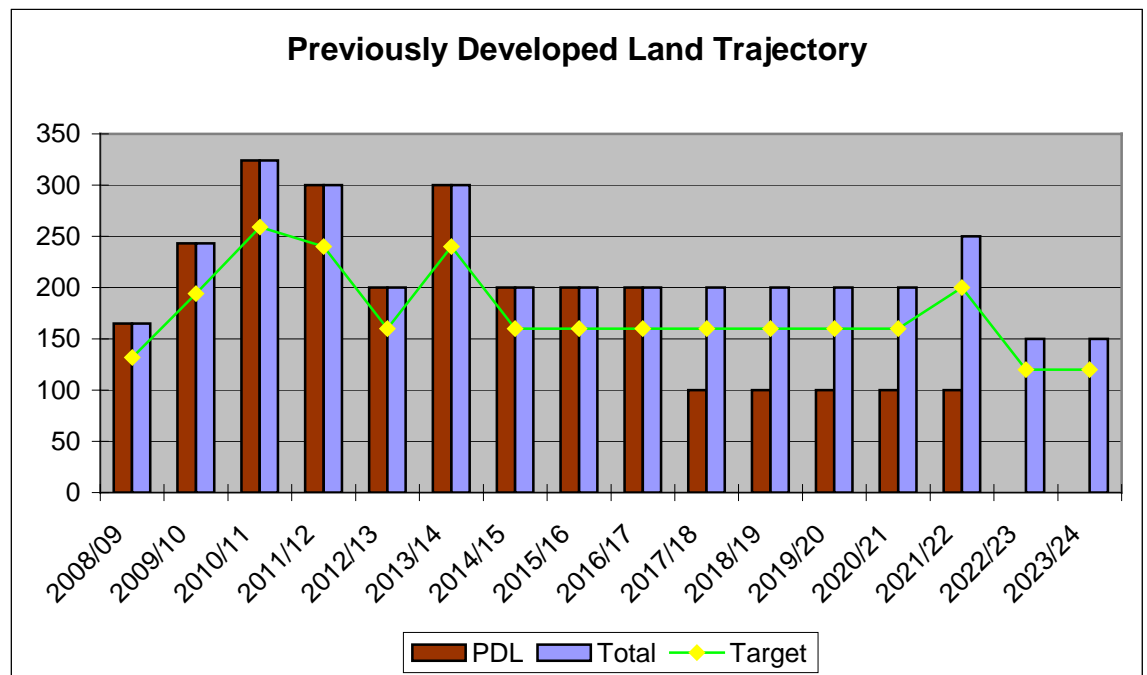
³⁶ Submission RSS policies 29 and 31

³⁷ SHMA to be prepared by January 2008

³⁸ Derelict Land and Building Audit and Assessment, Cass Associates, 2006, see paragraph 6.2

target of 80% on previously developed sites, see Figure 7 below. The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment³⁹ and the Employment Land review⁴⁰ will inform of future potential to re-use previously developed sites for housing and economic growth, and will be taken into account in the assessment of sites in the Local Development Framework Allocations document. However, of the housing provision currently identified, only planned development in Peterlee will require the use of greenfield land to achieve intensification of residential development.

Figure 7



5.20 New development is required to make the most efficient use of land and the Council will be seeking a minimum housing density of 30 dwellings per hectare. In areas where it can be demonstrated that there is a need to provide a range of house types and sizes not conducive to this density of development, lower densities may be considered. Higher density development will be expected on sites that have a high level of public transport accessibility and good access to services, without compromising the design and character of the surrounding area.

5.21 Development needs to be focused where it will support housing market restructuring, make best use of land in accessible locations, and contribute towards creating attractive, cohesive communities. Development limits are consequently drawn around settlements to define the extent of the built up area. The limits were defined using

³⁹ SHLAA currently under preparation

⁴⁰ Employment Land Review, 2008

defensible lines such as building lines, watercourses, roads, or footpaths and are shown on the Proposals Map. These limits will be reviewed in the Local Development Framework Allocations document if the Council needs to identify more housing land than can be allocated within existing limits. In order to deliver the Spatial Strategy, which does not envisage expansion of the smaller villages which have minimal services, facilities or jobs, the development limits around these villages are proposed to be removed in order to ensure that only development proposals essential to the rural location are approved in these areas.

Affordable housing

- 5.22 Housing affordability is of concern as house prices are rising in the District disproportionately to incomes. There is a need to increase the supply of housing for people who are unable to access or afford market housing. The preferred option builds on the evidence provided in research commissioned by the Council, and discussion of the issues and options in 'Planning the Future of Easington' considered the appropriate threshold for affordable housing provision.
- 5.23 In addition to the affordable homes expected to be delivered on qualifying sites identified in the housing land supply, the Council will seek to secure affordable homes on all sites which meet the thresholds identified in the following policy, in accordance with PPS3⁴¹. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment⁴² will also address this issue. If it presents higher thresholds to meet affordability needs in the market area, the Council will consider raising the target percentage of provision in the next phase of plan preparation.

⁴¹ Planning Policy Statement 3, Housing, 2006

⁴² SHMA to be reported January 2008

Preferred POLICY CS7. AFFORDABLE HOUSING

In housing development proposals of 15 or more dwellings, the Council will negotiate for 20% of the total number to be provided as affordable housing. Affordable housing provision will be made up of 50% for discounted sale and 50% for social rent.

Negotiations will be subject to site viability and reflect local housing needs. Where a smaller proposals is only part of a larger development site, the Council will negotiate on the basis of affordable provision for the whole site.

The Council will require affordable housing provision to be retained for the purpose in perpetuity and as such will expect it to be delivered through a Registered Social Landlord or similar body, usually by legal agreement between the Developer, the Landowner and the Council.

- 5.24 In 2006 the Council commissioned a report into the need for affordable housing in the District, the Easington Affordable Housing Strategy⁴³. The report identified that housing choice in the District is limited in broad terms to lower priced properties or the social rented sector. The consultants recommend that more home ownership needs to be encouraged if areas are to become more sustainable. An affordable housing policy was recommended to diversify the housing supply to provide more market sector housing.
- 5.25 The Strategy proposed a methodology which identified a range of affordability between levels based on the relationship between lower quartile household incomes and housing costs at ward level. This recommendation has been reviewed in the light of evidence from the Strategic Housing Market Assessment and in the light of the location of the deliverable housing land supply which is predominantly in the higher threshold areas.
- 5.26 The rapidly changing nature of housing markets within communities makes it difficult to accurately monitor an affordability threshold at ward level where markets will change over time in response to regeneration measures improving the stability of neighbourhoods, and as new residents contribute to higher income levels. The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment indicates that the majority of strategic housing sites are located in the wards recommended for higher levels of affordability. As many of these sites are also in Council ownership, it is likely that a higher level of affordable housing will be expected.
- 5.27 To maintain a coherent and transparent approach to affordable housing thresholds, therefore, an overall rate of 20% provision of all qualifying housing schemes has been set and this is to be split

⁴³ D Cumberland Regeneration Ltd, Easington Affordable Housing Strategy

between market and social rented housing to deliver the housing provision requirements identified in the Affordable Housing Strategy.

5.28 The provision of the affordable housing will comprise either intermediate housing or housing for social rent, or a mix of the two determined by the site location and housing needs and demand information. A lower proportion of affordable housing provision may be accepted where alternative planning provisions included in a Section 106 agreement are agreed as necessary related to the proposed development's implementation.

5.29 Precise details will be a matter for negotiation between the Council and applicants. An Affordable Housing Plan should be prepared as the basis for these negotiations, and will be required to be submitted along with the planning application for the scheme. The Council will publish Supplementary Planning Guidance to give further advice on the provision of affordable housing and what is required in an Affordable Housing Plan.

Gypsies and travellers

5.30 In order to ensure social inclusion, the Local Development Framework should consider the accommodation needs of gypsies and travellers as well as those of settled communities. As these groups suffer significant inequalities, there is a commitment to improve their health and well-being. Adequate accommodation provision will enable the Council to deal with unauthorised encampments more effectively.

Preferred POLICY CS8 GYPSIES AND TRAVELLERS

Permission will be granted for the provision of accommodation for gypsies and travellers where there is genuine and proven need and demand and where the proposal accords with the following criteria:

- i.) the site is satisfactorily serviced, including water, sewerage and refuse disposal facilities;
- ii.) the site is within a reasonable range of services and facilities, such as shops and schools;
- iii.) the proposal is well screened and landscaped and will not cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area;
- iv.) the site is not located where it would cause harm to environmentally sensitive areas such as the green belt and the coastal zone;
- v.) the proposal will not result in disturbance or loss of amenity to neighbouring properties or occupiers; and
- vi.) there are satisfactory access and highway arrangements

Locations beyond the built up areas may be appropriate provided that care is taken to avoid visually intrusive sites.

Permanent accommodation for gypsies and travellers will be allocated in accordance with identified needs.

5.31 Gypsies and travellers make up a small proportion of the population but have specific needs related to their lifestyle. Many are self employed working in a range of occupations like scrap metal dealing, laying tarmac, seasonal agricultural work, casual labouring, furniture dealing, and other related occupations. Some prefer to run their businesses from sites where caravans are situated.

5.32 Sites for travellers are not appropriate in either the Green Belt or the coastal zone, where development is strictly controlled. As with any development, the highway implications of any proposal and its potential for noise and disturbance must be considered.

5.33 Sites require a reasonable level of services including electricity, drinking water supplies, sewage disposal facilities and provision for waste disposal. The Allocations document will identify sites as appropriate in response to needs identified in the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment prepared for the Durham sub-region.

Green Space and Recreation

5.34 Green spaces and facilities for sport and recreation contribute to people's quality of life. The Local Development Framework should deliver an infrastructure of good quality open space and sporting facilities appropriate to local needs as part of its aim to create sustainable communities. The key objectives for green space and recreation provision are to:

- promote health and well-being;
- promote social inclusion;
- widen participation in sport and physical activity;
- secure urban regeneration;
- improve the attractiveness and image of the District;
- protect and enhance existing open space and sporting facilities of value to the local community;
- remedy identified gaps in the provision of open space and sporting facilities;
- reduce the amount of derelict land.

Preferred POLICY CS9. PROVIDING FOR GREEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION

The protection and enhancement of existing and proposals for new provision of open space and sporting facilities will be promoted by:

- i. supporting schemes that will protect and improve the quantity, quality and accessibility of open space, play and sporting facilities in accordance with adopted standards;
- ii. supporting proposals that contribute to the development of the following green space hierarchy:

Strategic space - country parks and linear open spaces which attract weekend and educational visits in addition to local residents, focused on the Durham Coast, Castle Eden Dene, the Haswell to Hart and other routes on the National Cycle Network;

Urban space - District Park in the main towns of Peterlee and Seaham, capable of hosting large community events and to attract weekend visitors;
Community Parks with facilities to attract visitors for prolonged periods, focused on the larger villages defined in the spatial strategy;

Neighbourhood space - Neighbourhood and Local Parks, play areas and amenity green space, for everyday visits principally on foot, focused on the smaller villages and local neighbourhoods.

Adopted standards and targets for the provision of open space and sporting facilities within each level of the hierarchy will be determined in locations in accordance with an approved Green Space Strategy. Land will be allocated in appropriate locations to remedy any deficiencies in provision, or de-allocated where it does not contribute to the hierarchy.

All new residential development will be expected to contribute towards delivering the green space hierarchy, either through a standard charge determined in the Green Space Strategy, or where appropriate through onsite provision.

Proposals which involve the loss of existing open space or sporting provision will only be supported where it is demonstrated that the facility is no longer needed in that location, and that it's loss will not result in a deficiency in quantity, quality or access to similar types of provision in the locality.

- 5.35 The provision of high quality accessible open space and sporting facilities will contribute to the vision for a better quality of life for residents of Easington. This is particularly important in Easington which is dominated by high density terraced housing without gardens and where participation in physical activity could contribute to improve the District's poor health record. Good quality open space has the potential to improve neighbourhoods and to attract investors and businesses. In a rural District characterised by dispersed settlements, open space provides valuable links between settlements and to the countryside.
- 5.36 A Greenspace Strategy for the District⁴⁴ has assessed how well the quality, quantity and accessibility of formal and informal open space and recreation provision meets the needs of the local community. It builds on a previous study into the provision of playing pitches in Easington⁴⁵. Despite some localised shortages, Easington has a great deal of open space and many pitches, although much needs to be done to improve the quality of green space and the variety of sporting facilities.
- 5.37 At the strategic level, the Durham coast is largely undeveloped with public access through a network of footpaths linking to the coastal path. It is a key environmental, ecological and recreational asset not just for residents of the District but for a wider area. Linear space, in the form of multi-user paths for walking, cycling and horse riding, also contribute to a green space infrastructure by linking built up areas and the countryside, and have both recreational and biodiversity value.
- 5.38 There are 12 parks and gardens within Easington District which bring together a variety of functions including sports fields, play areas, amenity areas and natural areas. These are also a high priority for maintenance and investment. There are 27 sports fields, not including school sites, which contribute to an overall surplus of adult football pitches relative to existing and projected demand, but these should be reconfigured to supply the needs of juniors and other pitch sports.
- 5.39 The audit has revealed 49 children's play areas, often located within the parks. A children's play strategy⁴⁶ has been prepared, and the Green Space Strategy considers the distribution of play provision along with other specific needs of young people.
- 5.40 Excluding the coastal area, by far the largest proportion of open space in the District is made up of amenity space – grassland and other managed landscape around housing providing for informal recreation. The Strategy recognises that there is considerable scope

⁴⁴ draft Green Space Strategy, Cass Associates, June 2007

⁴⁵ A Strategy for Playing Pitches in the District of Easington, January 2004

⁴⁶ Groundwork East Durham 2007

to rationalise, dispose of or develop this resource without detriment to the environment or people's wellbeing.

- 5.41 The Green Space Strategy proposes a hierarchy of provision for open space and recreation appropriate to the role and size of settlements, based on the catchment areas from which users will be drawn. Gaps in provision will be remedied through the allocation of land in the Local Development Framework Allocations document. Targets for the level and quality of open space and sporting provision will be set out in a Supplementary Planning Document.
- 5.42 The growth strategy put forward by the Council in a joint bid for Easington to be part of the East Durham Growth Point proposes to build on the Green Space Strategy to integrate housing development with protecting and developing green spaces. The overarching aim will be to focus development towards previously developed land and other sites that fit well with the built framework.
- 5.43 All new housing development will be expected to contribute to the enhancement of green space and sporting provision, commensurate with the scale of the proposal, or to provide additional facilities where the size of the development makes this more appropriate. Standard charges will be set out in the Supplementary Planning Document.

6. DELIVERING AN IMPROVED AND PROTECTED ENVIRONMENT

Introduction

- 6.1 Easington has some high quality natural environments including a Heritage Coast and internationally recognised Nature Reserve at Castle Eden Dene which contribute to the vision to transform the District into an attractive and successful place for economic growth, regeneration, health and quality of life.
- 6.2 Easington has a supply of derelict land and vacant buildings, a legacy from it's industrial past. The Council was a pilot authority in the national Liveability Programme⁴⁷ and also part of English Partnership's National Brownfield Strategy programme to tackle their re-use. The Local Development Framework will support development of such sites to contribute to regeneration, to help to deliver sustainable communities and to improve the image of the District. Sustainable development requires high quality natural and built environment, and policies are needed to secure good design which integrates development with it's surroundings and minimises negative impacts.
- 6.3 Climate change is a global issue requiring local actions. The Local Development Framework will manage the District's environmental resources to maximise economic and social benefits for regeneration. It should provide a planning framework which respects environmental limits, reduces greenhouse gases and encourages the use of renewable energy to meet government targets through the management of development proposals.
- 6.4 In pursuit of delivering an improved and protected environment, the Council's key objectives are to:
- address vacant and derelict land and buildings;
 - promote good quality design;
 - ensure development is designed to reduce crime and the fear of crime;
 - protect and enhance our natural and built heritage;
 - protect and enhance landscape character, especially the special qualities of the Coast and Denes;
 - safeguard the international, national and locally important sites for nature conservation, biodiversity and geology;
 - maintain the openness of the area designated as Green Belt;
 - contribute to government targets for renewable energy and reducing carbon emissions;
 - promote a reduction in energy and water consumption;
 - manage flood risks;
 - encourage sustainable construction methods.

⁴⁷ introduced under Sustainable Communities: Building for the Future, ODPM 2003

The issues and options

6.5 In 'Planning the Future of Easington' and 'Having Your Say' on how planning applications should be decided, we considered how we should protect, manage and improve coast and countryside and our built heritage; and how we should manage development for energy generation and conservation. These decisions are largely determined by national planning policy, and with Easington starting from such a low base at the centre of the east Durham coalfield, improvement to the quality of urban space is a necessity. Options therefore focused on finding the appropriate balance between development and conservation:

- a.) promote further development of the coast for tourism and recreation to support the regeneration aims of the District, balanced against nature conservation interests;
- b.) identify opportunities for enhancement along strategic transport routes;
- c.) review the purpose and effect of the green Wedge between Easington and Peterlee;
- d.) introduce positive measures in development proposals to manage designated sites and nature conservation interests;
- e.) appropriateness of non-agricultural structures like stables, animal shelters or trotting tracks in the countryside;
- f.) policy for other rural developments including farm diversification, renewable energy schemes and how to best re-use existing buildings in the countryside;
- g.) review the extent of our conservation areas and what features are important in them;
- h.) the aspiration for higher quality in our built heritage, particularly town centres;
- i.) the appropriate proportion of on-site renewable energy in new development;
- j.) the appropriate balance between renewable energy development requirements and protection of the landscape.

6.6 The preferred options

The responses to the questions we asked have helped shape the approach in the preferred options. These set the priorities to best meet the key objective to improve and protect our environment and meet the vision to capitalise on our leisure and tourism assets by providing attractive urban and rural environments.

6.7 Amenity and Design

Preferred POLICY CS10. PROMOTING HIGH QUALITY DESIGN

Development proposals will be expected to promote good design which respects local character, makes a positive contribution to the local area, creates safer, healthier places and deters crime. To protect the amenity of people living and working in the vicinity of the site, proposals should have regard particularly to the following;

- i.) contribute positively to the local environment;
- ii.) overlooking, overshadowing or overbearing impact;
- iii.) loss of privacy;
- iv.) making efficient use of land;
- v.) noise, air, water, ground, vibration, light, or other harmful pollution;
- vi.) traffic generation and highway safety;
- vii.) good connectivity to the transport network, including footpaths and cycle routes.

6.8 All development, from small household extensions to major schemes, should protect and enhance local character. The layout of development, landscaping and detailed building design all help to create a 'sense of place' and over time will contribute to the vision to enhance the image of the District⁴⁸. Some types of development cause pollution to the air, water or land and adequate mitigation measures should be addressed to secure the health and safety of residents.

*Information box:
Applicants are advised to consult Planning Policy Statement 23, Planning and Pollution Control, 2006, for proposals on unstable or contaminated sites, or where there is risk of pollution.*

6.9 To secure good design in development, the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 introduces a new requirement for Design and Access Statements to be submitted with most applications for planning permission and listed building consent, except for the following types of development:

- a material change of use of land or buildings, unless it involves operational development;
- engineering or mining operations;

⁴⁸ in accordance with Planning Policy Statement 1, Delivering Sustainable Communities

- development of an existing dwelling house, or development within the curtilage of an existing dwelling house for any purpose incidental to the enjoyment of the dwelling house where no part of that dwelling house or curtilage is within a conservation area or a site of special scientific interest.

*Information box:
Guidance on Design and Access Statements is provided in Section 3 of DCLG Circular 01/2006, Guidance on changes to the development control system. See also CABE: Design and Access Statements, how to write, read and use them.*

6.10 The Council will prepare Supplementary Planning Guidance regarding design, visual amenity and the impact of development. Only planning applications submitted with an appropriate Design and Access Statement when required will be validated.

Sustainable development

6.11 The construction of development should consider its environmental impacts. Natural resources are finite and need to be used wisely. Greenhouse gas emissions within Easington District are currently estimated to be 692,0000 tonnes of carbon dioxide per annum, of which 42% are domestic and 30% are industrial and commercial.⁴⁹

Preferred POLICY CS11. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND RENEWABLE ENERGY

Development proposals will be encouraged to make maximum use of environmentally sound and energy efficient construction methods, to avoid pollution, minimise the use of resources, conserve energy and water, and to avoid the risk of flooding.

Proposals to promote energy from renewable sources must reflect the capacity and sensitivity of the landscape to accommodate it, and take account of the cumulative impact of developments, as defined for the East Durham Limestone Area in the North East Windfarm Development and Landscape Capacity Study⁵⁰. Protection of the Durham Heritage Coast will be a priority.

Microgeneration projects and other technologies designed to reduce carbon dioxide emissions will be particularly encouraged.

⁴⁹ District of Easington Vclimate Change Community Action Plan, 2006

⁵⁰ North East Wind farm Development and Landscape Capacity Study – East Durham Limestone and Tees Plain, Arup 2008

Proposals will mitigate or compensate for any associated adverse impacts, and provision will be made for the removal of equipment and re-instatement of the site at such times as it ceases to be operational.

The following criteria will be taken into account in all development proposals:

- i.) the layout and design of new development will be expected to minimise energy consumption;
- ii.) commercial developments over 1000 sq metres will be expected to provide a minimum of 10% of estimated energy usage from local renewable sources and meet at least the BREEAM Very Good Standard, or higher as dictated by future legislation;
- iii.) residential schemes over 10 houses will be expected to provide a minimum of 10% of estimated energy usage from renewable sources and meet at least Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes, or higher as dictated by future legislation;
- iv.) development should incorporate infrastructure and services to serve the development including recycling and waste facilities, and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems, where appropriate, to reduce the risk of flooding.

Where site constraints mean that the provision of renewable energy on site is not feasible, the development will be required to demonstrate an additional 10% reduction in overall energy consumption.

Areas at most risk from flooding in Easington are identified along the coastline and adjacent to the Denes. Development proposals identified as being at risk of flooding will require a flood risk assessment to address the risk of flooding to the development, the risk of flooding arising from the development, and to have regard to the impacts of climate change.

6.12 This policy reflects the Council's enthusiasm to address climate change. The BREEAM Standards and Code for Sustainable Homes cover a wide range of matters including energy, water, pollution, materials, transport, ecology, land use, and well being. Assessments are graded and carried out by independent assessors, trained and licensed by the Building Research Establishment. All commercial developments should meet Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Buildings. Developments should seek to go beyond these standards, aiming to incorporate as many sustainable building techniques as are possible and appropriate to the site.

6.13 Renewable energy sources can include photovoltaic energy, solar power, geo-thermal water heating, wind power, energy crops and biomass. Where residential schemes cannot reasonably meet the

target, such as where technologies are visually inappropriate to the area, additional energy conservation measures will be required.

*Information box:
The District of Easington lies within an area identified in RSS as a medium resource area which offers potential to accommodate onshore wind developments⁵¹.*

Submission RSS policy 39 encourages homeowners and businesses to improve their energy efficiency and reduce consumption. See 'Building in Sustainability: a Guide to Sustainable Construction and Development in the North East' 2006 prepared through a partnership with Durham County Council.

See also Climate Change Community Action Plan, 2006 produced by the Council to secure energy efficiency measures.

- 6.14 The Council will prepare Supplementary Planning Guidance regarding sustainable construction techniques and incorporating a 'sustainability checklist'.
- 6.15 Draining surface water in urban areas using conventional drainage techniques can lead to problems of flooding, pollution of watercourses, and loss of natural habitats. 'Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems' aim to address these problems through the use of such techniques as soakaways, porous pavements and reed beds, and the use of 'grey water' recycled to reduce the amount of 'run off' from development to minimise its impact on drainage systems and natural watercourses. Sustainable drainage methods contribute to the rating for the Code for Sustainable Homes and will be encouraged.
- 6.16 Together with the Environment Agency, the Council will seek to ensure that development does not occur in areas at risk of flooding. These are identified in the Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment⁵² which will inform decisions regarding the allocation of land for future development.

⁵¹ Submission RSS, Policy 42

⁵² District of Easington Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, 2008

*Information box:
Applicants are advised to
consult Planning Policy
Statement 25, Development
and Flood Risk.*

6.17 Environmental Protection

Preferred POLICY CS12. PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF LANDSCAPE AND LOCAL HERITAGE

To protect the quality and character of the countryside and the settings of the towns and villages, the Council will:

- i.) give priority to the protection, enhancement or restoration of the landscape characteristics and natural beauty of the Durham Heritage Coast and the East Durham Limestone Plateau;
- ii.) facilitate the expansion of tree cover to support the Great North Forest, particularly on derelict and underused sites and the urban fringe;
- iii.) protect the openness of the land designated as Green Belt to the east of the A19 north of Seaham and north of the B1404 road and west of Seaton;
- iv.) preserve and enhance the appearance and setting of the Conservation Areas, currently identified in Castle Eden, Easington Village, Seaham Harbour and Hawthorn;
- v.) preserve the special characteristics of listed buildings; unlisted buildings of local importance; sites of archaeological interest; and the historic parks and gardens at Passmore Pavilion in Peterlee and the Castle at Castle Eden.

6.18 The whole of Easington lies within the East Durham Limestone Plateau, based on the Landscape Character Areas identified in the County Durham Landscape Strategy.⁵³ The area is important for the magnesium limestone grassland and the ancient semi-natural woodlands where the strategy is to conserve and restore those landscapes which contribute most to its quality and distinctiveness. A key component is the improvement of the urban fringes. For planning purposes, the countryside will be construed as the areas beyond the settlement boundaries on the Proposals Map

6.19 The Durham Coast stretches eleven miles from Ryhope Dene in the north to Crimdon Dene in the south. The area has huge potential for recreation, tourism and education, with particular scope to provide

⁵³ The County Durham Landscape Strategy, 2004, Durham County Council

more water based activities focused on North Dock in Seaham and holiday facilities at Crimdon. The Durham Heritage Coast Partnership has been established as a vehicle to continue delivering the momentum of improvements to the Durham Coast through the Durham Heritage Coast Management Plan⁵⁴, aimed at sensitive conservation. The Shoreline Management Plan for this part of the coastline proposes not to intervene in the natural processes of coastal erosion.

*Information box:
For planning purposes the coastal zone is defined to the seaward side by the mean low water mark and to the landward side by the railway line.*

The Shoreline Management Plan⁵⁵, developed on behalf of The North East Coastal Authorities Group, is aimed at identifying necessary management measures for coastal defences.

- 6.20 The Government attaches great weight to Green Belts, which have a positive role in providing opportunities for access to the countryside for the urban population for both active outdoor sports or passive recreation, as well as improving damaged and derelict land around towns. The most important attribute of the Green Belt, which the Council will endeavour to maintain, is its openness.

*Information box:
Applicants are advised to consult Planning Policy Guidance 2, Green Belts, before proposing developments in designated areas.*

- 6.21 Heritage sites are a valuable resource and important catalyst for social and economic regeneration, and to support the vision to develop a tourist economy in Easington. The District has a range of listed buildings, conservation areas, archaeological sites, scheduled ancient monuments and historic parks and gardens which make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area. Conservation Area Appraisals have identified unlisted buildings which are also considered to be of local importance in defining the character of place. Development or demolition within these sites

⁵⁴ Durham Heritage Coast Management Plan 2005-2010, Heritage Coast Partnership, April 2005

⁵⁵ Draft Shoreline Management Plan , The North East Coastal Group, Feb 2007

and will require special justifications and the re-use and refurbishment of historic buildings will be supported.

6.22 Biodiversity and nature conservation

Preferred POLICY CS13. BIODIVERSITY AND GEOLOGICAL CONSERVATION

The District's biodiversity and geological interest will be protected and enhanced to optimise conditions for wildlife, and secure the integrity of the network of designated sites (of international, national, regional and local importance), the wildlife corridors, Areas of High Landscape Value, ancient woodland, veteran trees, hedgerows, and the habitats and species identified in the County Durham Biodiversity Action Plan.

The level of protection will depend on the site's status and its importance in meeting the objectives and targets in the Plan.

New development should result in no net loss of biodiversity value of Priority Habitats and species identified in the Plan; and should include suitable measures to contribute to the overall biodiversity in the District, in accordance with the requirements of PPS9.

The redevelopment of previously developed land should incorporate measures to protect any biodiversity interest.

6.23 Biodiversity – the variety of life on earth – is at the heart of our aim for a more sustainable future.⁵⁶ Two sites in the District are designated as Special Protection Areas under the European Directive. These are the Durham Coast and Castle Eden Dene Special Areas of Conservation which enjoy statutory protection. These sites, identified on the Proposals Map, are also designated as National Nature Reserves.

6.24 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's) are designated nationally and also receive statutory protection under the Countryside Act 2000. The many SSSIs in Easington District are designated for their biological or geological interest.

6.25 Locally or regionally important areas of wildlife, nature conservation or geological importance include County Wildlife Sites and County Geological Sites, regionally important geological/geomorphological sites, local nature reserves, ancient woodlands and veteran trees, and hedgerows. Areas of the District which are a focus for many of these features are identified as Areas of High Landscape Value. Development on or affecting any of these sites will only be allowed where the importance of the development outweighs the regional and local value of the site.

⁵⁶ Working with the grain of nature – A biodiversity strategy for England, DEFRA, 2002

6.26 The ability of wildlife to move between urban and rural environments and sites of nature conservation importance is vital in terms of migration and colonisation. The wildlife corridors in the District are significant connections between the coast and countryside to be protected from development that will fragment or isolate habitats. Certain species are protected by law, principally under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 2981 and the Habitats Regulation.

6.27 Developer contributions

Preferred POLICY CS14. PLANNING OBLIGATIONS

In order to secure necessary community benefits required as a consequence of development, the Council will seek to negotiate planning obligations where any of the following circumstances apply:

- i) where the provision of affordable housing is required;
- ii) where there is a need to ensure that the residential development is phased to ensure regeneration in accordance with the Spatial Strategy, and delivery of accommodation for the elderly in identified locations;
- iii) where infrastructure, drainage and flood prevention measures are required;
- iv) where development requires highway, transport and access improvements;
- v) where community facilities and services are required;
- vi) where contributions for Art are appropriate;
- vii) where green space or recreation provision or maintenance is required;
- viii) where improvements to biodiversity and heritage assets are required;
- ix) where mitigation measures are required to remedy the adverse environmental or social impacts of development, or to address climate change.

Detailed guidance will be provided in Supplementary Planning Documents in order to determine the levels of contributions and procedures to secure them.

6.28 Planning obligations are legal agreements between landowners or developers and the Council. They enable the proper management of development proposals to deliver sustainable development which meets key social, environmental and economic objectives. The use of planning obligations provides a means to secure developer contributions towards the provision of vital infrastructure and services, or towards vital mitigation measures, to enable proposed developments to proceed. The use of a planning obligation should ensure that proper consideration is given to the environmental and social issues of development, and that measures are taken to enhance and maintain local neighbourhood services and facilities in

accordance with the aims of the East Durham Community Strategy⁵⁷.

- 6.29 Factors such as the scale, type and location of development will impact on the level of contributions, each development proposal will be assessed on its own merits. The Council will prepare Supplementary Planning Guidance to assist in preparing planning obligations.

⁵⁷ East Durham Community Strategy, 2001

Annex A

Assessment of Issues Options	Outcome of consultation response and sustainability appraisal
<p>Issue CS1: How should our towns develop in the future?</p> <p><i>Defining a vision:</i></p> <p>Strategy for Seaham to develop as key tourist, retail and leisure centre; Strategy for Peterlee to develop as key administrative, employment, retail and leisure centre; Strategy for villages is renewal and stability</p> <p>Taken forward in policy CS1</p>	<p>Respondents generally supported the proposed vision for how Easington should develop, wide acceptance that the main towns did not provide services expected; housing renewal and regeneration featured highly as means to encourage stability in the villages particularly, also the need to improve accessibility and the quality of the environment. These strategies for shaping the places in the District underpin the Core Strategy</p>
<p>Issue CS2: Where should new housing be built in the District?</p> <p><i>Preferred Options:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prioritise development in the main towns to improve their viability and secure a sustainable future as employment, retail and service centres for the whole District. 2. Development in villages where it supports local housing needs, for housing renewal and improvements of choice for local residents. <p>Taken forward in policies CS1, CS6</p> <p><i>Option not taken forward:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Permit limited growth and development dispersed across all of the district's settlements. 	<p>Appraisal shows option 1 will minimise the need to travel, supplemented by option 2 to meet social objectives; option 3 is not compatible with environmental objectives and is unlikely to deliver affordable housing. The need for greater investment in the main towns for growth and viability to drive regeneration is widely recognised, although not at the expense of declining villages. Accepted that some villages have inadequate services and facilities to be sustainable locations for growth.</p>
<p>Issue CS3: How can we improve existing housing?</p> <p><i>Preferred Options:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Demolition and rebuild in those areas where residents need more choice of the type and mix of property to meet local needs. 3. An appropriate amount and type of affordable housing to be built in all new housing schemes. <p>Taken forward in policies CS6, CS7, CS10, CS11, CS12</p> <p><i>Option not taken forward:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demolition of poorest properties in the less stable areas, to improve the appearance of the neighbourhood and create favourable conditions to encourage investment in the remaining properties. 	<p>The appraisal shows all options provide positive benefits but Option 2 and 3 are the preferred option to generate stability and housing choice through renewal. Rebuild on cleared sites will encourage community cohesion, clearance of outdated housing alone will not address public concerns regarding environmental quality and the social decline of neighbourhoods. Housing development is recognised in representations as a catalyst for regeneration, but affordable housing is needed to maintain community cohesion.</p> <p>Measures to mitigate environmental impacts will include policies to embed renewable energy and to encourage sustainable construction</p>

<p>Issue CS4: How should we deal with vacant land and buildings?</p> <p><i>Preferred options:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to permit redevelopment of all sites that come available within all the existing urban areas for housing. 4. Only permit redevelopment for housing where it would provide the type and mix of housing needed for residents in the locality. <p>Taken forward CS1, CS6, CS7, CS14</p> <p><i>Options not taken forward:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Use brownfield land for other uses, but not built development. 3. Limit redevelopment of brownfield sites according to their contribution to the sustainability of the main towns and surrounding settlements. 	<p>Option 3, limiting the redevelopment of brownfield sites to the main towns and linked settlements, would provide the most sustainable solution, as new development would only be in central locations with the best services and facilities. However, the need for housing renewal in the other former colliery villages is also acute, capacity from development on these sites will support restructure of the housing stock to deliver choice and affordability. Representations promoted the use of sites in the village cores before those on the edges to create cohesive communities.</p> <p>A consequence of option 2 would be considerable increase in amenity green space without a needs basis, the green space strategy indicates that the District has a surplus and should focus resources on quality improvement.</p> <p>Some mitigation measures in emerging policy to focus redevelopment of sites in the village cores prior to development at the settlement limits and to recognise the biodiversity potential of brownfield sites will ensure optimum sustainable approach.</p>
<p>Issue CS5: Do we need to review settlement boundaries to manage new development in the villages and make them more attractive places?</p> <p><i>Preferred options:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Remove settlement boundaries from some villages in the most rural areas to restrict all development in those locations through countryside policies. 3. Do not detract the settlement boundaries and allow housing development on brownfield infill sites where it meets the needs of the local residents. <p>Taken forward in policies CS1</p> <p><i>Option not taken forward:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Draw settlement boundaries more tightly around the built up areas to limit the potential number of sites coming forward for unplanned housing development. 	<p>Whilst option 1 was assessed as the most sustainable, reducing settlement boundaries in a Core Strategy would constrain options in a subsequent Allocations DPD and would be more appropriately considered at that time.</p> <p>A combination of options 2 and 3 provides a strategic approach to managing development appropriate to a Core Strategy. Limiting development in the rural villages is widely supported if it directs development to the larger villages and main towns where services are available and regeneration needs are greatest.</p>

<p>Issue CS6: Do we have the right type of sites available to attract new employers?</p> <p><i>Preferred options:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support the continuing growth and development of the administration and manufacturing sectors. 2. Support growth and development of smaller business units to provide facilities for local entrepreneurs. 3. Support the diversification of the economy into other areas such as retail, leisure and knowledge based industries. 4. Support the growth of the tourism sector using both natural assets and building on existing facilities. <p>Taken forward in policies CS2, CS3, CS4, CS5, CS10, CS11</p> <p><i>Options not taken forward:</i></p> <p><i>Alternative proposal:</i> Limit office development in the town centres to encourage occupancy of vacant premises on the business parks</p>	<p>The 4 options contribute positively to the sustainability objectives and can be taken forward together. Respondents recognised the need for diversification of the economy without promoting any particular sector; the natural environment, particularly the coast, should be protected in the drive to develop a tourist economy. Policies will support a portfolio of sites as identified by the Employment Land Review</p> <p>The town centres are a sustainable location for commercial property, particularly where they attract high numbers of employees and customers. Vacant premises on the business parks will be addressed in the Employment Land Review and alternative options considered.</p> <p>Mitigation measures should be provided in emerging policies to ensure high quality design, sustainable construction and good accessibility for new development.</p>
<p>Issue CS7: How can we help to create the right conditions for successful business?</p> <p><i>Preferred options:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promote further growth and development in the business parks and industrial estates of Peterlee and Seaham, as they are accessible to more residents. 2. Encourage growth and development of employment uses in the larger colliery villages to support some of the regeneration initiatives. 3. Improve public transport facilities, including the railway, to encourage resident to travel by public transport to places of employment. 4. Support the opening of training facilities and employment opportunities throughout the District to make them accessible to more residents. <p>Taken forward in policies CS1, CS2, CS3, CS5, CS10, CS11</p> <p><i>Options not taken forward:</i> None</p>	<p>All of the options contribute positively to the sustainability objectives and can be taken forward together to maximise use of existing employment parks, supported by improvement in transport infrastructure. No additional locations were proposed for consideration, development in settlements should be commensurate with their size</p> <p>Mitigation measures should be provided in emerging policies to ensure high quality design, sustainable construction and good accessibility for new development and to avoid increasing congestion</p>

<p>Issue CS8: How can we encourage more leisure facilities?</p> <p><i>Preferred options:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Encourage new evening leisure activities in the towns to expand the vitality of the centres. <p>Taken forward in policies CS3, CS4</p> <p><i>Option not taken forward</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Support the development of evening leisure activities throughout the District. 	<p>Option 1 best meets the sustainability objectives. There is no evening economy in the District, overwhelming support was for development to be focused on the main towns to protect amenity in the villages.</p>
<p>Issue CS9: How can we support development of education, skills and training?</p> <p><i>Preferred options:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Encourage and support the development of further education and training facilities, and the joint use of these to encourage public access to training. <p>Taken forward in policy CS2, CS3, CS5</p> <p><i>Option not taken forward:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Require developers to use local labour as much as possible when implementing their proposals. 	<p>Although this is an aspiration of regeneration initiatives and implemented where appropriate, option 2 cannot reasonably be delivered as a requirement in planning policy. Policy to maximise capacity of education and training facilities were supported by respondents, along with measures to improve access particularly in the villages, will supplement Building Schools for the Future program.</p>
<p>Issue CS10: How should we protect and improve our countryside?</p> <p><i>Preferred options:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promote further development of the coast for tourism and recreation to support regeneration aims of the District. 2. Identify opportunities for enhancements along strategic transport routes. <p>Taken forward in policies CS4, CS9, CS12, CS13, CS14</p> <p><i>Option not taken forward:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Review the purpose of and effect of the green wedge. 	<p>Options 1 and 2 remain a high priority, tourism should be encouraged as part of the drive to diversify the economy.</p> <p>Mitigation measures should address environmental capacity to maintain appropriate balance between development and protection of sensitive landscape</p> <p>Option 3 does not offer any more protection than countryside policies, presenting a strategic gap rather than a Wedge given the brownfield development site in the centre, which countryside policies can maintain. Respondents were keen to see this linked to the Green Belt but this is not feasible given it is geographically distant. The Central Area of High Landscape Value provides the protection sought for this area and this designation will be retained.</p>

<p>Issue CS11: How should we protect and improve our built heritage?</p> <p><i>Preferred options:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review the extent of our conservation areas and what features are important in them, and if any other areas are worthy of consideration. 2. Consider higher aspirations for the quality of our built heritage, particularly the town centres. <p>Taken forward in policies CS3, CS10, CS12,</p> <p><i>Options not taken forward:</i> None</p>	<p>All of the options contribute positively to the sustainability objectives and can be taken forward together. Respondents related to a need to address quality, energy and climate change. Consultation with local communities was highlighted in consideration of designations which affect them</p>
<p>Issue DC1: How do we create better quality urban space to improve the quality of life for residents?</p> <p><i>Preferred options:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Negotiate with developers for a higher level of design quality, particularly for prominent sites or important schemes. 2. Encourage all new developers to contribute in some way towards the provisions for art. 3. Secure the improvement of more derelict land and property to improve the appearance of the local environment. 4. Ensure that the community facilities and services provided in the locality are appropriate, and in the right location, to meet community needs. 5. Consider the concept of home zones, to create safe streets where the priority is for social use rather than the car. 6. Seek the provision of the right type of green space and leisure facilities for local needs. <p>Taken forward in policies CS9, CS10, CS14</p> <p><i>Options not taken forward:</i> None</p>	<p>All of the options are compatible with the sustainability objectives to protect and enhance the urban and rural environments, and with each other. There is no alternative approach given the low base from which the District is trying to recover, consultation sought to identify the appetite to pursue different priorities. Design quality was rated highly among respondents, as was the need for a green infrastructure to meet social and environmental objectives. Mitigation measures in policy should address the biodiversity potential of previously developed sites.</p>

<p>Issue DC2: How do we manage the control of development to maintain a supply of employment land?</p> <p><i>Preferred options:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reserve some employment land for manufacturing or warehousing? 2. Allow the manufacture and retail of bulky goods on all sites, or reserve some employment land for higher-level economic activities? <p>Taken forward in policies CS2, CS3</p> <p><i>Options not taken forward:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Consider greater use of employment sites for a mix of uses? 	<p>Whilst Option 3 scores most highly in terms of sustainability, evidence of shortage of employment land supply dictates that current sites should be reserved for employment and this option cannot be realistically taken forward. Options must deliver an appropriate supply of employment land, of a type and location to meet economic objectives to diversify the employment base. A combination of options 1 and 2 will secure a portfolio of employment sites to meet local needs. Policy will be prepared in the light of outcomes of the Employment Land Review.</p>
<p>Issue DC3: How should information and telecommunications equipment be managed?</p>	<p>This issue is appropriately addressed through national Planning Policy Guidance 8, Telecommunications (PPG8) without additional local interpretation. The issue will not consequently be taken forward into the LDF Preferred Options document.</p>
<p>Issue DC4: How can we ensure good access to employment sites?</p> <p><i>Preferred Options:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Give higher priority to the submission of travel plans for development proposals, which will generate trips by visitors and employees? 2. Manage implications of development proposals on the transport and highway networks? <p>Taken forward in policy CS5</p> <p><i>Options not taken forward:</i> Extend the Metro from Sunderland into Easington District</p>	<p>Accessibility is repeatedly raised by respondents as a significant local issue for employment. However, these options have been overtaken by national planning requirements in Circular 01/2006 which introduced changes to the development control system and the requirement for design and access statements to be submitted with planning applications. Policy will aim to secure sustainable travel options with development proposals.</p> <p>Other transport infrastructure provision is beyond the scope of delivery by the LDF Core Strategy</p>

<p>Issue DC5: How do we properly manage coast and countryside development?</p> <p><i>Preferred options:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Balance nature conservation interests against development of the coast and countryside for recreation and tourism? 2. Positive measures in development proposals to manage designated sites and nature conservation interests? 3. Consideration of structures like stables, animal shelters or trotting tracks used for non- agricultural purposes in the countryside? 4. Policy for other rural developments including farm diversification and renewable energy schemes? 5. Re-use of existing buildings in the countryside where they make a positive contribution to the rural environment? <p>Taken forward in policies CS4, CS10, CS12, CS13, CS14</p> <p><i>Options not taken forward:</i> None</p>	<p>None of the options have negative effects on the sustainability objectives and taken forward together will offer greater cumulative benefits. Consultation sought to identify the appetite to pursue different priorities to balance conservation interests and development potential in taking the issue forward. The preferred approach will seek to maximise opportunities for development but within the limits of local environmental capacity</p>
<p>Issue DC6: How can we manage development for energy generation and energy conservation?</p> <p><i>Preferred options:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Require a proportion of energy to be used in new development to come from on-site renewable energy development? 2. Balance renewable energy development requirements against protection of the landscape? <p>Taken forward in policies CS11, CS12</p> <p><i>Options not taken forward:</i> None</p>	<p>The most sustainable approach would be a combination of both options to maximise positive benefits, to be achieved by including a requirement for a proportion of energy in each development to be from on-site renewable energy, and mitigated by requirements to protect the landscape.</p>

Annex B
Monitoring and Implementation Framework

POLICY	OBJECTIVE	TARGET	INDICATOR	DELIVERY MECHANISM
CS1				
CS2				
CS3				
CS4				
CS5				
CS6				
CS7				
CS8				
CS9				
CS10				
CS11				
CS12				
CS13				
CS14				

Annex C
Review where partial Local Plan policies retained
Table of Local Plan Policies Replaced by this LDF Document

LDF CORE STRATEGY AND DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICY	REPLACES 'SAVED' LOCAL PLAN POLICY:
CS1 The Spatial Strategy	
CS2 Providing For Employment	Policy 49 Strategic Reserve site Policy 51 development of small industrial estates Policy 52 Prestige industrial estates Policy 53 Existing general industrial estates Policy 54 Existing small industrial estates Policy 62 Working from home Policy 63 Control of taxi business Policy 94 provision of education facilities
CS3 Tourism and Visitor Attractions	Policy 85 Crimdon Policy S28 Seaham North Dock
CS4 Meeting Housing Requirements	Policy 67 Windfall housing sites Policy 71 Rest homes, nursing homes, sheltered accommodation
CS5 Affordable Housing	
CS6 Gypsies and Travellers	Policy72 Control of sites for travellers
CS7 Town and Local Centres	Policy 89 Development of leisure and community buildings Policy 95 Provision of health facilities Policy 96 Protection of community facilities Policy 101 Protection of town centres Policy 102 Local and neighbourhood centres Policy 104 Major out-of-centre retail development Policy 113 Markets Policy B11 Blackhall local centre Policy E16 Easington local centre Policy Ho11 Hornden local centre Policy M12 Murton Local centre Policy P15 Peterlee shopping centre Policy S32 Seaham shopping centre Policy S33 Seaham town centre Policy Sh12 Shotton local centre Policy Wh11 Wheatley Hill local centre Policy Wi14 Wingate local centre
CS8 Sustainable Travel and Access	Policy 36 Design for access Policy 37 Design for parking Policy 38 Designing out crime Policy 74 footpaths and rights of way Policy 75 Provision for cyclists and pedestrians Policy 77 Public transport services Policy 79 Access onto the A19(T) Policy 81 Movement of freight Policy S16 seaham Station Policy S17 seaham cycleways
CS9 Green Space and Recreation	Policy 66 Provision of outdoor play space Policy 88 Swimming pool in north of District Policy 90 Protection of outdoor sports provision Policy 91 Protection of children's play space Policy 92 Protection of amenity open space Policy Wi11 Wingate play area
CS10 Promoting High Quality Design	Policy 1 General Principles Policy 35 Design and layout of development Policy 39 Design for Art Policy 48 Proper maintenance of land or buildings Policy 73 Extensions to dwelling houses Policy 93 Facilities for the arts Policy 109 Shop front design Policy 110 Security shutters and grills Policy 111 Hot food takeaways

	Policy Wh12 Wheatley hill improvements Policy Wh13 Wheatley hill amenity improvement
CS11 Sustainable Development and Renewable Energy	Policy 1 General Principles Policy 44 Development on landfill sites Policy 45 development on colliery sites
CS12 Protection and Enhancement of Landscape and Local Heritage	Policy 1 General Principles Policy 4 Green Belt extension Policy 9 Coastal Zone Policy 22 Conservation Areas Policy 24 Protection of Listed Buildings Policy 84 Undeveloped coast Policy C1 amenity in Castle Eden Policy C2 adaptation of buildings in Castle Eden
CS13 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation	Policy 7 Areas of High Landscape Value Policy 14 Protection of Special Areas of Conservation Policy 15 Protection of Sites of Special Scientific Interest Policy 16 Protection of Sites of Nature Conservation Importance Policy 17 Identification and protection of wildlife corridors Policy 18 Species and Habitat Protection Policy 19 management of areas of Nature Conservation Interest
CS14 Planning Obligations	Policy 29 Sites for recycling

Annex D

Strategy	Key Objective	Link with Core Strategy Objectives	Link with Core Strategy Policies
Other Local Strategies			
		Objective	
County Durham Strategies			
Regional Strategies			

Evidence base: list of documents