

# WEAR VALLEY DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN



ADOPTED PLAN  
MARCH 1997

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WEAR  
VALLEY  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

ROBERT M. HOPE (BA, B Phil, MRTPI)  
DIRECTOR OF PLANNING

CIVIC CENTRE, CROOK, COUNTY DURHAM. DL15 9ES  
TELEPHONE : (01388) 765555 FAX : (01388) 766660  
MINICOM : (01388) 761515



# FOREWORD

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The environment of Wear Valley District is of interest to all who live in, work in and visit the area. Its future development needs to be carefully controlled both to preserve its beauty and the quality of life it affords its residents and to realise its potential for development for essential housing, industry and other commercial uses, in order to achieve a sustainable future for all communities.

The framework for future development is provided in this statutory Districtwide Local Plan for the administrative area of Wear Valley District Council. It sets out the relevant land use policies to conserve the character and qualities of the district, and allocates sufficient land to accommodate growth over the period to 2006.

It has been prepared in accordance with the relevant legislation and has been the subject of considerable public participation and debate; this adopted Local Plan reflects the input from the wider community of the District.

The District Council hopes that all those who use the Plan and have an interest in Wear Valley approach the document in a positive and open-minded way. For the Plan to be a success, it requires the co-operation of all concerned.

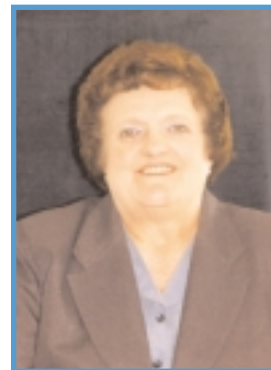
We would like to express our thanks to all those groups, organisations and individuals within the community who have commented and contributed to the content of the Plan; and to all the District Council Members and officers for all their hard work in preparing the Local Plan.



*Chair of Planning Committee*



*Leader of the Council*



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# Introduction

# BACKGROUND TO THE PLAN

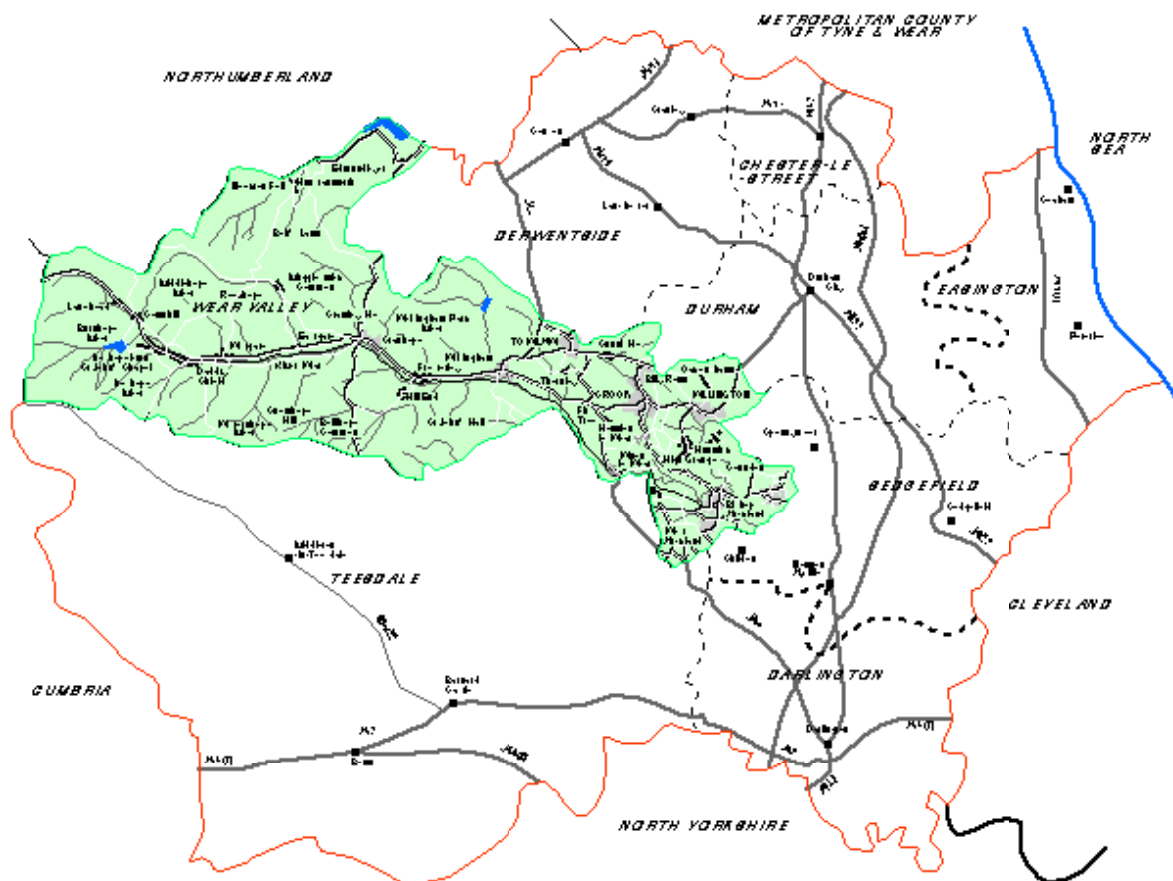


Fig. 1

## 1. WHAT IS A LOCAL PLAN AND WHY HAVE ONE?

- (i) The Wear Valley District Local Plan is a statutory document. It provides a land use framework in which the District's future needs for growth, protection and restraint are balanced. It forms the basis for taking day to day planning decisions. The Plan allocates areas, which are appropriate in terms of environmental impact, development demand and social need, to accommodate growth, and protects areas where development would be unsuitable. The Local Plan aims to ensure that land within the District is used in ways which are for the benefit of the residents of Wear Valley as a whole, balancing the demands of business with the needs of the public within the environment of the District.
- (ii) The Local Plan has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compensation Act 1991.

The 1991 Act places a mandatory duty on all local authorities to prepare a local plan for their area. In accordance with this legislative framework the Local Plan :-

- \* sets out the District Council's policies for the control of development; and
- \* makes proposals for the development and use of land and allocates land for specific purposes.
- (iii) The Local Plan covers the whole of the Administrative area of Wear Valley District (see

Figure 1) and will be valid for a period from the adoption of the plan by the Council to the year 2006.

## 2. PLAN PREPARATION AND PUBLIC CONSULTATION

- (iv) This document is the "adopted" version of the Local Plan and is the result of a structured plan preparation process. It is based upon a detailed understanding, gained through survey work and by consultation with local people, of the environmental, economic and social conditions prevailing in the District. The Local Plan therefore seeks to reflect the needs and aspirations of local people.
- (v) A **Local Plan Brief** was produced in April 1991 and circulated for consultation. The Brief led to the production of the following documents:-

- \* **Wear Valley Local Plan Issues and Objectives (September 1991)**; a summary of 12 detailed topic reports highlighting essential background for the production of the Local Plan, dealing with such matters as population, housing, industry and the natural and built environment.
- \* **Wear Valley Local Plan : A Draft Strategy (September 1991)**

- (vi) An informal public consultation exercise was undertaken in the Autumn of 1991 based on these documents. This exercise involved the use of 19 exhibition venues for a total of 81 days, public meetings at each venue, the circulation of a questionnaire and formal consultation with

statutory bodies and organisations. In total over 1,400 people attended the exhibitions and meetings and over 1000 questionnaires were completed.

(vii) The results of this consultation exercise were compiled into the **Wear Valley District Local Plan : Consultation Report** and reported to the Planning Committee in April 1992, and were used to formulate the policies and proposals contained within the Draft Local Plan.

(viii) The **Local Plan Consultation Draft** was approved by the District Council on 17th February 1993 and published for public comment in June 1993. Consultations took place from 14th June to 6th August 1993 and involved direct consultation with 170 organisations both locally and nationally and a series of 16 public exhibitions throughout the District. In total over 1050 people attended the exhibitions and 214 formal responses were made to the Local Plan. The results of this consultation exercise were compiled into the **Wear Valley District Local Plan: Report on Pre-deposit Consultation** which included reference to all comments made to the Plan and how the Plan was recommended to be changed. The report was agreed by Council on 17th January 1994, with minor amendments being agreed by Planning Committee on 2nd February, 23rd February and 16th March 1994.

(ix) The **Deposit Local Plan** was published in April 1994 and made available for public consultation. Over 400 objections were considered by an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for the Environment, either at a Public Local Inquiry or as Written Representations between March and May 1995.

(x) The Inspector's Report on the Wear Valley District Local Plan was considered by the Council and the subsequent **Proposed Modifications** were published in July 1996. After examining the representations received on the Proposed Modifications, the Council resolved to adopt the Plan in March 1997.

### 3. HOW TO USE THE PLAN

(xi) The Local Plan consists of:-

- 1) The written statement, containing the detailed policies and proposals of the plan; and
- 2) The Proposals Map, consisting of a base plan of the whole District and a series of 32 more detailed individual settlement inset plans.

(xii) The Written Statement consists of:-

- \* Part 1 - The general strategy of the Plan and general development principles.
- \* Part 2 - The policies and proposals of the Local Plan organised according to subject matter i.e. Environment, Housing, Industry, etc. Policies and Proposals are printed in bold type within the text and are followed by the background or justification for their inclusion. Proposals refer to specific sites

and areas of land where development is anticipated in the Local Plan period to 2006. Policies refer to wider areas, in some cases the whole District, to control or guide development in accordance with the Local Plan's aims.

- \* Part 3 - Individual settlement studies grouped accordingly into the three sub areas of Bishop Auckland, Crook and Willington and Weardale. Each individual settlement study includes a brief description and a list of policies relevant to the locality and proposal maps. All inset plans plus the overall District plan constitute the Local Plan Proposals Map.
- \* Further Plan Guidance (FPG) - This provides additional criteria (which will be considered together with the relevant policy) against which development proposals will be judged.
- \* Appendices - These include factual information, for example lists of designated sites and definitions of the Use Class Order.
- \* Glossary - This provides an explanation of some of the more frequently used words and terms in the Local Plan.



# Part 1

## Local Plan Strategy

# Chapter 1

## GENERAL DEVELOPMENT CRITERIA



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## General Development Criteria

- 1.1 New development gives the opportunity to improve the built environs of the area making it more attractive. An attractive environment in which to live and work is essential for the way in which people perceive their surroundings and adds to their quality of life. Developers will be encouraged to follow the general development principles established in Policy GD1 to create new schemes which compliment and enhance the surrounding area. The Council will seek to promote well designed developments which are functional, attractive and durable, incorporating landscape features and relating well to the local environment.
- 1.2 Full use should be made of natural features such as important trees, hedgerows, site boundaries and varying ground levels on site. It is important to maintain the setting of an area by the retention of, and creation of new open spaces and new wildlife habitats. Adequate open space and landscaping provision is important to ensure the new development is incorporated into the wider area. Existing traditional structures and buildings, such as stone out-buildings, stone walls etc, should be utilised and incorporated within new schemes. The layout of new development should closely relate to the existing settlement patterns, for example, a suburban cul-de-sac layouts will be resisted within a countryside setting.
- 1.3 Adequate and safe access will be required to the satisfaction of the highway authority. Highway design standards for new development are included in Further Plan Guidance 1 (FPG1). Schemes will also be required to fulfil the Durham County Council Parking Standards which are listed in FPG2. Developments which create unacceptable levels of traffic which exceed the capacity of the local road network will be resisted.
- 1.4 Residential, commercial and employment developments require careful location to help reduce the need for additional car journeys. It is appreciated that it is a personal decision as to where to live and work, and whether to use a car. Locating land uses within easy access to each other and to the public transport network will give the opportunity to use alternative methods of transport to the car. As specified in PPG12, reducing the number of car journeys is vital to cut down the levels of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions which contribute significantly to the greenhouse effect and global warming.
- 1.5 New development should be designed where possible to incorporate energy conservation features. Energy efficiency should not be seen as an after thought, but should be a key feature in all new development. Energy efficiency developments are vital to help reduce the demand on non-renewable fossil fuel resources and to produce a lifestyle which is self-sustaining.
- 1.6 New developments should be complementary to existing adjoining uses and not be in conflict with the surrounding area. Within an identified floodplain or in areas at unacceptable risk from flooding the Council will seek to resist new development, the intensification of existing development or land raising.

## General Development Criteria

### Policy GD1

All new development and redevelopment within the District should be designed and built to a high standard and should contribute to the quality and built environment of the surrounding area. Permission will be granted provided it fulfils, where appropriate, the following design criteria:-

#### Design and Setting

- (i) it is in keeping with the character and appearance of the area and is designed to be appropriate in terms of form, mass, scale, layout, density and materials to the town or village in which it is to be situated; and
- (ii) it has regard and is appropriate to the setting of neighbouring buildings, landscape features and open spaces of the surrounding areas; and
- (iii) its landscape, natural and historic features on site are retained and incorporated into the design and layout of the scheme; and
- (iv) it would not result in the loss of important open spaces within the built-up areas and villages of the District (BE14); and
- (v) adequate access, toilet and parking facilities are provided for the elderly, disabled and people with children for all proposals which provide access for the general public; and
- (vi) it would not disturb or conflict with adjoining uses; and
- (vii) adequate open space provision is incorporated within the design and layout of the site as stated in Policies H24, RL3, 4 and 5; and
- (viii) adequate foul and storm water drainage within and away from the development site are provided. Proposals will not be permitted which would exceed the capacity of the existing or planned sewerage and drainage system; and
- (ix) it is located and designed, where possible, to conserve energy and be energy efficient. This should include the southerly orientation of buildings, limiting the size of windows on north aspects, insulation and double glazing, screening from prevailing winds, avoiding exposed locations; and
- (x) it is designed, where possible, to deter crime and to increase personal safety. Design will need to incorporate open, well lit layouts which reduce high risk areas where the user is unsighted due to vegetation, alcoves or corners; and

#### Landscape and Environmental Impact

- (xi) it would not have a detrimental impact on the landscape quality of the surrounding area; and
- (xii) it would not endanger or damage important national and local wildlife habitats or have a

detrimental impact on the ecology and geology of the District (ENV9-13); and

- (xiii) adequate landscaping is incorporated within the design and layout of the site and where appropriate, creation of wildlife habitats; and
- (xiv) for major land use proposals, (including roads, industrial development and housing sites of over 25 dwellings on the edge of settlements) structural landscaping around the periphery of the site is provided to mitigate the impact of the scheme to the surrounding area and to blend the developments urban edge into the countryside; and
- (xv) it would not be detrimental to public health; and
- (xvi) it would not significantly pollute the environment with dust, noise, emission, outfall or discharges of any kind; and
- (xvii) it would not have a detrimental impact on ground water resources; and
- (xviii) an Environmental Assessment will be required for proposals likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as their nature, size or location [Subject to the provisions of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Assessment of Environmental Effects) Regulations 1988]; and
- (xix) it is not in an identified floodplain or area at risk from flooding; and

#### Highway and Transport

- (xx) safe access to the site and adequate parking facilities are provided, in accordance with the Highway Design Standards and Car Parking Standards contained in Further Plan Guidance Notes 1 and 2; and
- (xxi) it would not create unacceptable levels of traffic which exceeds the capacity of the local road network; and
- (xxii) adequate links and access to public transport systems are incorporated within the layout of the site. Large development sites will be required to provide access for public transport networks; and
- (xxiii) priority is given to pedestrians and cyclists within the development site and provide links into the local footpath and cycleway networks where practicable.

# Chapter 2

## THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

### LANDSCAPE PROTECTION

- ENV1 Protection of the Countryside
- ENV2 The North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- ENV3 Areas of Landscape Value
- ENV4 Historic Parkland Landscapes

### LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENT

- ENV5 Landscape Action Areas
- ENV6 Reclamation

### AGRICULTURAL LAND

- ENV7 Protection of Agricultural Land
- ENV8 Phasing of Agricultural Land

### NATURE CONSERVATION

- ENV9 Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation
- ENV10 Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- ENV11 Sites of Nature Conservation Importance and Local Nature Reserves
- ENV12 Creation of New Sites for Nature Conservation
- ENV13 Protection of Species and their Habitats

### TREES

- ENV14 Tree Preservation Orders
- ENV15 Ancient Woodlands
- ENV16 Community Forests



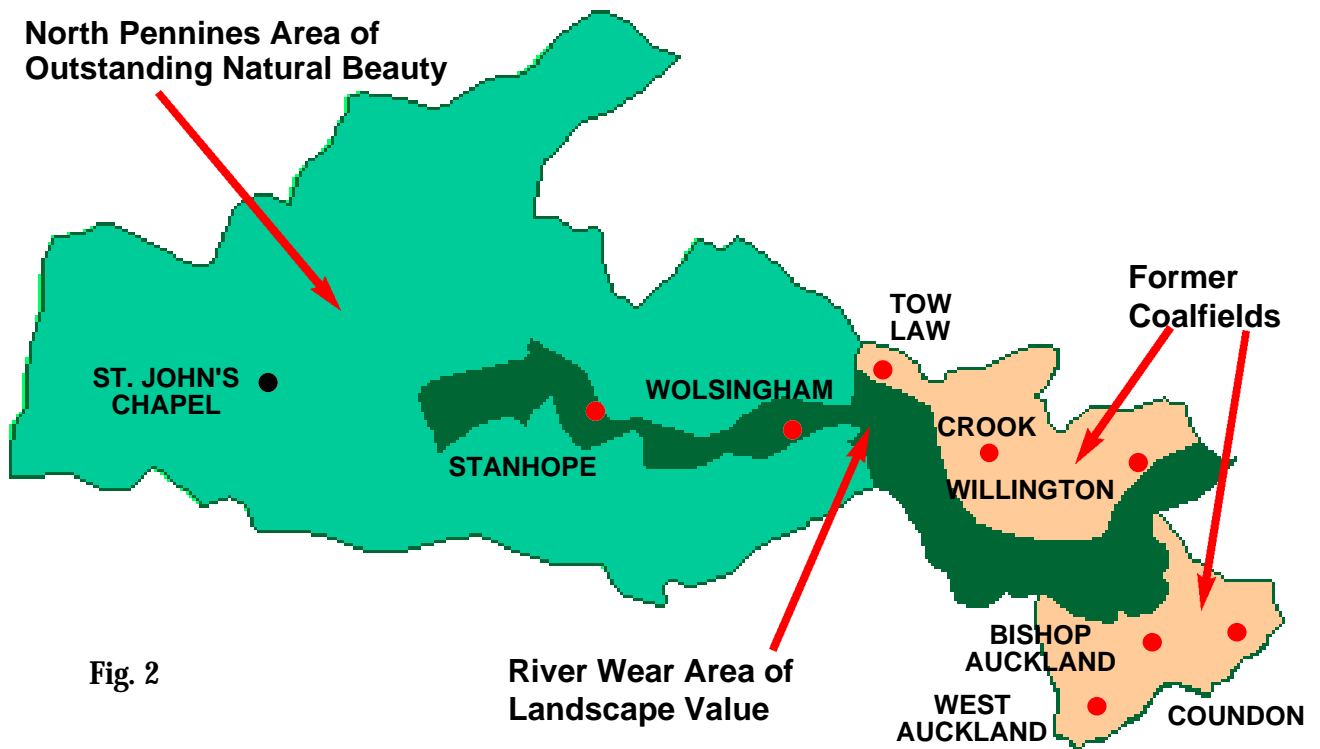


Fig. 2

2.1 Protection and enhancement of the local environment is one of the Council's most important activities and one which should be of direct benefit to all who live in Wear Valley or who visit the District. The Countryside of the District is under increased pressure today with shifts in agricultural policy, increased demand for tourism and recreation, the move of people from towns to more rural locations, the continued pressure from mineral extraction, industrial development and new road links. The local environment should be regarded as an inheritance and one that should be protected and enhanced allowing future generations to enjoy it. Although the countryside is changing and evolving it is vital that change is carried out in harmony with Wear Valley's unique and special landscape and wide ranging wildlife habitats.

**Landscape**

2.2 The landscape of Wear Valley is predominantly a rural one covering an area of 50,500 hectares. It is very diverse, from the attractive open heather moorland of the AONB located in the west of the District to the winding river valley of the lower slopes of the River Wear. To the east of the District lies the former coalfield areas where pockets of dereliction and despoliation are all that remains from the former mining industries.

2.3 The landscape of Wear Valley can be divided into the following three basic areas, as shown on Figure 2 :-

- a) The North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

2.4 National recognition of the landscape quality of the west of the District was given by its inclusion in the

North Pennines' Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) designated in 1988. The area of the District included within the designation is essentially the area west of the A68 but excluding the River Wear Valley bottom as far as Eastgate.

2.5 The special quality of the North Pennines AONB has long been admired for its unenclosed open heather moorland landscape. The moors provide valuable habitats for flora and fauna and are managed for rough grazing and grouse shooting. In addition the AONB contains a number of important meadows, pastures and woodlands of nature conservation importance.

2.6 Scattered throughout the AONB are farm buildings, which together with a distinctive pattern of dry stone walls which enclose both valley farmland and large expanses of moorland are an integral feature of the landscape. In addition, throughout the AONB, there is physical evidence of Weardale's industrial past particularly that which relates to the lead mining and stone quarrying industry. Several small areas of block coniferous planting are imprinted on the open tops of the AONB.

- b) The River Valleys/Area of Landscape Value

2.7 The area of the District between the AONB and the former coalfield areas to the east of the District is a mix of the landscape of the Wear River valley, two historic parklands and open agricultural countryside. Part of this area has been recognised as being of County landscape importance and is designated an Area of Landscape Value.

- c) Former Coalfield Areas

2.8 The former coalfield area lies in the eastern part of the District. Once the scene of intensive coal

extraction the area now is essentially a rural landscape with a scattering of small former mining settlements. It is an area where much opencast coal extraction has taken place and where as a consequence landscape quality has been impaired. To the east of the River Wear Valley north of Bishop Auckland is an area of the Central Durham Magnesian Limestone Escarpment with its characteristic landscapes. In both these areas there is a need for more tree cover and hedgerow planting.

### Nature Conservation

- 2.9 Throughout the District there are important nature conservation habitats, which have been designated for their international, national and local importance. The North Pennines Moors have been put forward by the Department of the Environment for designation as a Special Protection Area (SPA) under Article 41 (Annex 1) of the EC Directive on Conservation of Wild Birds (79/409/EEC). The District contains 16 "Sites of Special Scientific Interest" which have been designated by English Nature for their national importance. County Geological and County Wildlife Sites (identified as Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI) have been designated for their local importance. The compilation of Regionally Important Geological/Geomorphological Sites (RIGS) in the District is currently being undertaken by the RIGS Group.
- 2.10 It is vital that sites of ecological importance in the District are protected from the harmful effects of development and mismanagement. However, PPG9 Nature Conservation recognises that local planning authorities should not refuse planning permission if development can be subject to conditions that will prevent damaging impacts for example by requiring areas to be fenced off or by restricting operations or users to specific times of year. Planning obligations can also be used, for example to secure funds for long term management of nature conservation sites. In relation and subject to the provisions of Schedule 2 of Town and Country Planning (Assessment of Environmental Effects) Regulations 1988, the Council will require an environmental statement to accompany any development proposals affecting the prime nature conservation resources in the District as identified in Policy ENV9,10,11.

### Agriculture

- 2.11 The landscape of Wear Valley District, like most rural parts of England and Wales, is experiencing changes. In particular, changes within agriculture have been of significance in Wear Valley, as approximately 60% of the District is used for agriculture.
- 2.12 A major problem for the marginal hill farms in Weardale is the very small average business size in the area. In some cases this has led to the amalgamation of holdings, often with the consequential loss of agricultural employment. The response of other farmers has been to increase stock levels with the potential of over grazing and the increased use of pesticide, herbicide and fertiliser. This has potentially had the adverse

effects on landscape quality and nature conservation value of the land.

- 2.13 Farming has formed and maintained the attractive scenic pattern of Upper Weardale. The cost of the maintenance and upkeep falls on the farming community and the financial pressures now make this upkeep increasingly difficult. To recognise this cost and to encourage farming in an environmentally friendly way, Central Government has provided initiatives such as the Environmentally Sensitive Area and the Countryside Stewardship Scheme.
- 2.14 The Environmentally Sensitive Areas in the District cover parts of Upper Weardale and the Rookhope Valley. Farmers in these areas have entered into an agreement to farm using traditional methods to maintain and enhance conservation interest. In return the farmer is compensated for profits foregone using these less intensive traditional farming methods. The take up rate in Weardale has been relatively high (about 70%) and therefore the scheme has been reasonably effective, and has been of considerable benefit to the landscape of Upper Weardale.
- 2.15 The Countryside Stewardship Scheme advises farmers on the most suitable methods of farming on specific landscapes, such as moorland and wetland. The scheme promotes environmentally sensitive farming and compensates for any loss in production.
- 2.16 The Council supports and would wish to encourage the uptake of the ESA and Countryside Stewardship Schemes in order to promote management appropriate to maintain the landscape character, quality and nature conservation interest of the Weardale upland areas.
- 2.17 Elsewhere in the District, particularly in the lower lying areas near the towns and villages, better quality agricultural land is found. Agricultural activity in such areas can, however, suffer from urban fringe problems such as trespass, crop trample, fly tipping, abandoned cars and theft.

### Reclamation and Landscape Improvement

- 2.18 The past mining industries have left a legacy of landscape despoliation, especially to the east of the District. To overcome this, the District has a rolling programme of reclamation schemes which aim to improve the environment and landscape quality of the District. Many of these schemes incorporate an element of tree planting. The creation of community woodlands will be looked at in conjunction with the reclamation programme. The Reclamation programme will be implemented through the Derelict Land Grant and the Small Clearance Scheme.
- 2.19 Since 1981 nearly 100 hectares of land have been reclaimed in the District achieving both an improvement to the appearance of the landscape and new beneficial uses for underused or derelict land. This represents a substantial commitment to the creation of new areas of countryside on sites degraded by past industry or mineral working activities.

2.20 This programme needs to be continued as in 1993 about 340 hectares of land were classified in the District as being derelict by the District Council of which 310 hectares were classified as justifying reclamation. Reclamation schemes will take into account and incorporate the existing nature conservation interest of the derelict areas. Self-regeneration of derelict land can produce valuable wildlife habitats which can attract a variety of interesting and often rare species.

2.21

**The Local Plans aims:-**

- 1 To identify and give protection to areas of landscape and nature conservation interest, including those of internationally, nationally and locally recognised value, nature reserves and other sites of scientific or ecological interest and valuable, environmentally sensitive areas of agriculture.**
- 2 To identify features or areas in need of improvement or enhancement and seek their management or appropriate reclamation, in terms of nature conservation.**



**LANDSCAPE PROTECTION**

**Protection of the Countryside**

**Policy ENV1:** The District Council will seek to protect and enhance the countryside of Wear Valley. Development will be allowed only for the purposes of agriculture, farm diversification, forestry or outdoor recreation or if it is related to existing compatible uses in the countryside as defined in other Local Plan policies.

**Justification:**

2.22 Central Government in PPG 7 places a duty on local authorities through the implementation of the planning process to protect the countryside from inappropriate development, not for its agricultural value, but for its own sake. This is not to say that the countryside should be fossilised but that developments should be promoted which are compatible in use and sympathetic in scale and character. The countryside is a finite resource which provides both employment and leisure and recreational opportunities. Allowing development to encroach into the open countryside will erode this resource, which, once lost will be unable to recreate. Development will be largely restricted to the defined limits of towns and villages, as defined in H2, outside these areas will be classed as open countryside. New development outside these limits will be considered in relation to policies providing it is supported by an agricultural or other justification. The plan proposes sufficient industrial land within rural areas to satisfy the need of local firms within these areas of the District. The plan, however, affords the opportunity to facilitate development outside the defined limits of Policy H2. Provided development satisfies other policies of the Plan, opportunities exist for: the conversion of rural buildings (Policy BE20); farm diversification (Policy BE21); housing infill (Policy H4); agricultural workers dwellings (Policy H11); extensions to residential properties (Policy H13); affordable housing (Policy H15); industry (Policy I12); extensions to industrial premises (Policy I13); tourism (Policies TM1 & TM2); tourist accommodation (Policy TM5); new caravan and chalet sites (Policy TM7); recreation (Policies RL10, RL11 & RL13); and renewable energy (Policy MW4).

Implementation : Development control process.

**The North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty**

**Policy ENV2:** Priority will be given to the protection and enhancement of the landscape qualities of the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty as identified on the Proposals Map, when considering proposals for development. Development which adversely affects the special scenic quality and the nature conservation interest of the AONB will not be permitted.

**Justification :**

- 2.23 AONB's are statutory designations, comprising areas where the landscape is considered to be of national importance. The 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act established the concept of AONBs with their aim of preserving and enhancing the natural beauty, natural features, flora and fauna of identified areas. This aim is to be achieved by the actions of local authorities, landowners and interested parties, and by the preparation and implementation of Management Plans and strict development control.
- 2.24 The North Pennines AONB is a strongly defined upland landscape unit of high quality with a high moorland plateau which is generally unenclosed. The moorland is largely managed for grouse and rough grazing for sheep which results in the wild quality that is the essence of the area. The heather grouse moors add colour to the landscape.
- 2.25 The AONB contains a number of conifer plantations which are particularly dominant at the western end of Weardale.
- 2.26 The upper valley of the River Wear and its major tributaries within the AONB have their own special quality primarily as a result of the geomorphology and secondly as a result of land use and vegetation. The upper dales landscape is an agricultural landscape, predominantly pasture with traditional hay meadows in parts, which co-existed with lead mining the remains of which are now an intrinsic part of the landscape. As a result of the co-existence of agriculture and mining in the past, a unique scattered settlement pattern has evolved. Characteristic stone built farms and agricultural field barns and stone walls remain intrinsic features of the upper dale parts of the AONB.
- 2.27 Where the development is justified within the AONB, permission will only normally be granted for proposals which are in sympathy, and do not detract from the landscape quality of the area and will not conflict with nature conservation. It is recognised by the Council that there may be a need for development in the AONB by compatible countryside users, in order to meet the essential needs of their business and to implement improved pollution control measures. In order to be acceptable, all proposals in the AONB will need to satisfy the Council on the suitable location, design and materials of the proposal. The Council will expect and encourage, where practicable, the use of traditional designs and materials of the area such as stone, slate and wood. Policies BE19 & BE20 give further guidance on the design and conversion of agricultural and rural buildings.
- 2.28 The AONB needs to be protected from harmful development which will be detrimental to its unique scenic quality. This landscape which is of national significance should be protected and enhanced for future generations to enjoy. Activities which contribute to the quiet enjoyment of the AONB will be encouraged by the Council. There are, however, specific activities which are beyond the control of the Council, such as the winning of minerals for the national good and afforestation. The Council will, wherever possible, seek to limit

the impact of these activities on the AONB through consultation and negotiation. In the AONB some permitted development rights are reduced and others withdrawn entirely. These are listed in Appendix 1.

- 2.29 Due to the exposed nature of the AONB landscape the Council considers it inappropriate for larger scale developments including afforestation, intrusive recreation such as off-road motorsports, wind turbines and tourism developments. Under most circumstances these can be located in landscapes more able to accommodate such developments and it is not necessary for these to be sited within areas designated for their quality of landscape. The Plan allocates alternative locations for woodland (Proposal ENV16) and renewable energy (MW4). The Plan also includes criteria to assess recreation development (Policy RL11), tourism development (Policy TM2), infill housing (Policy H4) and affordable housing (Policy H15) as they relate to the AONB.

Implementation : Development control process. Consultation with the Forestry Authority.

### Area of Landscape Value

**Policy ENV3:** Development will not be allowed which adversely affects the special landscape character, nature conservation interests and appearance of the Area of Landscape Value identified on the Proposals Map.

### Historic Parkland Landscapes

**Policy ENV4:** Within the Area of Landscape Value the Council will protect and enhance the historic parkland landscapes at Harperley Park and Auckland Castle Park. Development will not be allowed which will detract from the special historic character, landscape qualities and nature conservation interests of the parks.

Justification:

- 2.30 The Area of Landscape Value is essentially the valley of the River Wear from Page Bank in the east to Eastgate in the west. The western part of Weardale lies within the North Pennines AONB. The topography of the valley is an important characteristic of the entire ALV.
- 2.31 Within the ALV are two historic parklands - Auckland Castle Park and Harperley Park. These parklands have a distinct character which differs from the surrounding agricultural landscape. The character results from the fact that the landscape has been specifically designed and maintained as parkland and the quality largely relies on the relationship between groups of trees, farmland and buildings.
- 2.32 Auckland Castle Park was a mediaeval deer park later developed as a landscape park in the mid 18th Century. The area immediately south and east of the castle consists of formal gardens - lawns and paths, and the original kitchen garden which is now a market garden. The Park lies to the north and east of the Castle and consists of

belts of woodland and classic open parkland with clumps of mature trees now used as a golf course. The park contains an ancient woodland at High Park and has been included by English Heritage on the "Register of Parks and Gardens of Historic Interest for England". The Park has been the subject of a Management Plan which aims to assess the need for replanting where existing trees are likely to reach the end of their maturity.

- 2.33 Harperley Hall Park is an area of parkland characterised by attractive blocks of woodland and a strong field pattern. The area has traditionally been managed to provide an attractive parkland landscape and a valuable commercial woodland. It forms an important agricultural area and a valuable recreational and economic resource. These historic parks will be protected from inappropriate development, English Heritage will be consulted for proposals within the parks.

- 2.34 The remaining ALV designation gives recognition to, and seeks to protect, the attractive landscape quality of the River Wear Valley. The landscape features of the valley range widely throughout its length. The eastern part of the valley is characterised by an agricultural river valley landscape with a mixture of pasture and arable land, deciduous woodland and strong hedgerows and hedgerow trees. Between Bishop Auckland and Wolsingham there are substantial areas of deciduous woodland in the valley bottom with strong belts of trees leading along the river and up the valley sides. The field size tends to decrease up the dale. The Weardale section of the ALV is characterised by strong regular field patterns with drystone walls. There are scattered small-scale semi-natural woodlands along the valley sides, particularly along the river. The riverside villages and scattered farms built of stone in the vernacular style are an intrinsic part of the landscape.

- 2.35 The ALV contains a range of wildlife habits including specific Sites of Nature Conservation Importance. It has therefore an important nature conservation interest. Proposals within the ALV will be required to maintain the nature conservation interest of the area.

- 2.36 Development within the ALV will only be acceptable where they do not detract from the landscape quality of the area or lead to the loss of the essential features of the ALV and will not conflict with the nature conservation interest of the District.

- 2.37 It is recognised by the Council that there may be the need for development in the ALV by compatible countryside uses in order to meet the essential needs of businesses and to implement improved pollution control measures. In order to be acceptable, all proposals in the ALV will need to satisfy the Authority on the suitable location, design and materials of the proposal. The Council will encourage, where practicable, the use of traditional designs and materials of the area, such as, stone, slate and wood. Policies BE19 and BE 20 give further guidance on the design and conversion of agricultural and rural buildings.

Implementation : Development control process. Consultation with English Heritage.

# LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENT

## Landscape Action Areas

**Proposal ENV5:** In the Newfield and Witton Park Landscape Action Areas, as identified on the Proposals Map, the District Council will pursue a comprehensive and coordinated programme of landscape improvement during the plan period.

**Justification :**

- 2.38 Within the River Wear Valley ALV there are two landscape black spots; an area surrounding Newfield including dereliction, waste disposal and coal washing; and an area to the north of Witton Park including land currently used for sand and gravel extraction and dereliction caused by former British Rail tipping operations. Both these areas present a complicated array of environmental issues. The majority of the two areas are covered by existing permissions for mineral and/or waste disposal working, which are conditioned to include full restoration schemes.
- 2.39 Appendix 7 includes the plans and schedule of both areas showing the areas which will be reclaimed through the current outstanding permissions and areas which have potential alternative recreational and nature conservation after uses which should be investigated during the plan period.
- 2.40 The Landscape Action Areas, not only include landscape improvements but suggest a range of possible after uses, such as, footpaths, informal recreation areas, potential for water based recreation activities and the creation of ponds and wildlife habitats. The improvements will enhance and complement the Sites of Nature Conservation Importance at Witton Park Wetlands and Cobey Carr, Newfield. The sand and gravel workings at Witton Park offers the opportunity for the development of a waterbased recreational facility which will be investigated through the plan period. The existing permission requires the restoration of the land back to agriculture and the restoration of Etherley Pit.

**Implementation :** Wear Valley District Council  
 Durham County Council  
 English Nature  
 Groundwork Trust.  
 Durham Wildlife Trust.

## Reclamation

**Policy ENV6 :** The District Council will reclaim the following sites, as shown on the Proposals Map, to after uses identified below:-

Site	After Use
Fir Tree Colliery	Public open space and tree planting
Mill Bank Terrace, Eldon Lane (Inset No. 3)	Public open space
Masons Arms, Bishop Auckland community (Inset No. 1)	Public open space, use/recreation use
Allotments, Close House (Inset No. 3)	Allotments, public open space.
Wear Terrace, Bishop Auckland Pumping Station, Willington	Part of housing site (refer H6)
Coronation Allotments, Dene Valley	Woodland
Wear Chare, Bishop Auckland	Woodland
North Bitchburn Allotments	Woodland
Rumby Hill Colliery, Crook	Allotments/public open space
St Helens Colliery Heap, Fieldon Bridge (Inset No. 1)	Woodland and agriculture
Building near Heights Quarry, Eastgate	Industry (refer I2,I5)
Arthur Pit, Roddymoor	Agriculture
Former Pit Heap Greenhead, Fir Tree	Recreation, public open space, agriculture
Tennis Court, Tow Law	Woodland/Agriculture
Leeholme Allotments (Inset No. 2)	Recreation
Howden Plantation Heaps	Allotment rationalisation
The Tilery, Willington	Agriculture
Hunwick Station Heaps	Agriculture
	Nature Conservation/Woodlands

**The District Council will encourage the reclamation by other agencies, where appropriate, of the additional areas of derelict land as identified on the Proposals Map during the Plan period.**

**Justification :**

- 2.41 The County Council and the District Council have a continuing programme of reclamation schemes which aim to improve and enhance the local environment. Particular priority will be given to schemes proposed within the designated landscape improvement areas, former coalfield areas or schemes which are visible from existing and proposed major traffic routes and also schemes which will help the economic regeneration of run down areas. These improvements will raise the environmental quality of these areas and so help the District encourage inward investment. Potential may exist in these schemes to create wildlife areas or provide recreational sites for example for water sports or rock climbing.
- 2.42 Improvements will be achieved through the use of the Derelict Land Grant (DLG) and Small Clearance Scheme (SCS). For sites to be eligible for DLG land has to be "so damaged by industry as to be of no beneficial use without treatment". In the District those sites which fulfill this criteria are essentially the large former colliery and quarrying works. Other sites which are "neglected and unsightly" will be improved through the Small Clearance Scheme. The Council will identify each year through its Reclamation Programme those sites which will be reclaimed and improved each year. The Policy lists those sites which have been identified in the Council's Derelict Land Reclamation Programme and which may be eligible for Derelict Land Grant. In addition the Proposals Map also identifies sites on which action

is being considered by other agencies for example Durham County Council because of land ownership or because of enforcement of minerals planning conditions or the West Durham Ground Work Trust.

English Nature.  
Durham Wildlife Trust  
Forestry Authority  
West Durham Groundwork Trust  
Sports Council.

2.43 Future improvement works will be required to take account of the following points:

- reinstating the former topography of the area;
- the planting of native tree species compatible with the surrounding landscape;
- the breaking up of reclamation schemes into smaller field units more characteristic of this area; and
- the creation of sites for nature conservation, tourism or recreation development which conform to Policy RL11.

2.44 The Council will, in considering the reclamation or management of land officially classified derelict, and in other environmental improvement schemes take into account any existing nature conservation interest or potential. This will help determine the need for such a scheme, after uses, scheme design and scheme implementation.

2.45 Tree planting will also play an important role in the reclamation of despoiled areas. Trees form one of the most important components of the District's landscape. However, over the past 50 years there has been a dramatic loss of trees and woodlands due to intensive agriculture, development, disease and neglect.

2.46 The Council have an ongoing programme of tree planting assisted by grants from Durham County Council, the Forestry Authority and the Countryside Commission. The aim of tree planting schemes is in general to improve the landscape quality of the area. They not only help to soften the environment and help screen development, but help to improve the environmental quality of the atmosphere. Reclamation work will make full use of tree planting schemes, ensuring local native species are chosen and the scale of planting relates well to the surrounding environment and the existing nature conservation interest of the site. The judicious use of non-native species will be used to help improve broadleaved survival. In addition the District Council has identified areas of landscape which could be improved by the creation of community forests. These are described in Policy ENV16.

2.47 Once the reclamation works have been completed it is necessary to carry out further works in order for the scheme to relate successfully with the surrounding environment. This involves the careful landscaping of sites using native species, and in certain situations the division of land through hedgerow planting or stone walls which will relate more to the existing complex interspersed field patterns of the lower Dales.

Implementation : Wear Valley District Council  
and Durham County Council,  
using Derelict Land Grant (and  
Small Clearance Schemes)  
Mineral Operators

## AGRICULTURAL LAND

### Protection of Agricultural Land

**Policy ENV7 : Development will not be permitted if it would result in the irreversible loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land i.e. Grade 2 or 3a.**

### Phasing of Agricultural Land

**Policy ENV8 : Agricultural land which is allocated for development during the plan period should be subject to phased release and be kept in agricultural use until it is required for development.**

Justification :

2.48 Approximately 60% (30,000 ha) of the area of Wear Valley District is given over to agriculture. To the east of the District the land is mostly Grade 3 with small pockets of Grade 2 land and is mainly used for arable and mixed farming. Poorer land exists to the west which is Grade 4 and 5 and this is mostly used for grazing.

2.49 Planning Policy Guidance Note 7 states 'at a time of surpluses in agricultural production it no longer makes sense to retain as much land as possible in agricultural use though the need for an efficient and flexible agricultural industry remains as important as ever'. It is important where possible to conserve the better quality land graded 1-3a whilst providing opportunities for potential development, subject to the policies in the plan.

2.50 Agricultural land can have high ecological and/or historic interest. The Council will seek to protect such areas from development and will continue to support the Environmentally Sensitive Area Scheme and the Countryside Stewardship Scheme to help to maintain and enhance ecologically important areas in the District.

2.51 Where sites are designated for long term development a suitable scheme of phasing will be required to ensure that all undeveloped land remains in agriculture for the maximum possible time.

Implementation : Development control powers after consultation with the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF).

## NATURE CONSERVATION

### Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation

**Policy ENV9 :** Development which will adversely affect Special Protection Areas (SPA's) or Special Areas of Conservation (SAC's) will only be allowed if:

- i) there is no alternative solution; and
- ii) there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the development.

Where such development is permitted the Council will consider the use of planning conditions or planning obligations to ensure that the overall coherence of Natura 2000 is protected.

Justification :

2.52 The quality and diversity of wildlife habitats are currently under threat. Industrialisation, intensification of agriculture, conifer afforestation and land claimed by built development over the past century has led to widespread loss of habitats. The effects of these activities has a detrimental effect on wildlife and in turn may result in a decline in the visual appearance of an area. Many of these pressures will continue to increase, and the wildlife habitats in the District will continue to be threatened. In view of this, policies are required to protect wildlife sites.

2.53 In accordance with international guidelines, one of the essential tasks of local authorities is to ensure effective conservation of the landscape and its wildlife. The most important international sites are the proposed designated Special Protection Areas under the EC Directive 79/409/EEC (Conservation of Wild Birds) and Special Areas of Conservation (under Species and Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC). Special Protection Areas cover sites used by particular species of breeding and migratory birds which are endangered, vulnerable, rare or endemic. Special Areas of Conservation protect species and habitats of particular animal and plant communities or outstanding examples of biogeographical regions for example raised bogs or natural grassland. SPA's together with SAC's form a European ecological network known as Natura 2000. They are protected under national legislation as Sites of Special Scientific Interest and by European legislation. Planning Policy Guidance Note 9 'Nature Conservation' outlines the controls that apply to these sites.

2.54 Where development could potentially affect such sites an Environmental Statement will be required. Developers will need to consider not just alternative sites but also different approaches to addressing the need for the development, for example methods of production or site designs. Although only two areas are proposed for SPA designation in Wear Valley, Moorhouse and Cross Fell SSSI and Upper Teesdale SSSI, there are other areas of moorland, pasture and meadow within the AONB which fulfil the SPA criteria and may be designated in the future. The Council will seek to protect the existing SPA sites and future

sites from the adverse effects of inappropriate development.

Implementation : Development control powers after consultation with English Nature. Through the use of planning obligations.

### Sites of Special Scientific Interest

**Policy ENV10 :** Development which will adversely affect the conservation value of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's) as identified on the Proposals Map either directly or indirectly will only be permitted if:

- i) the development is of overriding national importance so as to outweigh the special interest of the site; and
- ii) the development cannot be located elsewhere.

The District Council will require the developer to include measures to conserve and enhance the nature conservation interest and where practicable to provide replacement habitats and features where damage is unavoidable.

Justification :

2.55 Sites of Special Scientific Interest are notified by English Nature under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended 1985). They are a series of the most important nature conservation sites in the country. There are sixteen SSSI's in the District which are listed in Appendix 2 and also identified on the Proposals Map. Planning Policy Guidance Note 9 states that development proposals in or likely to affect them must be subject to special scrutiny. Developers will need to demonstrate the need nationally for any development which adversely affects a SSSI. They will be required to minimise adverse effects and compensate for any unavoidable damage through appropriate habitat creation or enhancement.

Implementation : Development control powers after consultation with English Nature. Use of planning obligations.

### Sites of Nature Conservation Importance and Local Nature Reserves

**Policy ENV11 :** Development which will adversely affect Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI's) or Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) as identified on the Proposals Map, will only be allowed if:

- i) the development is of overriding local importance; and
- ii) it can be demonstrated by the developer that there are no alternative development sites elsewhere in the County or region as appropriate.

The District Council will require the developer to include measures to conserve and enhance the nature conservation interest and where practicable to provide replacement habitats and features where damage is unavoidable.

**Justification :**

2.56 The District is rich in a wide range of habitats and geologically important sites which require protection from inappropriate development and uses. Areas of geological, ecological and nature importance are a finite resource and once lost are irreplaceable. In addition to the SPAs, SACs and SSSIs, other sites have been designated as being of locally important nature conservation interest in the District. These sites have been designated as Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCIs) and Local Nature Reserves (LNRs).

2.57 SNCIs include County Wildlife Sites, County Geological Sites and Regionally Important Geological Sites which exhibit some of the following features:-

- a) Open moorlands which provide habitats to be identified for breeding waders and upland raptors e.g. Curlew, Golden Plover and Merlin.
- b) Blanket bogs.
- c) Outcrops of limestone and rare plants they support.
- d) Semi natural woodland associated with steep sided valleys running into the River Wear.
- e) Other geological outcrops and geomorphological features.
- f) Traditionally managed hay meadows.

2.58 Durham County Council, Durham Wildlife Trust and English Nature are currently reviewing County Wildlife Sites. The Regionally Important Geological Sites are being identified by the RIGs Group.

2.59 Some sites are affected by development rights which have been established through current planning consents which pre-date their designation as Sites of Nature Conservation Importance. In the Plan area five sites already possess planning permission for uses which could, if fully implemented, adversely affect their nature conservation value. The sites are:-

- \* Cement Works Quarry, Eastgate;
- \* Groverake Mine and Opencast Harehope Quarry;
- \* Harthope Head Ganister Quarries;
- \* Boltsburn Mine and Rookhope Borehole; and
- \* Greenfield Quarry, Cowshill.

2.60 In these instances, if a future opportunity arises, the District Council will support appropriate efforts to protect their nature conservation value.

2.61 The District Council has powers under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 to acquire, declare and manage nature reserves, commonly known as Local Nature Reserves (LNRs). At present the Council has only one such site in the District at Willington North Dene which was declared in 1995. Other nature reserves maintained by the Durham Wildlife Trust exist at Low Barns, near Witton le Wear and at Baal Hill and Bishop Oak, Wolsingham. These sites provide a valuable educational as well as ecological

resource in the District. Attempts will be made to interest the public in order to increase their knowledge and understanding of nature conservation issues and in turn their use of and contribution to their local environment. Visitor/education facilities at these nature reserves will be encouraged provided that such proposals do not adversely affect the nature conservation value and landscape quality of the area.

2.62 It is vital that these sites be protected for their nature conservation importance and the harmful effects of development, including agricultural development minimised. Where damage is unavoidable, replacement habitats and features should be provided.

Implementation : Development control powers, in consultation with:  
 English Nature  
 Durham Wildlife Trust  
 Durham County Council.  
 Through the use of planning obligations.

### Creation of New Sites for Nature Conservation

**Policy ENV12 : Wear Valley District Council will support the creation and future designations of areas of high nature conservation value in recognition of their ecological value.**

**Justification :**

2.63 The Council is continually involved in tree planting schemes and environmental enhancement schemes. Opportunities exist for the creation of local wildlife areas and wildlife corridors, as created at Paddy's Wood on Thistleflat Road, Crook. These provide an invaluable educational and ecological resource to benefit local communities and schools and provide important habitats within the built-up area.

2.64 The Council is a major landowner within the District, managing and implementing many improvement schemes on both its own and other land, and it has a significant role to play in nature conservation. Changing management techniques on public open space can encourage wildlife. The Council has stopped spraying some road side verges with herbicides and insecticides and this has resulted in the growth of attractive wild flowers in these locations. Sensitive reclamation schemes may provide opportunities for the creation of wildlife habitats.

2.65 The District Council itself can designate Local Nature Reserves (LNR). Should future surveys reveal areas of high ecological value, the Council will, in consultation with English Nature, consider designating the area as a LNR. The site must be under the control of the Local Authority and be capable of being managed for the conservation of nature and/or the maintenance of special opportunities for the study. A management plan would be produced and implemented for all LNR's.

2.66 It is not only the Council who can help create sites for the benefit of nature conservation, local people

can too. The most direct way people can make a personal contribution to nature conservation is through their garden. Gardens often make up one of the most extensive forms of wildlife habitats and corridors within built-up areas. In addition, private industry needs to be encouraged to landscape the land around factories and offices to improve the local environment. Where a proposal incorporates sufficient landscaping, the creation of wildlife habitats may be achieved through planning conditions. Appropriate reclamation schemes will be encouraged to create and enhance areas of wildlife interest.

- 2.67 The Council will encourage landowners to enter into a Section 39 Agreement, (Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (amended 1985)) where appropriate, to ensure the suitable management of woodlands, grasslands, wetlands etc, for nature conservation.
- 2.68 Where the creation of new sites involves agricultural land, the views of MAFF will be sought during the designation process.

Implementation : Durham County Council  
Wear Valley District Council  
Developers of major new schemes.

### Protection of Species and their Habitats

**Policy ENV13 : Development will not be permitted which would adversely affect, directly or indirectly, species protected by law or their habitat.**

Justification :

- 2.69 The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (amended 1985) and the Badger Act 1992 lists several species which are afforded special protection. These include, for example, bats, the Great Crested Newt and badgers. The Conservation Regulations 1994 (The Habitat Regulations) implement the requirements of the EC Council Habitats Directive (92/43 EEC) which make it an offence deliberately to kill, injure, take or disturb listed animal species; to destroy their resting places or breeding sites, or to pick, collect, cut, uproot or otherwise destroy listed plant species. The habitats which these species require are diminishing through insensitive development and management of land. The Council will, therefore, control development away from areas which would have a detrimental effect on the habitats and these protected species.

Implementation : Development control process.  
In consultation with:  
English Nature  
RSPB  
Durham Wildlife Trust  
Vincent Wildlife Trust, Bat Group.

## TREES

### Tree Preservation Orders

**Policy ENV14 : Permission will not be granted for the felling, lopping or topping of trees covered by a tree preservation order, or support given for the granting of a felling licence unless there is a clear justification made on safety grounds or required during woodland management work and commercial forestry. Where permission is allowed for felling, planting of replacement trees will be required.**

Justification :

- 2.70 Trees make a significant contribution to the landscape quality of the countryside and the amenity and townscape and require protection. Important trees which are threatened by felling are covered by tree preservation orders. The Council will protect such trees from felling, unless they become dangerous and require surgery in the interests of public safety.
- 2.71 A felling licence is required from the Forest Authority for the felling of two or more mature trees (five cubic metres). The Council is consulted on the granting of felling licences and will object to those which do not have a sound justification.
- 2.72 Routine arboricultural maintenance will be required on protected trees and will be permitted provided it is required for public safety, the health of the tree or through sound woodland management. Where there is a need to remove the tree the applicant will be required to plant a replacement in a suitable location as agreed with the Council.
- 2.73 The planning legislation does not, however, have control over trees in private gardens which are not either covered by a tree preservation order, or are in a Conservation Area (see Policy BE9). The Council would wish to bring to the attention of house owners the importance and value of trees in terms of nature conservation and townscape.

Implementation : Development control process  
Forestry Authority.

### Ancient Woodlands

**Policy ENV15 : Proposals which are detrimental to the nature conservation value and landscape quality of ancient woodlands, as indicated on the Proposals Map, will not be permitted.**

Justification :

- 2.74 Ancient woodlands are those woodland areas that have been in existence before the 1600's, and now consist of mature trees with associated flora and fauna. English Nature, formerly the Nature Conservancy Council, have compiled a national inventory of ancient woods. These woodlands have been identified on the proposals map. They provide ideal habitats for nature conservation. The sensitive management of woodland involving selective felling of non -native trees will be encouraged. Farm diversification proposals

appropriate to woodland would only be permitted where the ecological interests of the woodland are safeguarded and/or enhanced.

Implementation : Development control process, using the advice of Durham County Council, Durham Wildlife Trust, English Nature and Forestry Authority. Also, liaison with landowners and countryside bodies.

Implementation : Wear Valley District Council  
Durham County Council  
Forestry Authority  
Countryside Commission  
English Nature  
Durham Wildlife Trust.

## Community Forests

**Proposal ENV16 : The Council, where appropriate, will encourage the creation of community forests in areas identified on the Proposals Map, provided schemes fulfil the following criteria:**

- i) the tree planting relates to the surrounding environment;**
- ii) the planting of native species is encouraged;**
- iii) consideration should be given to the creation of sites for nature conservation;**
- iv) account will be taken of any existing nature conservation value of the site and avoid damage to such value; and**
- v) informal recreation/visitor facilities are included.**

Justification :

- 2.75 Encouragement will be given to the creation of community forests in the areas indicated on the proposals map. These should be designed to improve the landscape quality, and aid environmental improvement to the identified areas. In the Dene Valley additional planting could reinforce and complement that undertaken on previous reclamation schemes and the in Tow Law/Sunniside/North Crook area where landscape reclamation and opencast coal extraction has left a landscape devoid of trees and landscape features, a community woodland would improve the landscape and provide additional opportunities for recreation. In addition community forests should be combined with reclamation schemes to provide attractive areas for recreation and nature conservation.
- 2.76 Tree planting will not be appropriate where it would have a detrimental effect on existing or adjoining wildlife habitats such as wetlands, heaths, herb rich grasslands. Community woodland schemes will be required to provide public access to these areas including appropriate visitor facilities such as footpaths, bridleways, picnic areas, nature trails, etc.
- 2.77 In the Dene Valley it may be possible to include more formal outdoor recreation development in association with the woodland areas.
- 2.78 The creation of community forests will be assisted by the availability of grant aid from the Forestry Authority in accordance with a Forestry Strategy which should be based upon the Local Plan.



# Chapter 3

## THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

### HISTORIC HERITAGE

- BE1 Protection of Historic Heritage

### LISTED BUILDINGS

- BE2 Listed Buildings; Demolition
- BE3 Listed Buildings; Change of Use, Alterations
- BE4 Setting of a Listed Building

### CONSERVATION AREAS

- BE5 Conservation Areas
- BE6 New Development and Alterations in Conservation Areas
- BE7 Demolition in Conservation Areas
- BE8 Setting of a Conservation Area
- BE9 Trees in Conservation Areas
- BE10 Roller Shutters within Conservation Areas

### ADVERTISEMENTS

- BE11 Advertisements in Conservation Areas
- BE12 Advertisements outside Conservation Areas
- BE13 Directional Signs not on the Highway

### OPEN SPACES IN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

- BE14 Open spaces within Built-up Areas

### ARCHAEOLOGY

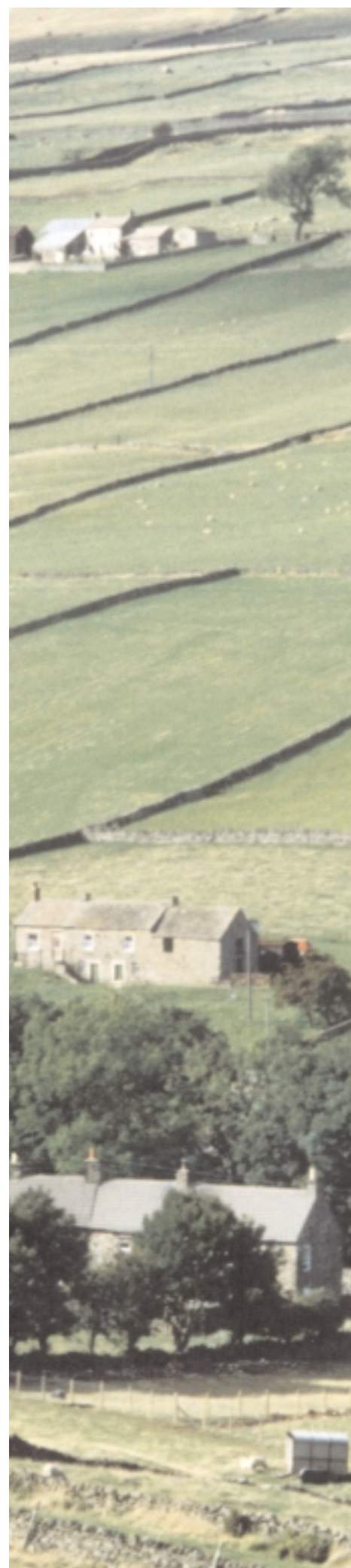
- BE15 Scheduled Ancient Monuments
- BE16 Education and Archaeology
- BE17 Areas of Archaeological Interest
- BE18 Excavation and Recording

### BUILDINGS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

- BE19 New Agricultural Buildings
- BE20 Conversion of Buildings in the Countryside
- BE21 Farm Diversification

### ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS

- BE22 Environmental Improvements
- BE23 Provision of Public Art



- 3.1 Buildings are the most obvious impact of man on the landscape. The form and appearance of buildings in conjunction with their setting in the wider landscape, combine to give an area its unique character.
- 3.2 The built character of the settlements of the District is largely derived from their historical origins and past trends of development which may have affected them. As such the towns and villages of the District show distinctly different building characters and style, particularly between the east and west of the District.
- 3.3 There are many aspects of the District's built environment whose architectural or historic character are worthy of additional protection and enhancement than would be afforded through normal planning control. This has been recognised by the designation of conservation areas and the "listing" of buildings.
- 3.4 There are, however, also many areas of our towns and villages where there is a need for enhancement and environmental improvement - creating not only a visual improvement to our townscape but also giving a better quality of environment for people to live and work in.

### Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas

- 3.5 There are over 500 buildings listed as being of architectural or historic interest in the District. Of these, 14 are listed as being of Grade I - that is they are buildings considered to be of exceptional interest - and 25 are Grade II\*, buildings considered to be of particular importance.
- 3.6 The Crook and Willington and Weardale area was last surveyed in 1987. The Bishop Auckland statutory list dates from 1972, but was resurveyed in 1992 by the Department of the Environment.
- 3.7 In addition to the many listed buildings the District contains areas which have an intrinsic quality and contribute greatly to the character of settlements. These are defined as Conservation Areas.
- 3.8 There are 20 Conservation Areas designated in the District; Bishop Auckland, Cockton Hill, Crook, Wolsingham, Witton le Wear, Stanhope, West Auckland, Hunwick, Frosterley, Edmondbyers, Wearhead, St. Johns Chapel, Hunstanworth, Westgate, Eastgate, Ireshopeburn/Newhouse, West Blackdene, East Blackdene, Thornley and Cowshill. The essential qualities and characteristics of each of the Conservation Areas are noted in Further Plan Guidance 3.
- 3.9 The purpose of designating Conservation Areas is to protect the character or appearance of an area, rather than individual buildings, in order to preserve or enhance it. Conservation areas are wide ranging covering town centres as well as smaller groups of buildings and include open spaces, trees village greens and street patterns. It is the group quality that is important and the contribution the area makes to the built form of the settlement.

### Sites of Archaeological Interest

- 3.10 There are 16 structures and earthworks in the

District scheduled as Ancient Monuments. These include Newton Cap Bridge; Vinovia; Park Level Mine, Killhope; Cambokeels Medieval site; and Chapel of St Botolph, Frosterley. There are also over 600 sites of known archaeological interest. Although there may be many more sites in the District which are as yet undiscovered, there are also a number of sites which have already been lost to development.

- 3.11 Ancient monuments and sites of archaeological interest are important as irreplaceable evidence of the past development of the District and provide evidence of past settlements, places of worship, farming or industrial activities.
- 3.12 Much archaeological heritage has already been destroyed through urban development, agricultural methods and mineral extraction. The balance between development and archaeological preservation has to be very carefully considered. Not all sites may be worthy of in-situ preservation, but opportunities should be provided for the recording of details through archaeological excavation before development commences.

### Re-Use of Buildings in the Countryside

- 3.13 Traditional buildings in the Countryside form an important landscape feature within the countryside. Changes in modern farming methods have led to some of these buildings no longer being capable of fulfilling a useful economic function. In addition the movement of new people into the countryside and farm diversification has created pressure for the conversion of the buildings. Conversion can often lead to the preservation of a rural building which might otherwise fall into dereliction. Alterations to accommodate new uses can have a detrimental impact on important architectural and historic features of the building, it is important that new proposals for traditional buildings in the countryside are in keeping with the building and its surrounding context and should not introduce a distinctly urban design into a rural setting.

#### 3.14 The Local Plan aims to:

- 1 Ensure the preservation and retention of listed buildings in the District;
- 2 Protect Conservation Areas from insensitive development and bring forward enhancement schemes for the designated areas;
- 3 Protect sites of archaeological interest from development and explore the tourist potential of such sites;
- 4 Consider and encourage the re-use of traditional farm buildings for alternative uses without the loss of the architectural quality of the building; and
- 5 Improve the environmental quality of the built-up areas of the District.

## HISTORIC HERITAGE

### Protection of Historic Heritage

**Policy BE 1 :** The District Council will seek to conserve the historic heritage of the District by the maintenance, protection and enhancement of features and areas of particular historic, architectural or archaeological interest.

Justification :

- 3.15 The District contains a number of buildings and areas of historic, architectural and archaeological interest which contribute greatly to character and appearance of the District's built environment. The District's heritage could however be easily lost through decay, neglect and destruction. The District Council will therefore seek to protect as much of the historic heritage of the District as possible.

Implementation : Through the development control process.

## LISTED BUILDINGS

### Demolition, Change of Use, Alterations

**Policy BE 2 :** The total demolition of listed buildings will not be permitted.

**Policy BE 3 :** Change of use, alterations and extensions to listed buildings will only be granted planning approval and/or listed building consent where the following criteria are met:

- i) the essential structural elements of the building are not altered or weakened;
- ii) architectural or historic elements which are important to the character of the building including those in the interior are retained and unaltered;
- iii) any new works respect the character and scale of the building; and
- iv) fully detailed drawings, at appropriate scale and clearly showing all proposed works are submitted with the application for listed building consent.

**Change of use of a listed building will require planning permission, whilst alteration/extensions will require listed building consent.**

Justification :

- 3.16 The demolition of listed buildings, both inside and outside Conservation Areas, will normally be resisted by the District Council. Improvements and alterations, including change of use, to listed buildings will be expected to complement and add to its existing character. Commercial properties should be improved/alterd so as not to destroy the scale, character and individual features of the building. Shop signs should be well designed and cover the minimum area of the shop front as possible. Shop fronts should reflect the scale and proportions of the building frontage as a whole so as to maintain the character of the property and area. In circumstances where a building is

considered as a dangerous structure control can be exercised in accordance with Circular 8/87. Listed building consent must be obtained before any work is carried out, alternative remedies for repair must be considered by the local planning authority before a Dangerous Structure Order is made. The total demolition of a listed building should be wholly exceptional and require the strongest justification and clear, convincing evidence that every alternative has been explored.

- 3.17 Retaining listed buildings in active use is often an essential requirement to maintaining their fabric. New or alternative uses, however, often require alteration or enlargement. It is sometimes difficult to extend or alter a listed building without destroying its inherent character. However, it is often possible to carry out works which although enlarging the building or improving its facilities, do not detract from its character. In some cases one way to extend a listed building is by building in an identical style with totally matching materials. In other cases, by the use of a sensitive contemporary design, a new element can be successfully added to a listed building without detracting from its character.

- 3.18 In general, renovation work should be only carried out using materials that match the original materials, for example natural stonewalls, stone flag roofs or clay pantiles should be used to match the original material. Where alteration/renovation work includes the removal of later unsympathetic additions, it is desirable to restore using the original materials, for example the replacement of interlocking concrete tiles with stone flags.

Implementation : Development control process.

### Setting of a Listed Building

**Policy BE 4 :** Development which impacts upon the setting of a listed building and adversely affects its special architectural, historical or landscape character will not be allowed.

Justification :

- 3.19 The protection and enhancement of the District's heritage in the form of its listed buildings goes further than the degree of protection afforded to the buildings themselves. Developments which take place adjacent to or in the same vicinity can have a detrimental impact on such buildings. It is important that such developments are carefully controlled. In accordance with the provisions of Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 policy BE 4 seeks to protect the 'setting' of listed buildings in the District.

Implementation : Development control process.

# CONSERVATION AREAS

## Conservation Areas

**Proposal BE 5 : The following Conservation Areas are identified on the Proposals Map:**

Bishop Auckland (Inset No. 1/1a)	St Johns Chapel (Inset No. 25)
Cockton Hill, Bp Auckland (Inset No. 1/1a)	Wolsingham (Inset No. 23)
Cowshill (Inset No. 31)	Stanhope (Inset No. 21)
Crook (Inset No. 9)	Thornley
Eastgate (Inset No. 28)	Wearhead (Inset No. 32)
East Blackdene	West Auckland (Inset No. 1)
Edmundbyers (Inset No. 27)	West Blackdene
Frosterley (Inset No. 24)	Westgate (Inset No. 30)
Hunstanworth	Witton le Wear (Inset No. 18)
Hunwick (Inset No. 13)	Ireshopeburn/Newhouse (Inset No. 26)

**The character of each Conservation Area will be protected from inappropriate development.**

Justification :

3.20 Conservation area status gives recognition to the special character group quality and appearance of an area. Designation allows greater control to be exercised over the demolition of buildings and the felling of trees so preserving the inherent quality of the defined area. It also requires wider local publicity for planning applications and ensures that development proposals are subject to close scrutiny. Designation puts the onus on prospective developers to produce a high standard of design which maintains the character and architectural quality of the area. Conservation area status will require consent for all demolition works and a six week notification period for the felling of trees. In conservation areas some permitted development rights are reduced and others withdrawn.

3.21 The qualities of each conservation area which the Council would seek to maintain are outlined in F.P.G.3.

Implementation :Development control process.

## New Development and Alterations in Conservation Areas

**Policy BE 6 : The District Council will permit new development and alterations within Conservation Areas provided it satisfies the following criteria:**

- i) the proposal preserves or enhances the character of the area in terms of scale, bulk, height, materials, colour, vertical and horizontal emphasis and design; and
- ii) the proposal will use external building materials which are appropriate to the conservation area. This will generally require the use of local materials or equivalent natural materials; and
- iii) the proposal satisfies the General Development criteria set out in Policy GD1.

Justification :

3.22 New development and alterations within conservation areas will be accommodated. However, this should not be at the expense of the existing character of the area. It is important to see that every new building is designed not as a separate entity, but as part of a larger whole,

reflecting the collective character of the conservation area. New development in conservation areas should reflect the design, style, materials and setting of the surrounding buildings. Sensitive design can help to add to the character of conservation areas and proposals will be encouraged to reflect the traditional style and architectural features of the area. Alterations and extensions to existing buildings should also help to contribute to the character of the conservation area in design, scale and materials.

3.23 Outline applications for new development within conservation areas will not normally be accepted. Instead such applications should usually be fully detailed and should show:

- (i) the siting, design and external appearance of the proposed development; means of access, where appropriate, and the elevations of adjoining buildings and walls;
- (ii) anything proposed for demolition; and
- (iii) trees or other features which are proposed or which may be affected.

Implementation :Development control process and by the District Council.

## Demolition in Conservation Areas

**Policy BE 7 :Applications to demolish buildings in Conservation Areas will only be approved where the demolition or replacement will not adversely affect the character of the area. In the case of redevelopment, demolition will not be permitted unless the proposals for new building accord with the special architectural and visual qualities of the area and that any application for demolition is accompanied by detailed drawings of the proposed replacement.**

Justification :

3.24 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 gives planning authorities control over the demolition of buildings within conservation areas and the Department of the Environment Circular 8/87 establishes national guidelines for listed buildings and conservation areas. It includes, amongst others, powers to help overcome problems which may arise with regard to dangerous structures, for demolition control and for alterations/extensions or change of use of listed buildings and other buildings in conservation areas. Such powers laid down nationally will guide the District Council in its dealings with listed buildings and conservation areas.

3.25 The demolition of individual buildings including both listed and unlisted buildings, within a conservation area can have a far-reaching impact on the appearance of the area as a whole. Proposals for demolition are very carefully considered and consent for demolition within a conservation area will only normally be permitted where the application is accompanied by detailed plans for the redevelopment of the site and the proposals for new buildings accord with the special architectural and visual qualities of the area.

Implementation : Development control process.

## Setting of a Conservation Area

**Policy BE 8 : Development which impacts upon the setting of a Conservation Area and which adversely affects its townscape qualities, landscape or historical character will not be allowed.**

Justification :

- 3.26 Special care is needed in the location and design of new buildings adjacent to conservation areas. Inappropriate development outside a conservation area can have a detrimental effect on the character and setting of the area.

Implementation : Through the development control process.

## Trees in Conservation Areas

**Policy BE 9 : The District Council will encourage the planting of native trees to enhance the Conservation Areas and the rest of the built-up area provided that they do not threaten vehicular and pedestrian safety or infrastructure operations.**

Justification :

- 3.27 Trees are an important feature of conservation areas and are protected under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 where any felling of, or work to be done to trees, can only be carried out six weeks after giving written notification to the District Council. The Council will ask applicants who fell trees within conservation areas to replant in appropriate locations. Care will be taken to ensure that highway and pedestrian safety is not impaired by the planting of trees for amenity purposes. The Council will include tree planting within environment improvement schemes (see Policy BE 22).

Implementation : Through consultation by landowners with the District Council.

## Roller Shutters within Conservation Areas

**Policy BE 10 : Roller shutters will be permitted on shops in Conservation Areas provided that:**

- i) shutters of perforated design are used;
- ii) the shutters are painted to be in keeping with the surroundings; and
- iii) the shutter boxes are concealed within the frontage of the building.

Justification :

- 3.28 The Council recognises the need for security steel roller shutters within the shopping centres of the District. Their appearance, however, creates an unfriendly, austere environment in the town and village centres. To minimise the visual impact of the shutter a perforated design should be used to allow the shop front to be visible, the shutter should be painted to be in keeping with the existing shop front. The mechanism should be concealed within the frontage of the building.

Implementation : Development control process.

## ADVERTISEMENTS

### Advertisements in Conservation Areas

**Policy BE 11 : Advertisements and signs within Conservation Areas will only be approved where they are sympathetic to the character and appearance of the building on which they are positioned and respect the character of the surrounding area. Proposals must satisfy the criteria set out in Policy BE12.**

Justification :

- 3.29 Due to their nature and location many conservation areas include commercial centres. The District Council accepts the need for advertising to continue within conservation areas. However, this will not be allowed to detract from the appearance and character of individual buildings or the area. Traditional hand painted timber signs would add to the character of the conservation area. F.P.G. 4 give guidelines for advertisements with conservation areas.

Implementation : Through the development control process.

### Advertisements outside Conservation Areas

**Policy BE 12 : Advertisements will be permitted provided they fulfil the following criteria:**

- i) it should be in keeping with the character of the building and surrounding area. It should be designed and sited to harmonise with its setting and not detract from the building's appearance and visual amenity of the immediate neighbourhood;
- ii) individual letter signs will be preferred where no fascia board is present;
- iii) advertisements will not be allowed at first floor level and above;
- iv) signs should not obscure or detract from architectural detailing such as cornice mouldings and decorative pilasters; and,
- v) signs should not distract, misdirect or confuse motorists or be an obstruction and dangerous to pedestrians.

### Directional Signs not on the Highway

**Policy BE13: Directional signs will only be allowed provided they are:**

- i) in keeping with the character of the surrounding area in terms of scale, colour, materials and design; and
- ii) located at an appropriate road junction and do not create a hazard for road users.

**Advance directional signs will only be permitted if considered by the Highway Authority to be not detrimental to public safety.**

Justification :

- 3.30 Advertisements play an important role in forming the character of the District's commercial areas. Care needs to be taken in order to create signs which help to contribute to the buildings appearance and overall character of the street or

area. The scale, design, colour and materials used all contribute to how the sign fits in with its setting. It is important that signs, where possible, utilise the existing architectural features of the building and does not simply cover these features up. The Council will encourage the use of traditional signs especially within conservation areas (Policy BE 11). Additional guidance is contained in F.P.G. 4.

- 3.31 Policy BE13 refers to all directional signs which are not on the highway but on privately owned land alongside the highway. Directional signs on the highway are covered by existing legislation controlled by the Highway Authority.
- 3.32 Directional signs are important to indicate the location of facilities and businesses that rely on trade from the public. Facilities for tourists such as bed and breakfast accommodation need to be signposted particularly for the benefit of people unfamiliar with the area. Care should be taken to ensure that signs are designed and sited to harmonise with their setting. Wherever practicable, businesses in the same general location, or in bypassed communities should be encouraged to combine their essential advertising needs so as to avoid a proliferation of directional signs.
- 3.33 Directional signs for premises on public highways are not justified unless the business is located on a no-through road or minor road with little or no passing traffic.

Implementation : Development control process.

## OPEN SPACES

### Open Spaces within Built-up Areas

**Policy BE 14 :** Open spaces which contribute to the character and amenity of the area within the defined development limits as identified on the Proposals Map will be protected against development.

Justification :

- 3.34 The character and structure of urban areas, whether large or small, are dependent upon the relationship between the built-up areas and the open spaces. The District Council will protect open areas within towns and villages of the District, these areas include playing fields, village greens, recreation grounds, fields, copses, paddocks, river valleys, woodlands and allotments.
- 3.35 The changing needs of schools may require the rationalisation of facilities and playing fields which are protected by the Plan. Such departures from the Plan will require a sufficiently strong justification for the creation of new educational facilities at the expense of the loss of playing fields within the built-up areas of the district.
- 3.36 The river valleys, such as Crook Beck, Willington Dene and the River Gaunless in Bishop Auckland also serve as important green wedges within the built-up environment, providing natural wildlife corridors through the towns and villages of the

District. These open spaces are identified on the proposals map.

Implementation : Through the development control process.

## ARCHAEOLOGY

### Scheduled Ancient Monuments

**Policy BE 15 :** Permission will not be granted for development which would have an adverse effect on scheduled and non-scheduled ancient monuments and their settings. Scheduled Ancient Monuments are identified on the Proposals Map.

Justification :

- 3.37 In the District there are 601 sites of archaeological interest and 16 Scheduled Ancient Monuments. The following Ancient Monuments are identified on the Proposals Map:-

Binchester Roman Station (Vinovia)  
 Newton Cap Bridge  
 Auckland Castle Deerhouse  
 Stanhope Bridge  
 Pele Tower, South West of Hunstanworth Church  
 Cambokeels Medieval Site  
 Camp at High Northgate  
 Park Level Mine, Killhope  
 Enclosure North West of Old Park House  
 Westgate Castle  
 Crawley Edge, Cairnsfield  
 Frosterley Chapel of St. Botolph  
 Inkerman Coke Ovens  
 Bradley Hall, Wolsingham  
 Medieval Settlement, Wolsingham  
 Remains of the Stockton and Darlington Railway

- 3.38 Archaeological remains are a finite and non-renewable resource. The District has lost many sites in the past through urban development. The District Council will seek to protect both discovered, and undiscovered archaeological remains and their setting. Similar protection will be afforded to sites which are identified in the future.

Implementation : Development control process.

### Education and Archaeology

**Policy BE 16 :** The District Council will seek to encourage and develop the educational, recreational and tourist potential of archaeological sites and monuments through management and interpretation.

### Areas of Archaeological Interest

**Policy BE 17 :** When development is proposed which affects areas of archaeological interest, as identified on the Proposals Map, an archaeological assessment will be required, before planning approval is given. Where possible the remains will be preserved in-situ.

Justification:

3.39 Areas of Archaeological Interest have been identified in Bishop Auckland Town Centre, South Church, St Helens and West Auckland. These are shown on the Proposals Map.

3.40 It would be unreasonable to suggest that development/redevelopment should be prohibited within areas of archaeological interest. In accordance with PPG16 Archaeology and Planning, the District Council will welcome early discussion on proposals for development within such areas, and would expect initial archaeological assessments to accompany planning applications. Where such assessments reveal evidence of archaeological remains the Council will request a full archaeological field evaluation, undertaken by expert persons or organisations and at the expense of the developer, to assist in the consideration of planning applications. The Council will, where possible, seek the preservation of archaeological remains in situ. In such cases permission may be conditional upon the submission of details which minimise as far as possible damage to archaeological deposits and which make provision for archaeological recording where damage cannot be avoided. Such conditions may include the model condition as explained in paragraph 30 of PPG16. The Council will seek to ensure all proposals which affect archaeological sites will take appropriate measures to mitigate the impact of such proposals. This may require suitable designs and layouts to increase physical preservation of finds, re-siting, redesign, or alternative foundation methods. Where proposals do not take into account the need to safeguard sites of archaeological importance planning permission may not be approved.

3.41 The areas of Archaeological Interest have been identified by fieldwork and research. Within the District this is not complete. New areas of archaeological interest identified in the future will be afforded the protection of Policy BE17.

Implementation : Through the development control process. The use of the model conditions in PPG16 - Archaeology and Planning may be made in granting planning permission.

**Excavation and Recording**

**Policy BE18:** Where it is not feasible to preserve archaeological remains in-situ, the Council will require the applicant to make appropriate and satisfactory provision for the excavation and recording of the remains before development commences. Such work will be required to be carried out to a project brief agreed by the Council.

Justification:

3.42 Although it is desirable to preserve archaeological remains in-situ, it is not always possible or feasible to do so. In accordance with the provisions of PPG16 - Archaeology and Planning, where the Council is satisfied that it is not justified to preserve remains in-situ, the applicant will be

required to make appropriate and satisfactory provision for the excavation and recording of the remains. Such excavation and recording will be required before development commences, working to a project brief agreed by the Council. The applicant will be required to enter into a legal agreement to undertake the excavation and recording work and will be required to publish the subsequent excavation results. If no agreement is signed, the permission will be conditioned accordingly. The British Property Federation has produced model agreements which are within the terms and spirit of the British Archaeologists and Developers' Code of Practice. Financial assistance towards the excavation and recording works may be available from English Heritage where the applicant is a non-profit making community body, such as a housing association or charitable trust, or in the case of individuals who cannot afford to carry out the works.

Implementation: Negotiation through 106 agreement.  
County Archaeologist  
English Heritage

The model conditions explained in PPG16 - Archaeology and Planning may be used in granting planning permission.

**BU ILDINGS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE**

**New Agricultural Buildings**

**Policy BE 19:** New agricultural buildings in the countryside will only be allowed provided the development fulfils the following criteria:

- i) it is well related to existing buildings;
- ii) it utilises the existing landforms;
- iii) the design provides visual breaks between the separate elements of the building;
- iv) the type and colour of materials complements the existing buildings and their setting;
- v) screen planting is provided where appropriate;
- vi) it is not detrimental to the landscape quality of the area; and
- vii) it fulfils Policy GD1.

Justification :

3.43 New agricultural buildings can have a significant impact on areas of open countryside. The Council is keen to minimise this impact by limiting new agricultural buildings to locations close to existing buildings. Techniques such as "cut and fill" and arranging buildings so they have parallel rooflines can be used to reduce the visual impact of a new building. Different materials can also be used on the same building. For example stone walls with stained timber space boarding above with a coloured sheeted profile roof, extending beyond the eaves. These measures also help to break up the visual appearance of a building and reduce its apparent scale. When siting isolated buildings,

these should where possible take advantage of natural dips in the land or be set against a hillside rather than on a skyline. Where new agricultural buildings are required away from existing buildings the Council may grant permission provided the new building is of appropriate design, scale and materials which are in keeping with the surrounding open countryside. For new agricultural buildings in the AONB the Council will expect and encourage, where practical, the use of traditional materials such as stone and timber. Elsewhere the District Council will encourage the use of such materials.

Implementation : Through the development control process.

## Conversion of Buildings in the Countryside

### **Policy BE 20 :**

- (a) **The change of use or conversion of rural buildings in the countryside will be permitted for the following uses providing it fulfils the criteria set out in (c):**
- i) **small scale employment uses (Class B1, B2);**
  - ii) **holiday accommodation;**
  - iii) **recreational uses, including camping barns and bunk houses; and**
  - iv) **new rural enterprises, including farm diversification (see Policy BE21).**
- (b) **If the building cannot be developed for the uses identified in (a), residential use may be considered if:**
- i) **it forms part of a group of buildings which includes at least one dwelling; and**
  - ii) **it fulfils the criteria set out in (c).**
- (c) **All proposals for the conversion of rural buildings will be required to fulfil the following criteria:**
- i) **the building is structurally sound and capable of conversion without significant rebuilding or extensions; and**
  - ii) **the new use would not cause unacceptable disturbance to rural amenities, nearby properties or land uses through noise, smell, pollution or operation at unreasonable hours; and**
  - iii) **the proposal would not be materially detrimental to the landscape quality of the area; and**
  - iv) **the conversion safeguards the form, character, architectural features, design and setting of the building; and**
  - v) **the building has/can be serviced without having a materially detrimental impact on the landscape; and**
  - vi) **the new use would not lead to an unacceptable increase in the level of traffic on local roads, cause access or parking problems or require road improvements which would be harmful to the rural environment. Direct access to metalled roads should already exist; and**
  - vii) **the new use is in accordance with the general development criteria of Policy GD1; and**
  - viii) **all conversions must accommodate any nature conservation interest associated with the building (refer to ENV13).**

**Further development and extensions beyond a building proposed for residential use will not be allowed. Permitted development rights attached to dwelling houses may be rescinded.**

### Justification :

<sup>3.44</sup> Traditional buildings are an important feature in the landscape of the District and their preservation is necessary to help maintain the elements which make up the countryside. It is recognised that converting these buildings to accommodate new uses is one way of saving a building, however this should not take place at the expense of the



character and setting of the building within the landscape.

- 3.45 In accordance with Government Guidance PPG7, the Council will encourage the re-use of rural farm buildings in the countryside for economic uses such as workshops or holiday facilities. Such uses help to sustain the rural economy of an area.
- 3.46 Conversion of rural buildings provides the opportunity to help stimulate the local economy and encourage new rural enterprises by providing additional workshops, tourist facilities and holiday accommodation.
- 3.47 The guidance states that residential conversions have a minimal contribution to make to the local economy and the creation of a residential curtilage around a newly converted building can sometimes have a harmful effect on the character of the countryside, especially in high quality landscape such as the AONB. In addition conversion to residential use can place additional demands on public services because of their often isolated location. Conversion to residential requirements often materially alters the character and quality of the building because of the need for further window and door openings, and internally can completely change the buildings form.
- 3.48 Conversion can lead to the urbanised setting of an otherwise rural building through the associated residential paraphernalia of gardens, fences, washing line, garaging and hardstanding. The conversion / re-use of rural buildings should not be done at the expense of their character or the contribution they make to the landscape. The suburbanisation of rural buildings, including field barns, by residential conversion and subsequent extension is considered potentially detrimental to the character of any of the District's rural buildings and should be prevented. The Council will, therefore, encourage the reuse of these buildings for alternative uses other than residential. Residential uses would only be allowed for buildings which are part of existing groups including a dwelling, and therefore should not add significantly to the impact on the landscape (PPG7, Annex G). Where permission is granted for conversion, permitted development rights normally attached to development may be withdrawn. This may protect the intrinsic quality of the building maintaining its form and character within its landscape setting.
- 3.49 The Council does not see the conversion of these buildings as an opportunity for low cost accommodation. The financial cost of conversion is prohibitive and the isolated location of many of the buildings makes them unsuitable for such use.
- 3.50 In order to prevent the rebuilding of former barns and buildings which have fallen into a ruinous state, the building will have to be structurally sound and capable of conversion. The Council will only permit conversion where this does not require significant work which constitutes the replacement of more than 50% of the structural walls of a building.
- 3.51 Many disused/underused buildings in the countryside serve as important habitats for certain

protected species, such as barn owls. The Council is keen to protect such habitats (ENV13), conversion will, therefore, be required to take account of the potential disturbance of such habitats.

Implementation : Through the Development Control process.

### Farm Diversification

**Policy BE 21 : Proposals for farm diversification will be permitted provided they fulfil the following criteria. The proposal should:**

- i) remain ancillary to the main agricultural function;**
- ii) utilise, where possible, existing farm buildings. Where new buildings are required they should be in keeping with the traditional form and character of the farm group and be well related to existing buildings; and**
- iii) satisfy the General Development criteria, Policy GD1.**

**Within the AONB farm diversification proposals will only be permitted if they do not conflict with the character of the countryside.**

Justification :

- 3.52 The changing situation in farming has led to the need to diversify. Diversified uses, such as farm shops, have helped to broaden the economic base in rural areas and provided additional facilities and services for the local community. PPG7 outlines the need to support the rural economy and help facilitate diversification whilst protecting the landscape quality of the countryside. Many uses, however, can have a detrimental impact to the character and landscape of the area. The Council wishes to ensure that farm diversification does not lead to the reduction in the landscape quality of the countryside and does not create problems such as access, congestion, noise, pollution and loss of amenity. Farm diversification seeks to sustain the farm enterprise and maintain an agricultural economy by adding income generating uses. Farm diversification schemes should however remain ancillary to the main agricultural function of the land and agriculture should remain the dominant land use in order to preserve the landscapes which have resulted from such activity. Within the AONB farm diversification will only be acceptable for uses which do not compromise the landscape quality or the quiet enjoyment of the area. The policy does not specifically list uses which are acceptable/unacceptable as the majority of uses depend upon their location and setting. The policy allows flexibility to assess each proposal on its merits and its location.

Implementation : Through the development control process.

## ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS

**Proposal BE 22 : The District Council will seek to improve the environmental quality of the District, both built and natural, through landscape improvement and enhancement schemes, as identified on the Proposal Map.**

Justification :

3.53 The District Council is committed to improving the environmental quality of Wear Valley. This will take the form of enhancement schemes which will be treated on a priority basis.

3.54 The following areas are identified for improvement:-

- (1) Town Scheme Improvements in Bishop Auckland, Wolsingham and Stanhope Conservation Areas.
- (2) Bishop Auckland Newgate Street - including traffic management, traffic calming, floorscaping, parking (including disabled access) and landscaping.
- (3) Bishop Auckland High Bondgate - junction prioritising and landscaping scheme.
- (4) Bishop Auckland Business Area - improvements to general environmental quality of area including improved parking provision and traffic management.
- (5) Bishop Auckland, The Batts - including tree planting, landscaping, parking, open space and picnic area.
- (6) West Auckland - improvements to the Green including tree planting, floorscaping, traffic management and car parking provision.
- (7) Coundon - including floorscaping, landscaping, street furniture and traffic calming.
- (8) Dene Valley - environmental improvement to Dene Valley settlements, to include landscaping of open areas, floorscaping, traffic calming and the investigation of means of road surface improvements. The establishment of a community woodland will be looked at for the area. See Policy ENV16.
- (9) Witton Park - creation of a village green in conjunction with housing development and road realignment.
- (10) Crook - including traffic management, floorscaping, car parking improvement and landscaping.
- (11) Wellington High Street/Commercial Street - including floorscaping, landscaping, traffic calming/traffic management and the creation of town centre/square.
- (12) Howden le Wear - improvements to High Street and Bridge Street including floorscaping, formalisation of car parking and traffic calming.

(13) Stanley/Hill Top/Sunniside - improvements to B6299 including formalised car parking, traffic calming and landscaping.

(14) Witton le Wear - improvements to Station Road, Cemetery Road and School Street, including traffic management/traffic calming, car parking provision and floorscaping.

(15) Tow Law - improvements to High Street including formalised car parking and landscaping.

(16) Wolsingham - including floorscaping, traffic management, parking and landscaping.

(17) Industrial Areas - including planting schemes and landscaping where opportunity arises.

3.55 Additional improvement schemes will come forward throughout the plan period. This will include schemes in residential, commercial and industrial areas.

Implementation : Improvement schemes by the District and County Council, with grant aid from regional, national and European agencies.

Improvements required as part of development proposals.

### Provision of Public Art

**Policy BE23: The Council, in appropriate cases, will encourage the provision of works of art as part of development. In considering planning applications the Council will have regard to the contribution which such works make to the appearance of the scheme and to the amenity of the area.**

Justification:

3.56 The provision of public works of art provides a point of focus and interest which can positively contribute to the quality of new buildings and the environment of the local amenity. Art in the past has often been seen as something to be enjoyed by the few (minority), having limited access. Art has, however, a much wider appeal and should be enjoyed by all groups of society. Incorporating works of art into new development will give greater access to the works by the public.

3.57 The Council will seek to incorporate new works of art in new public buildings and will encourage developers to provide public art within significant development schemes. Provision of new works can be wide ranging, including, boundary treatments, floorscaping, brickwork, ironwork, street furniture, glass work and sculpture. Where possible local artists will be used and traditional local methods and works produced.

Implementation : Through the development control process.

# Chapter 4

## HOUSING

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### Population

- 4.1 The future level of population within the District is of great importance to the future prosperity of the District. Decline in population inevitably means a decline in service; shops, schools, etc, whilst growth will achieve the support such services need and stimulate new investment. A fundamental aim of the plan is therefore to achieve population stability and if, possible, growth.
- 4.2 The future population of the District is also the single most important factor determining the need for new land use allocations for housing, industry, recreation, community facilities and shopping. These in turn need to be reflected in the Local Plan.
- 4.3 The population of the District has continued to decline since the 1950's, however, the rate of fall has decreased dramatically. Between 1950 and 1971 population fell by over 10,000 whilst since 1971 by only just over 2000. The reasons for the fall have also changed, from a predominance of out-migration as jobs were lost during the 1950 and 1960's in the mining industry, to a decline through natural change due to a relatively high death rate in the latter decades. The District's population is now estimated at about 63,000. (1991 Census). In the decade 1981 - 1991 population decline slowed down to -1.2% and in the two years to 1993 population has marginally increased to 63,582 (1.3%).
- 4.4 During the periods of decline the worst hit parts of the District were the former coalfield areas, particularly Crook and Willington where something like 22% of population was lost during the period. The population of Weardale and Tow Law also fell dramatically. In the last decade, however, levels in all these areas have stabilised and only the Bishop Auckland area has shown continued decline, albeit very small.
- 4.5 The District's population is also ageing. Over the past ten years or so the proportion of the population over the age of 60 rose marginally but it is significant that that proportion is higher than both the County and National averages. This gradual population ageing is reflected by the fact that the proportion of the population in institutional accommodation has increased from 0.5% in 1981 to 1.2% in 1991. (Census)
- 4.6 Durham County Council's Structure Plan adopted a population target for the District of 66,000 to be achieved by 1996. It is obvious now that this will not be achieved. The latest trend based projections prepared by the County Council, based on the 1981 census predict that the District's population will stabilise over the period to the year 2006. Of significance within these projections is the fact that the proportion of the population over the age of 80 years is expected to grow by 38%.

### Households

- 4.7 Against this background of decline the number of households in the District has increased reflecting the trend towards smaller households. Since 1981 the number of households has increased by 5.5% to over 25,500 in 1991 (Census). The average household size of the District has fallen from 2.65 in

1981 to 2.43 in 1991 and is predicted to fall further to 2.33 in 2006. This in itself, without any rise in population, will create a demand for further houses.

- 4.8 The number of households has increased by over 1000 in the last 10 years. Of significance has been the change in housing tenure, with a growth in private home ownership, from 61% in 1981 to 70% in 1991, and a consequent decline in the public sector. It is estimated that at any one time 6% of houses are vacant, i.e. holiday or second homes, under renovation or empty for some other purpose.

### House building

- 4.9 Between 1983 and 1993, about 1800 new dwellings were built in the District whilst 466 dwellings have been demolished, essentially as a result of the clearance of unfit or defective homes resulting in a net increase therefore of 1337 dwellings. The annual rate of building has been about 180 dwellings per year. Bishop Auckland and Crook, the two major centres in the District have accommodated respectively 51% and 22% of all new house building in the last ten years.

### Land for housing

- 4.10 The District has continually made available a sufficient amount of land for housing. There are a wide variety of sites available with planning permission throughout the District. At April 1st 1993 some 1000 units were available for development, of which about 350 were actually under construction.
- 4.11 On the basis of past development trends this is equivalent to under six years supply of land. As has been experienced in the past, some of this land does not always become available for development because of such factors as uncertainty over ownership or fears about marketability.

## Strategy

- 4.12 Durham County Structure Plan at present covers the period to 1996. There is therefore no strategic housing requirement established for the District for the rest of the plan period. A Durham County Structure Plan Review is currently being prepared to cover the period to 2006.

### **The Local Plan aims to ensure:**

- 1 A supply of housing adequate to meet the needs of all the District's residents and that new land for housing development is both capable of development and available for development without excessive economic cost.**
- 2 An adequate range of housing tenure and property type to allow for all housing needs.**
- 3 That housing is made available for all sectors of the community, including those with special needs and those unable to afford to enter the housing market.**
- 4 New housing development is well related to the availability of existing services, facilities and infrastructure to both support and facilitate development.**
- 5 The use of urban, particularly the upper floors above shops and derelict and under used land, for housing to relieve pressure on the countryside.**
- 6 That provision for housing and industry are well co-ordinated to ensure that houses are available in areas where jobs are being created.**
- 7 Housing is of a sufficient quality to meet contemporary housing needs and standards.**
- 8 That the environmental quality of existing housing is protected and enhanced, and that new housing developments comply with high environmental standards.**
- 9 That existing residential densities are maintained and opportunities to increase densities, particularly in town centre locations, are taken where appropriate**

### NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

#### Housing Requirement

**Policy H1 : Land will be made available in the District to enable approximately 2500 new dwellings to be provided. To meet this requirement about 950 dwellings will be provided on sites which already have the benefit of planning permission and a further 1500 dwellings on sites developed in accordance with the policies and proposals of the Local Plan.**

Justification :

- 4.13 It is incumbent on the Local Plan to make available sufficient land for future housing needs which is both free from environmental and development constraints, and which is capable of being developed economically and in areas where demand exists.
- 4.14 The derivation of the Local Plan housing requirement is set out in Table 1. Durham County Structure Plan Review (Deposit Plan) published for consultation in November 1995 provides the most up to date basis for calculating the housing requirement for the period to 2006 for County Durham. At the present time these figures are provisional and are used in Table 1 until they can be verified or corrected, by the District Council, following the adoption of the replacement County Structure Plan.

<b>Housing Requirement</b>	
<b>A</b> District Structure Plan Requirement 1991-2006	<b>2500</b>
<b>B</b> Total completions 1991-94	<b>533</b>
<b>C</b> Demolitions 1991-94	<b>6</b>
<b>D</b> Allowance for demolitions	<b>120</b>
<b>E</b> Total Estimate required (A+C+D-B)	<b>2093</b>
<b>Housing Land Supply</b>	
<b>F</b> Sites with Planning Permission (1st April 1994) (total 1018)*	<b>916</b>
<b>G</b> Allowance for dwellings provided on small sites (under 5) conversions and windfalls (25 per year)	<b>300</b>
<b>H</b> Local Plan Allocations (total 1492)*	<b>1342</b>
<b>I</b> Total Estimated Supply (F+G+H)	<b>2563</b>
<b>Surplus Land Supply (I-E)</b>	<b>465</b>
<b>*total in calculation denotes figures discounted by 10%</b>	

- 4.15 The calculated requirement represents a continuation of the past rate of housebuilding. As stated previously even with this rate of building, population decline has occurred. It is the stated aim of the Council, and therefore of the plan, to increase population. Helping to increase the rate of housebuilding in the District to more than the total identified in Table 1 will broaden the range of housing in the District and therefore assist in encouraging people back into the area.

- 4.16 The Local Plan provides for a total of

approximately 2500 new housing plots consisting of an initial allocation of 2200 with a further 300 in Phase 2 (see Policies H2, H4, H5, & H6). This total is made up of a commitment to development on sites with planning permission, a new supply allocated through the local plan and an unplanned allowance which could come forward as windfalls or developments on small sites.

- 4.17 At the 1st April 1994, sites with planning permission, including those sites under construction, could accommodate approximately 1000 new dwellings. In practice not all sites with planning permission actually come forward for development due to developmental and marketability constraints. A Housing Land Study undertaken with the Housebuilders Federation indicates a number of such sites which are considered not suitable for development and others where it is considered unlikely that development would take place in the next 6 years. Although development would be welcomed on such sites it is considered not appropriate to rely upon such sites to meet the total housing requirement. It is assumed that about 10% of sites with planning permission or allocated for development will not come forward in this way for development.
- 4.18 On the basis of past development trends it is estimated that about 25 dwellings per year will be provided on individual plots or sites of under five dwellings, or as a result of conversions or change of use.
- 4.19 In total these three sources could supply up to 2500 new dwellings, representing a surplus over the Deposit Structure Plan Review housing requirement:
- the Local Plan and Structure Plan requirements are seen as a general guide to housing development and not a fixed target;
  - advice given in Planning Policy Guidance 3 states that "it is important that sufficient land is genuinely available in practical terms to enable the policies and proposals in approved structure plans and adopted local plans to be carried forward";
  - in order to meet the agreed aims of the Local Plan with regard to maintaining the role of established centres and seeking to stimulate growth in areas identified for regeneration where at present development demand is weak;
  - not all dwellings granted planning permission or allocated will actually be built in the Plan period due to unforeseen problems in the housing market; and
  - the housing provision of the Local Plan represents a more realistic reflection of past building rates within the District than that indicated in the Deposit Structure Plan Review.
- 4.20 Allocated sites shown in the plan are based on average housing density of 24 dwellings per hectare. This density may change from site to site depending on the character of the area, site

constraints and housing types. The site areas and resulting site capacities are subject to confirmation through development briefs and planning applications. Several are dependent on the inter-relationship with adjacent uses including; the Saw Mill site, Wolsingham; the Eclipse Works, Crook; Bracks Farm, Bishop Auckland and Hillside Road, Coundon. The first two are also affected by land safeguarded for roads in Proposal T4 which have yet to be designed in detail. Some of the larger sites will require structural planting, such as Hillside Road, Coundon or may contain specific open space requirements, such as High Queen Street, Witton Park where the Council would like to see an open village green area to be incorporated into the development.

- 4.21 Progress on housing completions is continually monitored. Over the plan period, should under-provision be identified as a result of Land for Housing studies undertaken with the House Builders' Federation, meaning that a genuinely available and developable five year supply cannot be maintained, modifications to the Local Plan allocation may be justified.

Implementation :Through the granting of planning applications and promotion of the District as an attractive area in which to live and work.

### Phasing of Housing Provision

**Policy H2:** Of the total number of new dwellings allocated for development in Policy H1, sites in Crook, Coundon, Eldon Lane, Stanley/Mount Pleasant, Howden le Wear and Westgate as identified in Proposals H5, H6 and H7 should only be made available for development after other allocated sites in the same settlements have been substantially completed.

Justification :

- 4.22 The housing provision in the Local Plan is intended to cater for housing needs in the period to 2006. Phasing sites will help to provide a supply of housing land throughout the Local Plan period and ensure that, in settlements with more than one housing allocation, sites with the greatest environmental benefits are promoted first. Planning Policy Guidance 12 (Development Plans and Regional Planning Guidance) indicates that areas can be phased so that they are not released until a particular stage in the plan period. Phasing will where proposed concentrate development close to the centre of towns and villages and achieve environmental benefit in order to regenerate existing settlements.

- 4.23 Development on phased sites will only be allowed when a substantial proportion of houses are completed on other allocated sites within a particular area. It is suggested that these second phase sites should be released for development only when 75% of the estimated capacity of "phase one" sites identified in Proposals H5, H6 and H7 are complete. In this way building rates will not be suppressed and the Local Plan will continue to reflect the urban concentration and sustainability

concepts contained in central government advice, the Durham County Structure Plan and the District Local Plan.

Implementation : Through the monitoring of building rates.

### Distribution of Development

**Policy H3 :** New development will be directed to those towns and villages best able to support it. Within the limits to development of the following towns and villages, as shown on the Proposals Map, development (in addition to development on allocated sites) will be allowed provided it meets the criteria set down in Policy GD1 and conforms to the other policies of this plan:

<u>Settlement</u>	<u>Inset No.</u>
<b>Bishop Auckland (including West Auckland, St. Helen and South Church)</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Coundon/Leeholme</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Dene Valley</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Escomb</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Witton Park</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Binchester</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Toronto</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Newfield</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Crook</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Willington (including Sunnybrow)</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Howden-le-Wear</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Fir Tree</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Hunwick/Lane Ends</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>North Bitchburn</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Billy Row/Stanley/Mount Pleasant</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Sunnyside</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Roddymoor</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Witton-le-Wear</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Oakenshaw</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Helmington Row</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Stanhope</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Tow Law</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Wolsingham</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Frosterley</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>St. John's Chapel</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Ireshopeburn</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Edmundbyers</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Eastgate</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Rookhope</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Westgate</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Cowshill</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Wearhead</b>	<b>32</b>

## Criteria for Infill Development

**Proposal H4 : Proposals which would result in extension of development into open countryside or ribbon development will not be allowed. In the countryside, outside the towns and villages as defined in Policy H3 limited new residential development other than that subject to occupancy considerations (Policy H11) may be allowed as infilling or minor extension to small hamlets or groups of houses provided that proposals:**

- i) do not involve the development of agricultural land;
- ii) have no adverse impact on the landscape or on areas of nature conservation interest;
- iii) do not involve significant loss of trees or open space;
- iv) are contained within well-established physical boundaries;
- v) do not place unacceptable extra demand on services;
- vi) are normally sited within an otherwise built-up frontage;
- vii) where located in the North Pennines AONB, are located in gaps within a frontage of no more than 25 metres in width; and
- viii) are in accordance with Policy GD1 and other policies of the Local Plan.

### Justification :

4.24 When allocating new land for housing development consideration has been given to:

- a) the scale and location of development in relation to existing development;
- b) the impact of new development on the pattern and character of existing development;
- c) the availability and capacity of existing infrastructure, including services such as education and health, shops and post offices, public transport, as well as roads, water supply and sewers;
- d) the need to minimise travel for the Districts' residents;
- e) the impact on the landscape, nature conservation interests, agricultural holdings and archaeology;
- f) the need to reduce pollution and achieve compatibility between adjacent land uses;
- g) the need to utilise vacant or unused land within the built-up area of settlements without leading to town cramming or the loss of valuable open spaces; and
- h) the environmental capacity of the area to accommodate new development.

4.25 The towns and villages listed under Policy H3 all have defined developments limits. Within these boundaries residential development will normally be permitted provided it fulfils the general development criteria (Policy GD1). Land has been identified in Proposals H5, 6 & 7 for new development which can satisfy the above criteria.

New housing development in these areas will meet the housing needs of the District whilst also protecting the countryside and the environment in general from unplanned and unco-ordinated development. Sites have been identified in some villages, in Proposal H7, for small-scale development but it is considered that any further development should be limited to infill or conversions because of the need to conserve the character and setting of the village.

4.26 Outside the defined development limits infilling or minor extensions to small hamlets or groups of houses may be acceptable. Great care however needs to be taken to ensure that such development does not harm the agricultural, landscape or nature conservation interests of the immediate area or lead to the urbanisation of the beautiful countryside of the District.

4.27 Infill housing development constitutes the filling of small gaps within small groups of houses. In the North Pennines AONB, the traditional scattered settlement pattern could be irreversibly damaged by a significant amount of infilling, leading in places to the complete development of countryside road frontages. Therefore, in the AONB such gaps should be limited to a maximum of 25 metres and be suitable to accommodate no more than two dwellings.

4.28 In general outside those towns and villages identified in Policy H3, infill development, as defined above, and minor extensions may be acceptable in other small hamlets or groups of housing as long as this does not lead to the extension of development into open countryside or ribbon development. In addition, careful consideration will be needed for such proposals in order to protect the character and general environment of such groups and the countryside as a whole and therefore developments should meet the criteria established in Policy H4. It should not be assumed that permission will be given for development of all gap sites however small. It may be desirable to retain certain gaps which are important to the built form of the town and village, providing views through to open countryside and contributing to the character of the settlement. In considering proposals for infill development, consideration needs to be given to the general development criteria Policy GD1.

4.29 The limits to development for the Policy H3 settlements are defined on the Proposals Map. These limits are defined in accordance with the criteria set out in Appendix 8. The development limits distinguish between land where development is, in principle, acceptable, from areas where development would be prohibited, that is areas of urban use from areas where normal countryside protection policies would apply. The limits to development are not necessarily the same as the total area which historically or is locally known as the settlement, but defines the area in which new development would be acceptable and which could be accommodated without undue harm to the character and amenity of the existing towns and villages.

Implementation : Development control process.



**Allocated Sites in the Main Towns**

**Proposal H5 : The following sites are allocated for residential development during the plan period at Bishop Auckland, Crook and Coundon/Leeholme:-**

Site	Inset No.	Developable Area (Ha)	Estimated No. of dwellings
<b>Bishop Auckland</b>			
1. Bracks Farm	1	6.0	100
2. Etherley Dene Farm	1	5.7	150
3. Darlington Road	1	3.0	64
4. Oakley Street	1	0.8	15
5. Leazes Industrial Area	1	3.2	100
<b>Crook</b>			
6. Tennyson Terrace	9	2.4	60
7. Former Parkside School South and Former Eclipse Site	9	2.5	58
8. South End Villas	9	2.8	30
9. New Road	9	2.4	43
<b>Coundon/Leeholme</b>			
10. Hillside Road	2	3.0	72
11. Addison Road	2	1.2	25
12. Pembroke Street	2	1.6	38
13. Sussex Street	2	0.8	19
14. Westerton View	2	0.3	8

**The following additional sites will be made available for development after other allocated sites in the same settlement have been substantially completed:-**

15. Thistleflat Road, Crook	9	3.9	72
16. Grey Gardens, Coundon	2	3.9	94

**Justification :**

- 4.30 The Local Plan seeks to ensure new residential development is well related to settlements which possess a good range of facilities and services, which can support such development. In addition it is essential to relate new housing development to areas of existing and potential industrial development, to ensure new homes are provided where jobs are being created.
- 4.31 The towns of Bishop Auckland and Crook are the established residential, commercial and industrial centres of the District. Willington and Coundon/Leeholme are growing centres where major industrial and residential development is planned. The District Local Plan Draft Strategy produced in 1991 identified the scope for the expansion of Willington and Coundon/Leeholme. This was subject to public consultation and given public support. Both towns already possess a range of services and facilities, with the exception of good retail facilities, and are strategically located on the District's communication routes.
- 4.32 It is appropriate that the majority of the District's new housing provision should be provided at these

4 towns.

- 4.33 Land already exists in these towns with planning permission for housing. Appendix 4 gives details of such land in the District at 1st April 1994. The total amount of land which is proposed to come forward for development in these towns during the plan period is shown in Table 2:
- 4.34 The Bishop Auckland Local Plan adopted in December 1990 allocated 468 housing plots for development in the period to 1996. At 1st April 1994 354 sites had planning consent and were committed for development. This constitutes approximately four years supply at current rates of building, equivalent to the end of the adopted Local Plan period. There is a need to maintain an adequate supply of land at Bishop Auckland to maintain its role as a major centre in the District. An estimated 429 new housing plots are identified in the Plan. Of these 245 represent a reconfirmation of the sites allocated in the Bishop Auckland Local Plan. These sites have been subject to extensive public consultation and have been subsequently endorsed through the planning system as acceptable housing sites.
- 4.35 The South West Crook Action Area Plan approved, after public consultation, by both Durham County and Wear Valley District Councils in 1984 allocated site H5 : 7, for residential development. This allocation is carried forward in the Local Plan.
- 4.36 The other allocated sites have been put forward to meet the strategic need for development in all four towns, and have been chosen to conform with the criteria for residential development as outlined in the justification of Policy H3.
- 4.37 It is envisaged that other small scale developments may come forward for development within those towns in accordance with Policy H3, but no additional large scale housing land releases are envisaged during the plan period.
- 4.38 The number of dwellings estimated for each allocated site is on the basis of an average 24 dwellings per hectare. The total number of dwellings proposed is sufficiently large to enable a variety of densities to be built and to give potential developers a choice and flexibility to meet all elements of housing market demands.
- 4.39 Proposal H5 outlines the scope for housing in the four main towns of the District. Reference should be made to Policies H9, H10, H15 and H22 which identify various development requirements of these sites.

	Land with Planning Permission		Local Plan Allocations				Total Dwellings
	Area(Ha)	Est. Dwell.	Phase 1 Area(Ha)	Phase 1 Est. Dwell.	Phase 2 Area(Ha)	Phase 2 Est. Dwell.	
Bishop Auckland	13.85	348	18.7	429			777
Crook	11.33	102	9.0	191	3.9	72	365
Willington	7.12	234					234
Coundon	1.58	44	6.9	162	3.9	94	300

- 4.40 Not all sites identified in Policy H5 will be available for development immediately. Sites allocated within the centre of Crook and at Hillside Road, Coundon will realise greater environmental benefit than other sites within these settlements. The development of these sites should be promoted in advance of the more peripheral sites of Thistleflat Road, Crook and Grey Gardens, Coundon. These sites should be phased to come forward only after a substantial proportion of houses are completed on the first phase of allocations. It is suggested that 75% of each "phase one" site should be completed before these second phase allocations are released for development.
- 4.41 The District Council in conjunction with landowners and other interested parties will prepare detailed design briefs for Bracks Farm, Bishop Auckland, the Eclipse Works site, Crook and Hillside Road, Coundon. In the latter 2 cases the need for, the amount and siting of and the relationship between the various uses will be explained.

Implementation :Through the granting of planning permission and the production of housing development briefs.  
Development will mostly be undertaken by private house builders.

### Allocated Sites in Villages identified for Regeneration

**Proposal H6 : The following sites are allocated for residential development during the plan period and should be developed in conjunction with environmental improvements at Witton Park, Dene Valley and Stanley/Mount Pleasant:-**

	Inset No.	Dev. Area(ha)	Est. Dwell
<b>Witton Park</b>			
1. Low Queen Street	5	3.3	50
2. High Queen Street	5	1.0	24
<b>Dene Valley</b>			
3. Bridge Farm Phase 1, Eldon Lane	3	0.5	20
4. Close House Allotments	3	0.5	13
5. Close House	3	1.7	30
<b>Stanley/Mount Pleasant</b>			
6. Allotment Site	15	1.3	20
<b>The following additional sites will be made available for development after other allocated sites in the same settlement have been substantially completed:-</b>			
7. Bridge Farm Phase 2, Eldon Lane	3	2.9	40
8. South of Football Ground, Stanley	15	1.7	40

Justification:

- 4.42 The villages in the Dene Valley (including Close House, Coronation, Coundon Grange, Eldon Lane and the outlying terraces of Auckland Park and Gurney Valley), Witton Park and Stanley/Mount Pleasant are well served by existing facilities, including primary schools, shops and public transport links. They are also easily accessible to the larger centres of Bishop Auckland and Crook for other services and sources of employment. The environment of all areas, however, has suffered through neglect and lack of investment.
- 4.43 It is proposed to seek the revitalisation and regeneration of such settlements by stimulating investment led by new housing development and associated environmental improvement (Policy BE22). The concept of revitalisation of these settlements was given public support during consultation on the Draft Local Plan Strategy in 1991. Only a small number of dwellings will be provided in these settlements on sites with planning permission (further details are included in Appendix 4). The total amount of land proposed to come forward for development in these settlements during the plan period is as shown in Table 3. Within the villages of Stanley/Mount Pleasant and Eldon Lane (Dene Valley) it is proposed to release land for development initially on Site 6 Allotment Site, and 3 Bridge Farm (part) respectively to achieve greater environmental benefit. The remaining sites within these settlements will be released only after a substantial proportion of houses are completed on the first phase allocations. It is suggested that 75% of each "phase one" site should be completed before these second phase allocations are released for development.
- 4.44 The sites allocated have been put forward to meet the regenerative aims of the Local Plan and have been selected in accordance with the criteria established in the justification of Policy H3. Within the limits of development for these villages as established in Policy H3 other small sites may come forward for development and be judged in relation to criteria established in the justification of Policy H3. However, no further large scale housing sites are expected to come forward for development. It is anticipated that development within these villages will be matched by environmental improvements aimed at achieving wholesale physical enhancement of the areas including village enhancement schemes, tree planting and landscaping, and improvements to recreational provision.
- 4.45 Reference should be made to Policies H9, H10, H15 and H22 which identify various requirements for some of these sites.

TABLE 3

	Land with Planning Permission		Local Plan Allocations				Total Dwell
	Area(Ha)	Est. Dwell.	Phase 1 Area(Ha)	Phase 1 Est. Dwell.	Phase 2 Area(Ha)	Phase 2 Est. Dwell.	
Witton Park	-	-	4.3	74	-	-	74
Dene Valley	1.68	15	2.7	80	2.9	40	135
Stanley/M Pleasant	-	6	1.3	20	1.7	40	60

Implementation : Through the preparation of development briefs, the granting of planning permissions, landscaping and village enhancement schemes in conjunction with the Groundwork Trust and others. Developments will mostly be undertaken by private housebuilders.

these settlements during the Plan period is set out in Table 4 below. Within the villages of Howden le Wear and Westgate sites at Park Terrace and Britten Hall should be phased to come forward only after a substantial proportion of houses are completed on the first phase allocations. It is suggested that 75% of each “phase one” site should be completed before these second phase allocations are released for development.

## Allocated Sites in the Sub-Areas

**Policy H7:** The following sites, as shown on the Proposals Map, are allocated for residential development during the plan period in the following villages:-

	<u>Inset</u> <u>No.</u>	<u>Dev</u> <u>Area (ha)</u>	<u>Estimated</u> <u>Dwellings</u>
<b>Crook and Willington Area</b>			
1. Well Bank, Billy Row	15	0.4	6
2. High Street, Howden-le-Wear	11	1.8	45
3. West End, Hunwick	13	0.8	20
4. Lane Ends, Hunwick	13	0.2	10
5. Front Street, Sunnyside	16	0.6	14
<b>Tow Law/Weardale Area</b>			
6. Broken Way, St. John's Chapel	25	1.3	30
7. Bond Isle Allotments, Stanhope	21	0.4	10
8. Chapel Street, Stanhope	21	0.5	12
9. Weardale Caravan Site, Westgate	30	0.7	16
10. Saw Mill Site, Wolsingham	23	2.6	55
11. North of Riverdale, Wolsingham	23	0.8	20

The following additional sites will be made available for development after other allocated sites in the same settlement have been substantially completed:-

12. Park Terrace, Howden le Wear	11	1.8	42
13. Britten Hall, Westgate	30	0.6	10

4.47 The size and location of such sites allows for the provision of a range of sites throughout the District for potential developers, and will enable provision for all sections of the local housing market, including public and private development and low cost and executive housing.

4.48 Further development opportunities within these villages may also come forward during the plan period but should be restricted to that considered appropriate for each village. The development of these allocated sites, and any others that may come forward should be consistent with the other policies of the Local Plan, in particular general housing development policies. Reference should be made to Policies H9, H10, H15 and H22 and settlement studies which identify various requirements of some of these sites.

Implementation : Through the granting of planning permissions.  
Development will mostly be undertaken by private housebuilders.

Justification :

4.46 All sites lie within the limits to development as identified on the Proposals Map in accordance with Policy H3. The location and scale of development proposed relates to the availability of services and facilities within the villages, and the impact of such development on the character and setting of the villages themselves. Consideration has also been given to the impact of outstanding planning permissions for housing on such villages. The total amount of land to come forward for development in

**TABLE 4**

	Land with Planning Permission Area (Ha)	Dwellings	Land Allocations Area (Ha)	Dwellings	Total Dwellings
<b>Bishop Auckland Area</b>					
Newfield	0.7	17	-	-	17
<b>Crook &amp; Willington Area</b>					
Billy Row	0.18	6	0.4	6	12
Fir Tree	0.57	7	-	-	7
Howden le Wear	0.35	6	3.6	87	93
Hunwick	1.4	92	1.0	30	122
North Bitchburn	0.46	8	-	-	8
Oakenshaw	1.77	8	-	-	8
Sunnyside	-	-	0.6	14	14
Wilton le Wear	-	6	-	-	6
<b>Weardale &amp; Tow Law Area</b>					
Edmundbyers	0.58	10	-	-	10
Frosterley	1.74	25	-	-	25
Stanhope	0.69	28	0.9	22	50
St Johns Chapel	-	-	1.3	30	30
Tow Law	0.5	16	-	-	16
Westgate	0.6	14	1.3	26	40
Wolsingham	8.3	32	3.4	75	107

## Renewal of Housing Permissions

**Policy H8 :** Housing development will be approved on the following sites should existing planning permissions lapse during the plan period unless there has been a material change in circumstances that precludes development:-

<u>Bishop Auckland</u>	<u>Inset No.</u>	<u>Site Area (Ha)</u>
The Elms	1A	0.2
Wilkinsons Yard	1	0.2
Milford Meadows	1	1.0
St Andrews Road	1	0.5
Kings Lodge	1A	0.1
Priors Gate	1	2.0
<u>Crook</u>		
West Road (Former Eclipse site)	9	2.9
<u>Willington</u>		
West of Industrial Estate Phase II	10	1.2

Justification:

4.49 The District Council has already granted planning permission on the sites contained in policy H8. These permissions have not yet been implemented and some may lapse during the plan period. The sites are all listed in the Council's Housing Land Availability Register (April 1994) and contribute to the total housing requirement of the District. It is important that if planning applications for housing submitted on these sites they are given favourable consideration.

Implementation : Through the development control process.

Justification :

4.50 That the development of certain sites will require improvements to be made to the surrounding infrastructure (for example, roads, sewers, service supplies) and it is appropriate that developers will be required to contribute or pay for such improvements to facilitate development. Policy H9 highlights those sites which are already known to require major infrastructure improvements either associated with them or the development of which will be delayed until certain major works have been carried out.

4.51 Sites within the valley of Crook Beck will have significant impact on existing drainage arrangements because of problems within the river system and the inability of the lower reaches of the Beck to accommodate higher levels of surface water run-off. In recent years new developments in Crook have made financial contribution to improvements to the Beck. New allocations will be expected to make similar contributions. Consideration is currently being given to the development of a balancing pond to the north of Crook to intercept flows from the northern valley and regulate flows in the Beck between Crook and the River Wear. Detailed proposals for such a scheme will be further investigated.

Implementation : Major road building is the responsibility of Durham County Council. Small works will need to be undertaken and paid for by private developers but to the specification of Durham County Council. Sewerage and drainage provision by Northumbrian Water PLC.

## INFRASTRUCTURE AND RELOCATION

### Housing Allocations with Related Infrastructure Provision

**Proposal H9 :** Residential development on the following sites will only be allowed on the completion of the indicated major infrastructure works:-

<u>Site</u>	<u>Inset No.</u>	<u>Infrastructure Works</u>
Bracks Farm, Bishop Auckland (H5)	1	Construction of roundabout on A688
Former Parkside School South, and Eclipse Site, Crook (H5)	9	Crook Beck improvements and A689 Crook Relief Road
Thistleflat Road, Crook (H5)	9	Crook Beck improvements
New Road, Crook (H5)	9	Crook Beck improvements
Low Queen Street, Witton Park (H6)	5	Low Queen Street realignment
Park Terrace, Howden le Wear (H7)	11	Crook Beck improvements and construction of Howden le Wear bypass.
High Street, Howden le Wear (H7)	11	Crook Beck improvements
Saw Mill Site, Wolsingham (H7)	23	Access to proposed industrial area (Prop.16/T4)

### Relocation of Existing Uses

**Policy H10 :** Residential development on the following sites will only be allowed following the relocation of existing uses:-

<u>Site</u>	<u>Inset No.</u>	<u>Uses to be relocated</u>
Etherley Dene Farm, Bishop Auckland (H5)	1	Transport depot
Leazes Industrial Area, Bishop Auckland (H5)	1	Special Industries/industrial land allocation
Hillside Road, Coundon (H5)	2	Allotments
Bridge Farm Phase 1, Eldon Lane (H6)	3	Industry
Allotment Site, Stanley (H6)	15	Allotment Rationalisation
Bond Isle Allotments, Stanhope (H7)	21	Allotment Rationalisation
Chapel Street, Stanhope (H7)	21	Allotment Rationalisation
Saw Mill Site, Wolsingham (H7)	23	Industry
West End, Hunwick (H7)	13	Allotments

Justification :

4.52 The identified industrial non-conforming uses are within essentially residential areas. They are, however, employment generating uses and their successful relocation will both maintain employment and improve the amenity of surrounding properties. Suitable locations for such uses are identified in Industry and Employment Chapter. The relocation and rationalisation of the allotments identified will require suitable alternative locations close to the existing housing.

Implementation : Through legal agreements as appropriate under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Section 33 of the Local Government Act.  
Relocation and subsequent housing development will be undertaken essentially by private developers.

d) to ensure the effective and economic use of existing services and facilities.

4.55 As a consequence in principle any new housing in the countryside should be prohibited. Exceptions may be made where it can be demonstrated, that the housing is essential for the running of a viable agricultural holding or for forestry enterprise. In such circumstances applicants should be able to demonstrate clearly why an exception should be made and will need to provide evidence to support an application. In accordance with PPG7 Annex I the applicant will be required to clearly demonstrate that the demands of the farming or forestry work concerned make it essential for one or more of the people engaged in this work to live at or very close to the site of that work. In assessing applications for such agricultural or forestry dwellings the Council may apply functional and financial tests. The functional test will establish whether it is essential for the proper functioning of the enterprise for workers to be readily available at all times, both as to tender animals or agricultural processes at short notice or to deal with emergencies which could lead to the loss of crops. Where such tests are inconclusive, financial tests may apply to give further evidence of need.

Implementation : Through the development control process

## HOUSING IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

### New Housing in the Countryside

**Policy H11 : New housing development in the countryside outside the limits to development, as identified on the Proposals Map, will not be allowed. A dwelling may be permitted in the countryside if the applicant can clearly show that it is essential for one or more of the people engaged in farming or forestry to live at or very close to the site of their work. In such circumstances permission may be granted for such development subject to:**

- i) a clear demonstration of need to the satisfaction of the local authority;
- ii) being well related to any existing built development in the countryside;
- iii) not adversely affect the environment;
- iv) being of a scale and design which is sympathetic with its surroundings and appropriate to its purpose;
- v) the application forms part of a financially viable farm or forestry holding; and
- vi) fulfilling the general design criteria in Policy GD1.

Planning permissions granted for such developments will be controlled by occupancy conditions.

### Removal of Occupancy Condition

**Policy H12 : Planning permission for the removal of an agricultural occupancy condition will only be granted if it can be demonstrated by the applicant that the longer term need for the agricultural workers dwelling both on a particular farm and in the locality no longer warrants reserving the dwelling for that purpose.**

Justification :

Justification :

4.53 The countryside of the District represents a significant natural asset, much of which has been recognised as being of Outstanding Natural Beauty (North Pennines AONB). Protection of this asset accords with Government Guidance in the form of Planning Policy Guidance Note 7 which provides that the countryside should be safeguarded for its own sake and that non-renewable and natural resources should be afforded protection. In addition, the strategy of the Local Plan which seeks to provide sufficient land for housing to meet anticipated future demands in locations which relate to the availability of existing services and facilities would as such prescribe against uncontrolled residential development, in the countryside.

4.54 New housing in the countryside would therefore in general be opposed because of the need:

- a) to protect the countryside;
- b) to maintain the separate identity of existing towns and villages;
- c) to ensure the development of land within built-up areas is more effectively used; and

4.56 As long as agriculture is a vital rural industry, dwellings will be required to house those it employs. To release an agricultural worker's dwelling, for general housing purposes, whilst a need still exists either on the particular agricultural holding or in the vicinity of the holding will result in a demand for further housing development in the countryside. In order to be consistent in protecting the countryside, it is essential that dwellings built specifically for agricultural occupation should be kept for such use, unless it can be demonstrated that it is now redundant of such use.

4.57 In considering requests to remove occupancy conditions it will be necessary to demonstrate:

- (a) that the property has been widely advertised for sale and/or rent for a minimum period of one year;
- (b) the valuation attributed to the property reflects the occupancy condition; and
- (c) that no reasonable offer has been refused.

Implementation : Through the processing of planning applications.

## Extensions to Houses in the Countryside

**Policy H13 :** Extensions to residential properties in the countryside will only be allowed where:

- i) proposals do not detract from the appearance of the original building or its historic or architectural character; and
- ii) are sympathetic in scale, design and character with the original building.

Justification :

4.58 It is also necessary to ensure that the character and type of dwelling stock in the countryside is maintained. Improvements to existing dwellings are welcomed as long as they are in keeping with the character of the property. Proposals to increase the size of the original building which will result in a significant change to the character and appearance of the building will be resisted.

Implementation : Through the processing of planning applications, the production of design guidance and general advice to developers.

## HOUSING TYPES

### Range of Housing Types

**Policy H14 :** When granting planning permission for residential development the District Council will seek the provision of an appropriate range of accommodation relative to the size of the site and the housing needs or demands in the locality.

Justification :

4.59 The District Council considers it essential that a wide range of accommodation is provided to meet the varied housing needs of the District's population. Such factors as the aging population, the falling household size and the need for single or two person accommodation and providing homes which are affordable to all members of the population should all be taken into consideration when bringing forward new housing proposals. The District Council is conscious of the fact that developments over the last 10 years have been essentially market led, only 10% being by public agencies, and much of what has been produced is standard family housing. Regard should therefore be given to the housing needs of all sections of the population. The District Council is also conscious of the fact that in certain parts of the District, such as Wolsingham and Witton-le-Wear new housing has been at above average price. Again consideration should be given to enabling all sections of the population a free choice in housing locations.

Implementation : Through consideration of development proposals, discussions/negotiations with developers and by encouraging the activity of Housing Associations and other social housing providers.

## Affordable Housing

**Proposal H15 :** The District Council will, where a relevant local need has been established, seek to negotiate with developers for the inclusion of an appropriate element of affordable housing on the following and additional sites that come forward during the Plan period:-

	<u>Inset No.</u>	<u>Suggested number of affordable housing units</u>
<b><u>Bishop Auckland (H5)</u></b>		
Bracks Farm	1	20
Etherley Dene Farm	1	30
Darlington Road	1	14
Oakley Street	1	15
Leazes Industrial Area	1	20
<b><u>Crook (H5)</u></b>		
Tennyson Terrace	9	12
Former Parkside School South	9	11
South End Villas	9	10
New Road	9	8
Thistleflat Road	9	15
<b><u>Coundon/Leeholme (H5)</u></b>		
Hillside Road	2	10
Addison Road	2	10
Pembroke Street/		
Sussex Street	2	13
Grey Gardens	2	15
<b><u>Witton Park (H6)</u></b>		
Low Queen Street, Witton Park	5	10
<b><u>Dene Valley (H6)</u></b>		
Close House Allotments	3	10
<b><u>Billy Row/Stanley/Mount Pleasant (H6)</u></b>		
Allotment Site, Stanley	15	4
South of Football Ground, Stanley	15	8
<b><u>Howden le Wear (H7)</u></b>		
Park Terrace, Howden le Wear	11	10
High Street, Howden le Wear	11	8
<b><u>Hunwick (H7)</u></b>		
Lane Ends	13	10
<b><u>St John's Chapel (H7)</u></b>		
Broken Way	25	6
<b><u>Wolsingham (H7)</u></b>		
Saw Mill Site	23	11
North of Riverdale	23	4

Where dwellings are provided in accordance with this Proposal the Council will require the provision of adequate arrangements to reserve the dwellings both initially and on subsequent change of occupants, for local needs.

Justification :

4.60 The District Council is deeply concerned at the difficulty experienced by local people on modest incomes in obtaining housing at a price to buy or rent that they can afford. Initiatives to provide "affordable" housing will be supported by the District Council. Such housing can include homes for rent, homes that are for sale at less than full purchase price through shared equity, and low cost home ownership schemes.

4.61 The percentage of the District's housing stock which is available for rent and/or low cost ownership has been declining for the past 10 years, whilst the total number of people registering for accommodation within the District has been growing. The District Council have assessed and will continue to assess the need for 'affordable housing' within the District. In 1990 the District Council's Rural Housing Survey showed that in Weardale and Tow Law alone over 200 households were considered in need of housing whilst house prices on the open market had escalated far beyond their reach. A comprehensive Districtwide Housing Needs survey concluded in 1993 showed that there were over 800 households identified themselves to be in housing need. These were distributed as follows: Bishop Auckland Area 396, Crook and Willington 264, Weardale and Tow Law 147. In addition, current housing waiting lists estimate a need for over 2500 dwellings throughout the District.

4.62 Whilst not seeking to prevent the rise in home ownership the District Council is conscious of the need to provide housing for all elements of the population. Planning Policy Guidance Note 3 : Housing advises that a community's need for affordable housing is a material planning consideration which may properly be taken into account in formulating local plan policies and that in any new development on a substantial scale in both urban and rural locations, a mix and balance of house types and sizes is desirable to cater for a range of housing needs. In response to this demonstrable need for "affordable" housing in the District the Local Plan seeks to make new provision through Proposal H15 and Policy H16. On the larger housing allocations in the Local Plan (identified as being of 0.8 hectares or accommodating 20 or more dwellings), and in locations where a need has been identified, Proposal H15 seeks to ensure that a proportion of new dwellings is provided at low cost or for rent. In proposing such "affordable" housing, account has been taken of the scale and location of housing need as determined through the Districtwide Housing Need Survey 1993. A quota of approximately 20% has been taken as the proportion of affordable housing units that should be provided on a site. This figure has been exceeded on sites owned by the District Council and reduced on sites where demand for development is low. Table 5 identifies the scale of housing need according to settlements within the District, and identifies the proposed supply of affordable housing, as proposed in Proposal H15. At April 1994 there were 14 housing plots being developed to meet the needs for low cost or rented accommodation. Proposal H15 seeks to provide a further 284 dwellings. This will meet, in total, only 35% of the identified demands on available evidence. It is appreciated that there is greater ability to provide "affordable" housing in this way in the larger settlements of the District. In the rural west of the District Policy H16 would apply to bring forward sites for affordable housing on "exceptions" sites.

4.63 The District will continue to monitor demands for affordable housing throughout the plan period to

enable Proposal H15 to be relevant to expressed and demonstrable housing needs. Where the Council intends to seek to negotiate the provision of an element of affordable housing on a site, the Council will make freely available its assessment of local affordable housing demand relevant to the site location.

4.64 The District Council will seek to use its own land holdings and encourage the use of County Council land to promote low cost/rented accommodation through Housing Associations. At 1st April 1994 14 dwellings were being developed on land in District Council ownership at Wheatbottom, Crook. Other sites in Council ownership which are considered appropriate for such use include:-

<u>Site</u>	<u>No. of dwellings</u>
1 Oakley Street, West Auckland (H5)	15
2 Grey Gardens, Coundon (H5)	15
3 Addison Road, Coundon (H5)	10
4 Pembroke/Sussex Street, Leeholme (H5)	13
5 Tennyson Terrace, Crook (H5)	12
6 South End Villas, Crook (H5)	10
7 Close House Allotments (H6)	10
8 Lane Ends, Hunwick (H7)	10

4.65 The District Council can therefore seek to bring forward land for the development of about 100 dwellings (36% of Proposal H15 supply). It is essential therefore that all land in private ownership and subject to private sector development makes an appropriate contribution to satisfying the need for affordable housing. The District Council will therefore seek to apply Proposal H15 to other large unidentified and currently unallocated sites in areas of demonstrable housing need, should these come forward during the plan period.

4.66 In order to ensure that "affordable" housing provided in accordance with both Proposal H15 and Policy H16 is maintained for local needs, the Council will expect developers to involve the participation of Housing Associations or otherwise enter into arrangements including Section 106 Agreements where appropriate which ensure such provision both initially and on subsequent change of occupants.

Implementation : Through negotiations with developers on planning applications and through the involvement of Housing Associations. The demand for affordable housing will be monitored by the District Council in each sub-area every 3 years.

**TABLE 5 - AFFORDABLE HOUSING NEED**

AREA	IDENTIFIED NEED	PROPOSED SUPPLY
<b>Bishop Auckland Sub Area</b>		
Bishop Auckland/West Auckland	319	99 (31%)
Coundon/Leeholme	48	48 (100%)
Witton Park/Escomb	11	10 (91%)
Dene Valley	10	10 (100%)
Other Settlements	8	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>396</b>	<b>167 (42%)</b>
<b>Crook Sub Area</b>		
Crook	129	56 (43%)
Willington	72	-
Billy Row/Roddy Moor/Stanley/Sunnyside	20	12 (60%)
Howden le Wear/Fir Tree/Witton le Wear	27	18 (67%)
Hunwick	10	10 (100%)
Other Settlements	1	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>264(a)</b>	<b>96 (36%)</b>
<b>Weardale /Tow Law Sub Area</b>		
Tow Law	23	-
Wolsingham	64	15 (23%)
Stanhope	26	-
St John's Chapel	11	6 (55%)
Other Settlements	23	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>21 (14%)</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>807</b>	<b>284 (35%)</b>

(a) includes 5 non-site specific households.

### Exceptions Policy

**Policy H16 :** As an exception to Policy H3, small scale (under 10 dwellings or 0.5 hectares) housing schemes may be permitted on suitable sites outside but adjacent to the defined limits to development of villages listed in Policy H3 in Weardale, where it is clearly demonstrated that there is an overriding local need for affordable housing that cannot be reasonably provided within the boundaries of villages, provided that:

- i) appropriate agreements are entered into to ensure that all dwellings provided will be and will remain available for local people at an affordable cost either to rent or buy;
- ii) developments do not have any adverse impact on the character or appearance of settlements, their setting and the surrounding countryside; and
- iii) the proposal satisfies the General Development Criteria, Policy GD1 and other policies in the Local Plan.

Justification :

4.67 Whilst the Council considers it has allocated sufficient land to meet the likely housing requirements of the District which includes the need for low cost/rented accommodation on allocated sites through the implementation of Policy H15, it acknowledges that in Weardale, in particular, where large housing land releases are not possible, it may not be possible for this to be achieved. If a genuine need can be demonstrated for land to be released for housing development in this area to meet the needs of a particular community, then the District Council may be prepared to grant planning permission. In such cases the Council will wish to limit the occupation of the dwellings to people with a demonstrable need to live in or near that village, or who are closely connected with it. It is likely that this policy will mainly be achieved through schemes carried out by Housing Associations and the District Council will seek to ensure that overall control of occupancy can be maintained.

4.68 The following categories of need will be taken into account when assessing demand for affordable housing. These categories, as outlined in Planning Policy Guidance Note 3, indicate the type of need which Policy H16 will seek to address. The categories are:

- a existing residents needing separate accommodation in the area (newly married couples; people leaving tied accommodation on retirement);
- b people whose work provides important services and who need to live closer to the local community;
- c people who are not necessarily resident locally but have longstanding links with the local community (e.g. elderly people who need to move back to a village to be near relatives); and
- d people with the offer of a job in the locality who cannot take up the offer because of lack of affordable housing.

Implementation : Development control process, the use of legal agreements and the involvement of Housing Associations.

### Housing for the Elderly, Handicapped and Disabled

**Policy H17 :** Planning permission will be approved for proposals for the provision of residential and nursing homes and other accommodation for the elderly, handicapped and disabled so long as:

- i) it is located within the limits of development of settlements listed in Policy H3;
- ii) It is located on or near public transport routes and ideally, close to a stopping point on such routes;
- iii) its location is such that noise and disturbance from existing surrounding uses would not be detrimental to residents;
- iv) sufficient garden and/or private amenity open space is provided to meet the needs of residents. This should not be less than 25m<sup>2</sup> per bedroom;
- v) the design and layout of the building should allow residents both privacy and an attractive outlook from habitable rooms; and
- vi) the proposal fulfils the General Development Criteria, Policy GD1.

Justification :

4.69 Forecasts carried out by Durham County Council predict the population of the District will contain an increasing number of elderly people, including a significant number living well into their 80's. This may result in an increasing demand for accommodation specially designed to meet such needs. The North and South Durham Health Authorities have recently produced guidelines for such accommodation. The District Council endorses such guidelines through Policy H17, and will seek to reflect the needs of the Health Authority in respect of such accommodation.



4.70 It is essential that accommodation for the elderly, handicapped and disabled is planned to form part of the neighbourhood and local community. Sites and developments should be carefully considered to provide a safe, accessible, peaceful and pleasant environment for residents. Sites should be level with easy access to shops, public transport, entertainment and public facilities, but should also provide a pleasant outlook, have sufficient private amenity open space and be remote from possible disturbing, noisy land uses. Homes would not need to fully comply with residential parking standards where legal agreements restrict their use.

4.71 Isolated premises will not be considered suitable for residential homes.

Implementation : Through the development control process, social service regulation and legal agreement.

### Sub-Division of Premises

**Policy H18 : Planning permission will be approved for proposals for the sub-division and/or conversion of any premises to flats or other forms of multiple residential accommodation where:**

- i) it is located within the built-up areas of towns and villages as defined by the limits to development on the Proposals Map (Policy H3);
- ii) such conversions will not be detrimental to the amenities of adjoining residents;
- iii) access and parking arrangements are in accordance with Further Plan Guidance No. 2;
- iv) any alterations and/or extensions to the buildings would be in keeping with and not detract from the character of the surrounding area;
- v) sufficient garden and/or private amenity space is provided to meet the needs of residents; and
- vi) proposals accord with Policy GD1.

Justification :

4.72 A number of houses exist in the District which are either too large for occupation by a single family or which, because of their location, may be suitable for conversion to provide smaller units of accommodation. Applications should, however, be carefully considered in relation to their impact both on the individual building concerned, particularly its size and design, and on its surroundings, in particular where sub-division will result in parking problems. Certain parts of central Bishop Auckland for example the Princes Street area, will not normally be acceptable unless parking can be provided within the building curtilage.

Implementation : Through the development control process

### Living over the Shop

**Proposal H19 : Proposals for the residential use of upper floors of commercial properties in the central areas of towns will be permitted providing that proposals do not conflict with other policies and proposals in the plan and conform to the general development policies. To facilitate such development full conformity to residential car parking standards will not be insisted upon in town centres.**

Justification :

4.73 A potential important housing resource exists above shops and offices in the town centres of the District. In Bishop Auckland alone it is estimated that a significant number of dwelling units could be provided through acceptance of the "living over the shop" concept. The desire to increase such use is important because it:

- a) makes good use of vacant accommodation and therefore benefits the repair and maintenance of buildings;
- b) provides increased variety to available housing supply and adds a new dimension to the housing market;
- c) achieves an element of security to shopping premises and to town centres in general;
- d) enriches town centre life through repopulation; and
- e) provides income to town centre property owners.

4.74 The District Council will promote the conversions of upper floors in town centres to residential use, and will seek to involve Housing Associations in such schemes.

4.75 In considering proposals for such uses, careful consideration will need to be given to current Building Regulations particularly Fire Regulations, and to the needs for car parking. Where it is considered desirable to promote such use and where it is not possible to achieve normal residential car parking standards, a relaxation of such standards will be allowed.

Implementation : Through processing planning applications, through the promotion of pilot schemes and involving Housing Associations.

# RESIDENTIAL ENVIRONMENTS

## Alternative Uses within Residential Areas

**Policy H20 :** Within existing residential areas, as defined by the limits of development in Policy H3, the following uses may be acceptable:

**Shops (Use Class A1) up to 100 sq.m. in gross floor area;**  
**Offices (Use Class A2) up to 50 sq.m.;**  
**Light industry (Use Class B1);**  
**Leisure and recreation facilities;**  
**Residential institutions, hotels and hostels; and**  
**Doctors Surgeries and Health Centres (Use Class D1)**

When considering proposals for such uses in residential areas, regard will be given to:

- i) the need to safeguard the amenities and general living environment of existing residents;
- ii) the scale and character of proposed uses;
- iii) the potential for expansion or intensification of such uses;
- iv) the potential traffic generation and parking requirements of proposed uses; and
- v) other policies in the Local Plan.

Justification :

4.76 In order to maintain existing residential areas as attractive and safe living environments it is important to control development and prohibit or restrict uses that may cause conflict or nuisance. Many uses can quite happily be located in residential areas and in many areas a mix of land use is desirable and often provides services used locally and can create local employment. The intensity and type of use, however, needs to be carefully controlled. Consideration needs to be given to the type of activity, traffic and parking generation, noise and smell emissions. Developments which cause nuisance, disturbance through any of these factors, which are inappropriate in scale and design, and which would be generally harmful to living conditions will not be allowed.

Implementation : Guidance to potential developers and through the processing of planning applications.

## Public Open Space within Residential Areas

**Policy H21 :** The development of open space within existing housing areas will only be allowed where:

- i) it does not cause harm to the character of the area;
- ii) it does not result in the loss of visual amenity; and
- iii) it does not lead to a reduction in the quality of the residential environment.

Justification:

4.77 Public open space contributes greatly to the general amenity and environment of built-up areas. In many parts of the District there is a shortage of public open space used either informally or formally for recreation (see Recreation and Leisure Chapter). Any further loss of public open space for development will be detrimental to residential amenity and lead to town cramming. Open spaces within the defined settlement limits protected against development by policy BE14.

4.78 New residential development should incorporate sufficient open space to meet both the standards set out in Policy RL3 and contribute to the needs of the locality.

Implementation : Through the processing of planning applications and negotiation with potential developers.

## Community Benefit

**Proposal H22 :** On sites of 10 or more dwellings the local authority will seek to negotiate with developers a contribution, where appropriate, to the provision and subsequent maintenance of related social, community and/or recreational facilities in the locality.

On the following large new housing developments the identified facilities or a contribution to the provision of such facilities will be expected:-

Site	Inset No.	Facility
1. Etherley Dene Farm, Bishop Auckland (H5)	1	Woodland access/recreational use and management of Etherley Dene woods
2. Former Parkside School South and Eclipse Site, Crook (H5)	9	Playing fields with changing facilities
3. Grey Gardens and Hillside Road, Coundon (H5)	2	Playing fields with changing facilities
4. Low Queen Street, Witton Park (H6)	5	Village green amenity area
5. Park Terrace, Howden le Wear (H7)	11	Playing fields.

Justification :

4.79 All new housing developments in the District place demands on the existing recreational, shopping or community facilities available publicly. Therefore, it is reasonable that, where feasible, they should contribute towards the provision of such facilities. Having regard to the scale of projected housing developments in the District, and the need to negotiate suitable agreements, a minimum site capacity of 10 dwellings is considered appropriate to meet the test of feasibility in applying Proposal H22.

4.80 In relation to the National Playing Fields Association Standards and the District's Playing Pitch Strategy the District has an underprovision of children's play space and playing fields by 19 acres and 35 acres respectively. Any additional housing development will place further demands on existing provision. The areas of the District experiencing severe problems are Crook, Tow Law, Willington, West Auckland and Coundon. In

addition it is considered appropriate in locations where substantial new housing is proposed to bring forward proposals for the creation of areas of open space and to seek an acceptable balance of land uses. New housing development provides an opportunity to create such new facilities and for such developments to contribute towards provision for the wider community. The facilities identified in Proposal H22 and specifically identified as new land use proposals under Proposal RL6 of the Local Plan, are related to and can be achieved through and/or by contribution from new housing development.

- (1) **Etherley Dene Farm (H5)** - the provision of public access to and management of woodlands linked by ownership to housing development, and subject to negotiated agreement.
- (2) **Parkside School/Former Eclipse Site, Crook (H5)** - proposed large scale housing development within an area of major mixed developments, where recreation land, required in accordance with Policy RL5 of the Local Plan from all housing developments in the area, can be developed centrally to provide a facility not only for new developments but also to meet an identified shortfall in provision within Crook. The area will be subject to a development brief.
- (3) **Grey Gardens/Hillside Road, Coundon (H5)** - proposed large scale housing development within a major growth area where the recreational land, required in accordance with Policy RL5 of the Local Plan from both housing proposals, can be developed centrally to provide a facility not only for new developments but also to meet identified needs in the area. The area will be subject to a development brief.
- (4) **Low Queen Street, Witton Park (H6)** - the unique development opportunity to regenerate the centre of the village, afforded by Proposal H6, provides for an innovative approach with the re-creation of a new village green. The development is controlled by District Council ownership and will be subject to a development brief.
- (5) **Park Terrace, Howden le Wear (H7)** - a new housing development opportunity created by the line of the proposed Howden le Wear bypass. The road line also affords an opportunity for new recreational land which can be developed with contributions from housing development.

<sup>4.81</sup> Whilst it can be reasonably expected that development makes a contribution to such facilities, it is not expected these should be financed or developed solely at the expense of developers. In this respect the Council is conscious of the cost to developers of such provision and the extent of what is required in each case will be related fairly and reasonably, in scale and kind, to the proposed development. It can be reasonably expected however that developers would contribute towards the cost of such provision or set land aside for development

and use by the local community or by the Council.

Implementation : Negotiation through the Development Control process and where appropriate through the use of Section 106 agreements. Through the production of development briefs.

### Taxi Businesses within Residential Areas

**Policy H23 :** Permission will only be granted for taxi business uses within housing estates and residential areas where:-

- i) the use would not cause noise or disturbance to neighbouring properties;
- ii) the use would not result in on-street parking problems;
- iii) adequate off-street car parking provision exists in accordance with Further Plan Guidance No.2; and
- iv) the site is served by an adopted road with a safe access.

Justification :

<sup>4.82</sup> Problems have been experienced in the past from taxi businesses operating from private dwellinghouses which cause problems to residents, with vehicles starting up and operating late into the night and early morning. The Council will, therefore, normally refuse permissions for taxi businesses within housing estates and residential areas.

<sup>4.83</sup> Permission is not normally required for one vehicle operating from a dwellinghouse which does not involve radio control system located in that house.

Implementation : Through the development control process.

## RESIDENTIAL DESIGN

### Residential Design Criteria

**Policy H24 :** New residential developments and/or redevelopments will be approved provided:

- i) the proposals reflect the density and character of the locality;
- ii) internal access ways would be constructed and designed to give priority to pedestrian movements within the site and would not produce through routes;
- iii) adequate and safe pedestrian and cycle routes are provided within the site and to surrounding areas to facilitate access to shops, schools, bus routes and other community facilities;
- iv) adequate and safe access is provided for residents with disability;
- v) private and usable amenity space would be provided to each dwelling in accordance with the following minimum guidelines:
  - a) Houses : a rear garden depth of 10 metres.
  - b) Flats : 25 sq. metres per unit of accommodation.
  - c) Houses for the elderly and sheltered accommodation : 25 sq. metres per unit of accommodation (see Policy H17);
- vi) open space is provided in accordance with Policies RL3, 4 and 5; and
- vii) the relationship between new dwellings, and between new dwellings and existing dwellings maintains and provides adequate levels of privacy in accordance with the following minimum guidelines:
  - a) A 21 metre distance between walls of dwellings containing windows to habitable rooms.
  - b) A 15 metre distance between windowed elevations and opposing gable end walls.

All development must satisfy the General Development Criteria, Policy GD1.

Justification :

<sup>4.84</sup> Prospective and existing residents require the provision of basic facilities and amenities and a pleasant environment in which to live. The criteria above have been set out to ensure that proposals for residential development are appropriate and safeguard the amenities of the area and residents.

<sup>4.85</sup> These criteria have been established to provide guidelines for conventional development. More innovative designs and layouts in certain locations where a relaxation of these criteria may be appropriate, e.g. in Conservation Areas, and may be considered providing other relevant policies of the plan and the amenities of the area are not compromised. In addition in rural villages to facilitate traditional styles of development consideration may also be given to a relaxation of these criteria.

Implementation : Through advice to developers, the production of design guidance and through the development control system.

### Residential Extensions

**Policy H25 :** Extensions to existing dwellings will be approved provided that:

- i) a garden area to the rear of the property of a minimum 10 metres depth can be maintained or in the case of terraced dwellings, no more than 50% of the yard is occupied;
- ii) parking arrangements in accordance with the Highway Design Standards for New Development (Further Plan Guidance Note 1), can be satisfactorily maintained;
- iii) the proposal is in keeping with the character of the existing dwelling in terms of mass, scale, design and materials. Flat roof extensions at first floor level will not be acceptable unless the original building has a similar roof form; and
- iv) such extensions are in accordance with the guidelines for alterations and extensions as contained in Further Plan Guidance Note 4.

Justification :

<sup>4.86</sup> The extension of existing dwellings can have a significant effect on the character of the building and surrounding area and on the amenities of adjoining residents. The criteria set out above has been established to ensure that extensions are sympathetic in scale, location and character to ensure adequate levels of privacy and amenity, and the quality of the built environment. Design Guidelines have been set out in F.P.G.5, with illustrations of good and bad examples of extensions and alterations.

Implementation : Through advice to developers, the production of design guidance and through the development control system.

### Backland Development

**Policy H26 :** Backland development will not be permitted unless:

- i) a separate and satisfactory vehicular access and car parking provision, in accordance with the standards as prescribed in Further Plan Guidance Note 1 can be provided; and
- ii) the amenity of both new and existing properties can be safeguarded; and
- iii) the proposal is in keeping with the scale and character of existing development in the locality; and
- iv) the other requirements of Policy GD1 are satisfied.

Justification :

<sup>4.87</sup> Backland development in inappropriate locations can lead to the loss of amenity of existing residents. Many open spaces also contribute towards the general amenity of an area and their development would lead to town cramming. Backland development refers to development to the rear of existing properties usually in large backgardens. In some locations they may be acceptable. On the edge of settlements, however, where large rear gardens extend to open

countryside backland development could affect the settlement edge and the settlement setting. In such cases the definition of the limits to development would reflect the 25 metre rule as expressed in Criteria for Limits to Development, (Appendix 8).

4.88 Development may be acceptable where development can provide:

- a) a separate and safe vehicular and pedestrian access.
- b) adequate car parking;
- c) adequate space between old and new development in accordance with Policy H24; and
- d) sensitive landscaping and design.

4.89 Tandem development, consisting of one house immediately behind another and sharing the same access is generally unsatisfactory.

Implementation : Through advice to developers, through the production of planning guidance and through the development control process.

## CARAVAN SITES AND GYPSY SITES

### Residential Caravans and Mobile Homes

**Policy H27 : Permission will not be given for residential caravans or mobile homes unless used as temporary accommodation required for agricultural or equestrian starter units.**

Justification :

4.90 Mobile homes have similar locational requirements as those of normal residential development, consequently they are subject to the same environmental and infrastructure consideration and it is appropriate that they are provided in association with more standard residential development. For these reasons proposals will only be considered within the limits of development (H3) and will need to be in accordance with general housing development Policy H24 and the General Development Criteria (Policy GD1). An exception to this policy will be made for agricultural or equestrian starter units, in order to help provide accommodation whilst the business is being built-up. A three year period will be allowed for the use of the caravan with renewal dependent upon progress made of the business.

Implementation : Through the development control process.

### Gypsy Sites

**Policy H28 : Planning permission will be granted for permanent, temporary or transit accommodation for gypsies and travellers provided that:**

- i) the site would have convenient access to schools, medical facilities, public transport routes and other local services;
- ii) access and parking arrangements are in accordance with Further Plan Guidance Notes 1 and 2;
- iii) the scale of the development would not affect the amenity or living conditions of local residents;
- iv) the site can be assimilated into the landscape and would not intrude into open countryside, and have no adverse impact on areas of nature conservation, archaeological and/or historic interest or on any existing agricultural activity in the vicinity. Sites will not normally be allowed in the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or the Area of Landscape Value;
- v) the site is planned comprehensively to include external and internal plot separating landscaping, hardstanding for caravans, and car/lorry parking, work areas and play areas; and
- vi) the site conforms to Policy GD1.

Justification :

4.91 At present two permanent sites are provided for caravan dwellers at Green Lane, Bishop Auckland, and at Coundon Grange. At present these sites appear to meet existing demands although site occupation will continue to be carefully monitored. Should the need arise consideration will be given to providing additional pitches at these sites or providing new sites.

4.92 In accordance with Circular 1/94 the provision of new sites can be made by the District Council or through the provision of private sites by gypsies themselves. In both circumstances, consideration will be given to the impact of sites on the landscape, on access and traffic generation, and to the proximity of services and facilities. Sites should not be located in open countryside but developed close to existing facilities. They should be designed and laid out with integral services and facilities; hardstanding for parking caravans, cars and lorries; areas for work and play; and good landscaping to minimise their potential impact on adjacent activities. Sites may range in size from those for 2 or 3 caravans, up to 15 or 20 pitches. The criteria in Policy GD1 will be applied in all cases.

4.93 Notwithstanding the different type of sites which may be demanded, be they permanent, temporary or transit sites, they should all meet the above locational and development criteria although work areas may not be needed on transit or temporary sites.

Implementation : District Council monitoring of site occupation and liaison with County Council's Gypsy Officer.

# Chapter 5

## INDUSTRY AND EMPLOYMENT

### INDUSTRIAL LAND DEVELOPMENT

- I1 Availability of Land for Industry
- I2 New Industrial Allocations
- I3 Business/Office Sites
- I4 Prestige Industrial Sites
- I5 General Industrial Sites
- I6 Local Industrial Sites
- I7 Office/Workshops in Crook
- I8 Bulky Goods Retailing
- I9 Service Industrial Sites
- I10 Commercial Sector

### INDUSTRY OFF INDUSTRIAL ESTATES

- I11 Industry in Built-up Areas
- I12 Industry in the Countryside
- I13 Extensions to Industrial Premises in the Countryside

### INDUSTRY AND INFRASTRUCTURE

- I14 Industrial Allocations Requiring Related Infrastructure

### NOTIFIABLE INSTALLATIONS

- I15 Notifiable Installations
- I16 Development Near to Notifiable Installations



### Jobs

- 5.1 Whilst essentially a rural area, the District has a rich industrial history. Based initially on mineral extraction with lead, fluorspar and coal, employment is now concentrated in manufacturing and service industries.
- 5.2 In the 1993 Census of Employment, total employment in the District was recorded as 19,100. From a total of over 23,000 in the mid 1970's, the District lost nearly a quarter of all jobs as a result of the recession of late 1979-1984. Although gradual restructuring of the economy took place during the 1980's, between 1989 and 1993, the District lost about 200 jobs in total. This represents a 1% rate of decrease compared to a 7.3% decrease nationally.
- 5.3 In the period 1987 to 1989, manufacturing represented a major area of growth with about 800 jobs being created, an increase of 14%. Nationally the increase was less than 1%. Between 1989 and 1993 however, 1400 manufacturing jobs were lost - a 22% decline. Nationally the rate of decline in the same period was about 27%. Manufacturing now provides approximately 25% of jobs in the District, compared to 18% nationally.
- 5.4 The number of service sector jobs increased nationally by 1.2% between 1989 and 1993 whilst there was a 9% increase in the District, although the District started off from a lower base. The service sector now represents about 65% of all jobs in the District while nationally the figure is 75%.
- 5.5 The District has, however, a narrow economic base. Many parts of the District, particularly Crook and parts of Weardale, remain heavily dependent on a small number of large employers. Further economic restructuring and expansion of employment is needed. Whilst manufacturing remains a major element of the District economy, despite being in decline nationally, efforts should be made to support existing jobs, stimulate expansion of existing firms and attract new firms to the District. Efforts should however also continue to be made to strengthen the service sector of the economy, to enable the District to benefit from the national growth of such jobs. Despite the rural nature of the District, agriculture provides only about 2% of all jobs. As about a third of the District's population live in the rural areas, there is an additional need to support rural jobs, and to seek to spread the benefits of economic regeneration throughout the District.

### Availability of land for Industry

- 5.6 A fundamental requirement for economic growth in the District is the availability of good quality, well located land for industry. Sufficient land is needed to provide for all types of industry to offer choice for developers and to enable economic development to be spread throughout the District.
- 5.7 At 1st April 1993, there was 187ha of land identified for industrial purposes in the District, of which 61ha was developed and occupied, including a small amount on which development was expected to start. There was about 97ha of

land and buildings available for development; however, only 25ha of this was serviced and available for development in the short-term. The vast majority of the land available in the longer term can be developed only when major infrastructure works are completed. The bulk of the land available in the short-term was located on sites in Bishop Auckland and Crook.

- 5.8 At current rates of industrial development there is a 10 year supply of serviced industrial land. In certain parts of the District, particularly Bishop Auckland and parts of Weardale, more localised shortages exist and throughout the District there is a demand for certain types of industrial land.
- 5.9 In addition to the allocated sites there may be potential for redevelopment of disused industrial and mining works. The Council would encourage the reuse of such sites for alternative employment generating uses.
- 5.10 Table 6 on the following page includes all the sites listed in Policies I3, I4, I5, I6 and I9. It identifies the new industrial land noted in Policy I2 together with existing industrial land already identified.

### Strategy

- 5.11 The District Council's Economic Development Strategy approved in May 1992 provides the framework for the Council's involvement in developing and supporting the local economy. This encompasses industrial promotion and marketing, training, financial and business support, as well as land and infrastructure developments. The Local Plan is concerned with the latter elements of the Strategy.

#### The Local Plan aims :-

- 1 **To improve and broaden the local economy in order to create a stronger and diverse local economy capable of generating self growth and which offers secure and good quality employment to all local people.**
- 2 **To reduce unemployment.**
- 3 **To stimulate growth in all sectors of employment.**
- 4 **To develop employment opportunities throughout the District including the more remote rural areas, to reduce out-commuting and excessive travel to work.**
- 5 **To improve the environment for industry, to help improve the conditions in which people work and provide an attractive working environment for inward investment.**
- 6 **To help alleviate problems of basic infrastructure in order to bring forward new land for development to facilitate continued investment and employment growth.**
- 7 **To assist to develop the skills and human resources of the existing workforce.**
- 8 **To seek initiatives to help diversify the rural economy.**

**Table 6**      **New and Existing Land Allocations**

Policy/Site	AREA OF LAND ALLOCATED (Ha)	
	New	Existing
<b><u>1. Policy I3 Business Parks</u></b>		
A Fylands	3.0	-
B Bracks Farm	9.4	-
<b><u>2. Policy I4 - Prestige Industrial Sites</u></b>		
A South Church Enterprise Park	-	28.7
B Low Willington	-	21.4
C Coundon Industrial Estate, East	9.3	-
<b><u>3. Policy I5 - General Industrial Sites</u></b>		
A Greenfield Industrial Estate and Extention	14.1	10.6
B St Helen Auckland Industrial Estate and Extention	2.2	19.9
C West Auckland Industrial Estate and Extention	8.2	6.6
D Thistleflat Industrial Estate and Extention I & II	10.4	18.1
E Coundon Industrial Estate, West	-	8.2
F Fieldon Bridge	10.3	-
<b><u>4. Policy I6 - Local Industrial Sites</u></b>		
A Laurel Way, Bishop Auckland (B1 uses only)	-	0.4
B Auckland Park	1.2	-
C Witton Park	1.1	-
D High Hope Street, Crook	-	1.0
E Dunelm, Willington	-	2.0
F Dan's Castle and Extension, Tow Law	0.6	1.6
G Inkerman, Tow Law	1.7	-
H Wolsingham Industrial Estate	-	1.1
I Wolsingham Steelworks	4.6	-
J Wolsingham Industrial Estate, East (B1 uses only)	0.6	-
K Broadwood, Frosterley	1.4	-
L Bond Isle, Stanhope	-	1.9
M Castle Gardens, Stanhope	-	0.8
O East of Blairs, Stanhope	3.2	-
P St Johns Chapel and Extension	0.7	0.3
<b><u>5. Policy I9 - Service Industrial Sites</u></b>		
A Romanway, Bishop Auckland	-	9.1
B Adjacent to Pulverite Plant, Willington	1.5	-
C Romanway East, Bishop Auckland	5.1	-
<b>Totals</b>	<b>88.6</b>	<b>131.7</b>



### INDUSTRIAL LAND DEVELOPMENT

#### Availability of Land for Industry

**Policy I1:** The District Council will make available and encourage other public and private agencies to bring forward land and buildings for industry and other employment generating uses on identified sites throughout the District, provided they fulfil the General Development Criteria (Policy GD1).

#### New Industrial Allocations

**Proposal I2:** The Plan allocates approximately 80 hectares of new industrial land, as shown on the Proposals Map, to help facilitate economic growth and employment generation in the District throughout the plan area/period. New industrial land is allocated for the following uses at:-

	Inset No.
<b>Business Parks</b>	
Fylands, Bishop Auckland (3 ha)	1
Bracks Farm, Bishop Auckland (9.4 ha)	1
<b>Prestige Industrial Site</b>	
Coundon Industrial Estate, East (9.3 ha)	2
<b>General Industrial Sites</b>	
Fieldon Bridge, Bishop Auckland (10.3 ha)	1
Greenfields Extension Bishop Auckland (14.1 ha)	1
West Auckland Extension (8.2 ha)	1
St Helen Auckland Extension (2.2 ha)	1
Thistleflat Industrial Extensions I & II, Crook (10.4 ha)	9
<b>Local Industrial Sites</b>	
Auckland Park (1.2 ha)	3
Broadwood, Frosterley (1.4 ha)	24
St John's Chapel Extension (0.7 ha)	25
East of Blairs, Stanhope (3.2 ha)	21
Witton Park (1.1 ha)	5
Wolsingham Steelworks (4.6 ha)	23
Inkerman, Tow Law (1.7 ha)	22
Dan's Castle Extension, Tow Law (0.6 ha)	22
Wolsingham Industrial Estate, East (0.6ha)	23
<b>Service Industrial Sites</b>	
Adjacent to Pulverite Plant, Willington (1.5 ha)	10
Romanway East, Bishop Auckland (5.1 ha).	1

**Proposals will be permitted provided they fulfil the General Development Criteria, Policy GD1.**

#### Justification :

- 5.12 The provision of an adequate supply of industrial land throughout the District is essential to meet the needs of industry, providing a choice of location and type of site and buildings as necessary to attract new investment and meet the needs of indigenous firms.
- 5.13 Whilst most industrial development has taken place in the main towns of Bishop Auckland and Crook there is a need to spread employment to all parts of the District. There is also the need to develop industry where housing is available, promote rural development and to reduce journeys to work consequently promoting energy conservation. Industrial land needs to be made available in advance of demand and be able to accommodate all industrial needs from large land uses and inward investors to small businesses

and service sites for unneighbourly uses. The proposals in this plan seek to provide the full range of industrial land needs throughout the District.

- 5.14 Whilst the private sector own and make land available for industry, thus making a valuable contribution to the supply of industrial land, they have not, in the past, carried out the same level of development as has occurred on publicly owned sites. Although the District Council will, in conjunction with Durham County Council and public agencies such as the Rural Development Commission and English Partnerships, be the main providers of land, it will continue to assist and encourage the private sector to bring forward and develop land for industrial uses.
- 5.15 The District Council, in conjunction with landowners and other interested parties, will prepare detailed design briefs for Bracks Farm, Bishop Auckland and the Eclipse Works site, Crook (which includes industrial land at Thistleflat). The site areas and resulting site capacities of these and other sites are therefore subject to confirmation because of their inter-relationship with adjacent land uses.
- 5.16 Phasing of land will be determined by external factors such as the provision of infrastructure and new roads. Thistleflat, Crook is dependent on the Crook bypass which will start after 1994/95. The General Industrial Sites at West Auckland and the extension to St Helens Auckland Industrial Site are both dependent on the West Auckland bypass due to commence after 1997/98. The industrial sites at Wolsingham Steelworks and the land adjacent to the Pulverite Plant, Willington are also dependent on new road links. Proposal I14 details those industrial allocations requiring related infrastructure. Proposal T4 indicates land safeguarded for road proposals. Where agricultural land is identified for industrial development, phasing may be required to ensure all undeveloped land remains in agriculture for the maximum possible time.

Implementation : District Council, Durham County Council, Rural Development Commission and the private sector.

**Business/Office Sites**

**Proposal I3 :** Land at the following locations, as shown on the Proposals Map, Inset No. 1, will be reserved and developed as business/office parks:-

- A. Fylands, Bishop Auckland (3ha).
- B. Bracks Farm, Bishop Auckland (9.4ha).

Proposals for business uses such as offices and research and development will be permitted provided they fulfil the General Development Criteria (Policy GD1). Proposals which involve outside storage will not be permitted.

In such areas the following uses will not be allowed:-

1. General Industry (Class B2).
2. Warehousing and distribution (Class B8).
3. Retail (Classes A1-A3) and retail warehousing.
4. Scrapyards, activities related to the breaking of motor vehicles.
5. Car sales, petrol sales and lorry parks.
6. The storage and distribution of minerals.

Justification :

- 5.17 The change in the nature of the industrial base of the Northern Region from a reliance on heavy manufacturing and extractive industries to new light, technology and services industries has resulted in a change in the location and quality of environment demanded by developing firms. New locations for development need to have a clean and attractive environment, designed to accommodate buildings of high quality design in a spacious landscaped setting, in addition to good communications and a potential market and labour force. Such areas are particularly attractive to prestige office developments, research and development, high technology and light manufacturing falling in Use Class B1 (Use Class Order 1987 as amended).
- 5.18 The availability of such areas is recognised as a vital component of the employment strategy aimed at attracting much needed inward investment to the Region by the Northern Development Company, and Bishop Auckland is recognised by Durham County Council as the most suitable location for such land in Wear Valley District.
- 5.19 Land at Fylands (3ha) was allocated for such use in the Bishop Auckland Local Plan. It is considered appropriate to carry such allocation forward in this Local Plan. The site is relatively small and constrained compared to other allocations elsewhere in the County, eg Chester-le-Street Riverside and Mount Oswald Durham City, and as such may not be able to compete fully for inward investment.
- 5.20 Land at Bracks Farm (9.4ha) is therefore allocated for such use. The site lies immediately adjacent to the Darlington-Bishop Auckland Railway and to the Bishop Auckland bypass (A688). The land is currently in agricultural use and is flat but well screened by established woodland. Development of the site will be dependent on the construction of a roundabout on the A688 (see I14). An

office/business park is proposed to be designed to a high standard to include extensive areas of landscaping and woodland, and buildings will be designed at low density to a high standard to provide a modern and attractive working environment. The development of large scale manufacturing proposals will normally be resisted. Use will be restricted to Class B1 by agreement.

Implementation : Wear Valley District Council  
English Partnerships  
Private development  
Durham County Council

**Prestige Industrial Sites**

**Proposal I4 :** Land at the following locations, as shown on the Proposals Map, will be reserved and developed as prestige industrial sites:-

	<u>Inset No.</u>
A. South Church Enterprise Park, Bishop Auckland (28.7ha)	1
B. Low Willington (21.4ha)	10
C. Coundon Industrial Estate, East (9.3ha)	2

Proposals for offices and business uses (Class B1) and general industry (Class B2) will be permitted provided they fulfil, where relevant, the General Development Criteria (Policy GD1). Proposals which involve outside storage will not be permitted.

In such areas the following specific uses will not be allowed:-

1. Retail (Classes A1-A3) and retail warehousing.
2. Scrapyards, activities related to the breaking of motor vehicles.
3. Car sales, petrol sales and lorry parks.
4. The storage and distribution of minerals.

During the phased development of these sites, the undeveloped land will be maintained in agricultural use until it is required for development. (See Policy ENV8).

Justification:

- 5.21 Land for prestige industrial development provides a limited but much needed part of the total land available for industrial development. Prestige sites are high quality, strategically located major industrial sites capable of competing against the very attractive sites now available in many parts of the UK. A high quality environment with good communication links to motorways and close to centres of population for labour force and markets are essential for the needs of modern industries, primarily in Use Classes B1 and B2. Sites should be designed to a high standard with good landscape and building quality.
- 5.22 Because of the relative scarcity of such good quality land, efforts should be made to preserve it for B1 and B2 uses. Large land users which provide few jobs such as warehousing and storage (B8) will not normally be allowed. Retailing will be resisted on these sites in order to preserve this industrial land and to help maintain the Local Plans retail aim of supporting the vitality and viability of the Districts town centres.
- 5.23 Wear Valley District Council's Economic Development Strategy identifies South Church Enterprise Park, Low Willington Industrial Estate

and Coundon Industrial Estate, East as prestige sites. These will provide a total of 64 ha of prestige land. The servicing of these sites will be undertaken by the District Council and Durham County Council and the sites made available for occupation by private developers. The development at Low Willington will be dependent upon the construction of the first phase of the proposed Willington relief road.

Implementation : Wear Valley District Council and Durham County Council will, where appropriate and resources permitting, undertake site and infrastructure developments. Public sector agencies, including English Partnerships and the private sector will be encouraged to provide industrial developments, and both sites will continue to be promoted accordingly.

Control over uses on the sites will be through the processing of planning applications and by landlord control.

**General Industrial Sites**

**Proposal I5 :** Land at the following locations, as shown on the Proposals Map, will be reserved and developed as general industrial sites:-

	<u>Inset No.</u>
A. Greenfield Industrial Estate, Bishop Auckland (24.7ha)	1
B. St Helen's Industrial Estate (22.1ha)	1
C. West Auckland Industrial Estate (14.8ha)	1
D. Thistleflat Industrial Estate, Crook (28.5ha)	9
E. Coundon Industrial Estate, West (8.2ha)	2
F. Fieldon Bridge, Bishop Auckland (10.3ha)	1

**Proposals for business uses (Class B1), general industry (Class B2) and warehousing and distribution (Class B8) will be permitted provided they fulfil, where relevant, the General Development Criteria. Consideration will be given to proposals for lorry parks. Proposals which would decrease the attractiveness of these industrial sites to potential developers will not be allowed.**

**In such areas, the following specific uses will not be allowed:-**

1. Retail (Use Classes A1-A3), including retail warehousing.
2. Scrapyards, activities related to the breaking of motor vehicles.
3. The storage and distribution of minerals.

Justification :

5.24 A network of major industrial sites has been established at the main towns throughout the District and it is proposed to expand existing sites or provide new facilities where appropriate. Such sites are strategically located with good access to the District's primary road network, enabling good communications to markets and the local labour force. They can cater for a wide range of uses such as business uses (Use Class B1), general industry (Use Class B2) and related offices,

warehousing and distribution (Use Class B8).

5.25 The Council is aware of the need to maintain and improve the image and marketability of industrial sites to ensure firms are attracted to the District. Proposals which affect the attractiveness of industrial sites through noise, smell or visual impact will not normally be permitted.

5.26 As these areas provide the bulk of the District's industrial land resource it would undermine the Economic Development Strategy of the District if this land was made available for non-bona fide industrial uses such as retail warehousing and car showrooms. Such uses will, therefore, not normally be allowed and be strictly controlled to prevent further change of use to more inappropriate uses, particularly retail, which would further conflict with the Local Plan aims of preserving the vitality and viability of the District's town centres.

5.27 In total, the Local Plan allocates just over 100 ha of land as general industrial sites. Of this total, just over 45 ha will be available only after the provision of major infrastructure works (see Proposal I14) including the construction of the West Auckland bypass (West Auckland Industrial Estate expansion) and the A689 Crook Relief Road (Thistleflat Industrial Estate Expansion).

5.28 Land included in this proposal in the Bishop Auckland area, particularly Greenfields Industrial Estate, St Helen's Industrial Estate, West Auckland Industrial Estate and Fieldon Bridge, were allocated as general industrial sites in the Bishop Auckland Local Plan and are carried forward in this plan. Similarly, expansion of the Thistleflat Industrial Estate at Crook was allocated for such use in the South-west Crook Action Area Plan of 1984. Expansion of the Coundon Industrial Estate as proposed in this plan seeks to capitalise on the locational and environmental benefits of Coundon as a residential and employment growth centre (see Strategy). The excellent communication link from Bishop Auckland to the A1(M) makes Coundon the District's most strategic location for growth and a co-ordinated approach will see housing and jobs developed together.

Implementation : Wear Valley District Council  
 Durham County Council  
 English Partnerships  
 Private sector  
 Through the development control process.

**Local Industrial Sites**

**Proposal I6 :** Land at the following locations, as shown on the Proposals Map, will be reserved and developed as local industrial sites:-

	<u>Inset No.</u>
A. Laurel Way, Bishop Auckland (B1 uses only) (0.4 ha)	1
B. Auckland Park (1.2 ha)	3
C. Witton Park (1.1 ha)	5
D. High Hope Street, Crook (1.0 ha)	9
E. Dunelm, Willington (2.0 ha)	10
F. Dan's Castle, Tow Law (2.2 ha)	22
G. Inkerman, Tow Law (1.7 ha)	22
H. Wolsingham Industrial Estate (1.1 ha)	23
I. Wolsingham Steelworks Site (4.6 ha)	23
J. Wolsingham Industrial Estate, East (B1 uses only) (0.6 ha)	23
K. Broadwood, Frosterley (1.4 ha)	24
L. Bond Isle, Stanhope (1.9 ha)	21
M. Castle Gardens, Stanhope (0.8 ha)	21
N. St John's Chapel and Extension (1.0 ha)	25
O. East of Blairs, Stanhope (3.2 ha).	21

Proposals for business uses (Class B1), general industries (Class B2) and warehousing and distribution (Class B8) will be permitted provided they fulfil, where appropriate, the General Development Criteria. Consideration will be given to proposals for the use of the above sites for a lorry park.

In such areas, the following specific uses will not be allowed:-

1. Retail (Use Classes A1-A3).
2. scrapyards, activities related to the breaking of motor vehicles.
3. The storage and distribution of minerals.

Justification :

- 5.29 Many small manufacturing and service industries can be located on general industrial sites, others need to locate closer to markets and services, and can be accommodated without loss of amenity closer to residential and other uses. Small industrial estates serving essentially local needs are therefore desirable throughout the District, and as such can play an important role in sustaining the local economy, particularly in rural areas.
- 5.30 Eight such sites have already been established throughout the District giving a total of 8ha of land. A need exists to increase the number of such sites. A further 10 sites are put forward giving an additional 16ha. The sites allocated seek to introduce local employment into the Witton Park and Dene Valley areas, and continue to achieve the diversification of the rural economy by providing further land at Tow Law, Wolsingham, Stanhope and Frosterley.
- 5.31 Opportunity exists for the redevelopment of former industrial sites throughout the District for alternative employment generating uses such as general industry and distribution.
- 5.32 The Laurel Way Industrial site is restricted to B1 use only due to the close proximity of housing and

its town centre location. General Industrial uses (Class B2) would conflict with the amenity of the adjoining residential properties.

- 5.33 The Rural Development Commission has indicated that there is a need for high quality, light industrial/office development allocation (Class B1) within Weardale. Land to the east of Ferndale Industrial Estate, Wolsingham and East of Blairs, Stanhope offer the opportunity to develop this type of industry. The sites are adjacent to existing industrial estates and have good access links onto the A689 and A68. Development of this land will therefore be restricted to light industrial and office use (Class B1).

Implementation : The District Council will seek the assistance of the Rural Development Commission, English Partnerships and the private sector in the development of such sites.

**Office/Workshops in Crook**

**Proposal I7 :** The use of the former Crook Primary School as identified on Proposals Map Inset No. 9 shall be restricted to office and workshop uses (Class B1) only.

Justification :

- 5.34 The success of the Auckland New Business Centre in St Helen Auckland has indicated a need for similar workshop space in other parts of the District. The former Crook Primary School provides the ideal central location for small office/workshop units in Crook. The offices provide valuable sheltered starter units for new businesses to start up their operation. The former school is part of the Crook Conservation Area and contributes to the character of the town centre.

Implementation : Wear Valley District Council  
Durham County Council  
Rural Development Commission

**Bulky Goods Retailing**

**Proposal 18 :** Permission will be granted for the development of bulky goods retailing in Tindale Crescent, as identified on Proposals Map Inset No. 1.

In this area, the following specific uses will be allowed provided they fulfil, where appropriate, the General Development Criteria (Policy GD1):

1. Retail warehousing of non-food bulky goods.
2. Builders Merchants.
3. Petrol filling station.
4. Garden Centre.
5. Lorry Parking.
6. Storage and Distribution (Class B8).
7. Business uses (Class B1).
8. General Industry (Class B2).
9. Sale and display of motor vehicles.

In such areas, the following specific uses will not be allowed:-

1. Food/general retailing, unless it can clearly be demonstrated that this would not undermine the vitality and viability of an existing town centre as a whole, and would be accessible to all sectors of the community.
2. Scrap yards, activities relating to the breaking of motor vehicles.
3. The storage and distribution of minerals.

**Justification :**

- 5.35 The retailing of large bulky goods includes home improvement stores, garden centres (see Policy S14) and wholesalers providing large and bulky goods which would not usually be sold in town centre high streets. Such goods include home and garden furniture, garden tools and appliances, horticultural and gardening supplies such as fertilizer bags, plants and shrubs, bathroom fittings and builders' supplies. This form of retailing requires large premises with substantial car parking immediately adjacent to the outlet.
- 5.36 Tindale Crescent comprises three areas of land (2ha, 3ha and 9ha) totalling 14ha which contain a number of such uses and provides the opportunity for further redevelopment. The area is well accessed by the A68 and will be improved by the construction of the Bishop Auckland - Shildon link road. Proposals will be required to provide on-site parking facilities and adequate access provision. Permission will not be granted for proposals which will generate traffic in excess of the capacity of the local road system.
- 5.37 Urban fringe opportunities to accommodate warehouse retailing are limited in the District. PPG 6 encourages local authorities to pursue policies which seek to protect existing town centre retailing. Food and general retailing from these areas would probably undermine the vitality and viability of the town centres of Bishop Auckland, Crook and Shildon and Spennymoor in Sedgfield Borough as established commercial centres. The District Council would therefore seek to protect warehouse development opportunities by conditioning permissions to limit retailing to non-food bulky goods.

**Implementation :** Control of uses in this area will be exercised through the development control system.

**Service Industrial Sites**

**Proposal 19 :** Land at the following locations, as shown on the Proposals Map, will be reserved and developed as service industrial sites:-

	<u>Inset No.</u>
A. Romanway, Bishop Auckland (9.1 ha)	1
B. Pulverite Site, Willington (1.5 ha)	10
C. Romanway East, Bishop Auckland (5.1 ha)	1

In such areas, the following specific uses will be allowed provided they fulfil the General Development Criteria (Policy GD1):-

1. Scrapyards.
2. Activities related to the breaking and servicing/repairing of motor vehicles.
3. Activities related to the storage and distribution of minerals.
4. Haulage and transport depots.
5. Builders yards.
6. Lorry parking.

In such areas, the following specific uses will not be allowed:-

1. Retail (Class A1-A3).
2. Bulky Goods, Retailing/Retail Warehousing.

**Justification :**

- 5.38 Some industrial users, which by their very nature are potentially polluting or unneighbourly, through excessive outside storage, noise, smell and other disturbance need to be catered for within the District in a way which does not create problems for other land users. Such users include scrapyards or other vehicle breaking, coal merchants and other mineral reclamation, storage and distribution. Such activities provide vital local services. Sites for such activities should be suitably screened for visual separation and fenced for security reasons, and be located at a distance from other land users. There is a need to provide such "compound" sites in each sub-area of the District.
- 5.39 The development of the access road (see Policy I14) through Low Willington Industrial Estate will open up the area around the existing Pulverite plant. Land adjacent to the plant is suitable to accommodate special industries. It is removed from residential areas and is flanked by Dunelm Industrial Estate and the Pulverite plant. Adequate landscaping will be required to ensure its adverse effects are sufficiently mitigated.
- 5.40 Land exists at Romanway Industrial Estate which is proposed for such use. Existing users on the site are compatible, and the site should be designed to cater for additional users. Land is also being allocated between Green Lane and the River Gaunless east of the industrial estate. The development of this site will be linked to structural planting surrounding the site.

**Implementation :** The District Council will seek to develop such sites in conjunction with the Rural Development Commission and private developers.

Control of uses on the site will be exercised through the processing of planning applications

and through the Environmental Protection Act legislation.

generation and pedestrian flow may cause conflict between the traditional businesses in the area and visiting members of the public.

Implementation : Through the development control process.

## Commercial Sector

**Policy 110 :** Within the Commercial Sector of Bishop Auckland, as defined on Proposals Map Inset No. 1A, permission will be granted for business use and light industry (Class B1), general industry (Class B2) and storage and distribution (Class B8) provided it fulfils the General Development Criteria (Policy GD1).

**Proposals for retail and other uses which would lead to an increase in the traffic congestion problems of the area will be resisted.**

Justification :

- 5.41 The Commercial Area is an area of Bishop Auckland of mixed commercial activity centred on a number of parallel streets linking the shopping centre of the town, based on Newgate Street to the west, and one of the towns main arterial roads, South Church Road, to the east. The area is bounded to the north and east by residential uses, to the west by retail uses and to the south by further residential uses and an active foundry. Access and egress to and from the area is via either the main shopping street or the residential areas.
- 5.42 The area, comprising Peel Street, Chester Street, Railway Street and Union Street, has a mixture of uses including warehousing, business and general industry and has developed historically into a mixed-use area within the town where businesses have been established which cause difficulties because of their proximity to close to residential uses, traffic congestion, the lack of off-street parking and the consequent problems of on-street parking. It is intended that new developments in the area should be those which can be reasonably located in close proximity to residential areas and whose traffic generation can be satisfactorily accommodated on the road system without detriment both in terms of capacity and environmental impact. Notwithstanding the existing uses within the area, the location of which is a result of historical accident, it is the intention of the Local Plan that the situation within the area is not exacerbated by further non-compatible uses and uses which would lead to an increase in traffic volume for the area.
- 5.43 Retail development is not a suitable use in this area due to increased traffic/parking and pedestrian activity that such a use would generate. There is sufficient floorspace for retailing purposes in the primary and secondary shopping areas to meet local needs, and the introduction of an element of retailing into the business sector defined above would be likely to cause conflict between shoppers and vehicles associated with businesses and industries in the area.
- 5.44 The Commercial Sector relies on office space for their day-to-day operations (Class B1). Other offices (Class A2) which are for the benefit of visiting numbers of the public are not considered to be acceptable in principle in the area where traffic

## INDUSTRY OFF INDUSTRIAL ESTATES

### Industry in Built-Up Areas

**Policy 111 :** In towns and villages, as defined by the limits to development (see Proposal H3), in areas not specifically identified for industrial use in accordance with Proposals I3 to I9, planning permission will be given only for development or redevelopment to create new premises or the expansion of existing premises which do not adversely affect the local amenity of the area in terms of noise, nuisance and traffic generation. Proposals will need to fulfil the General Development Criteria (Policy GD1).

Justification :

- 5.45 The development of business uses in built-up areas provides a useful source of employment and, as long as the identified criteria are followed, should be encouraged. Proposals for such developments, including changes of use, new buildings and the extension of existing premises, should not have an adverse impact on the environment or the amenity of local residents, or be of a scale and character of development which is incompatible with its surroundings. Particular attention will be given to the activities proposed in relation to noise, smell or other disturbance, traffic generation and scale and design of developments.
- 5.46 Permitted developments in towns and villages, if not properly controlled, may expand or intensify to an unacceptable level. Unless this intensification is a material change of use, it cannot be controlled. Under certain circumstances, therefore, the local planning authority will expect developers to enter into a planning agreement to prevent such intensification and, therefore, safeguard the environment and the amenities of local residents in the longer term.

Implementation : Through the development control process.

**Industry in the Countryside**

**Policy I12 :** In the countryside outside towns and villages, permission will not be given for industry/business use unless:

- i) it is directly related to the winning, processing and treatment of minerals, or the processing of agricultural or forestry products and it is essential for such processing to take place close to the source of raw materials, and that as such permissions will be related to the life of such raw material source; or
- ii) it involves the conversion of a sound rural building. (See Policy BE20).

Proposals for such uses in the countryside should not have an adverse impact on the environment or the amenity of local residents. Permissions may be subject to legal agreement to safeguard the environment and local amenities in the longer term. Proposals will be required to satisfy the general design criteria.

**Extensions to Industrial Premises in the Countryside**

**Policy I13 :** In the countryside outside towns and villages, permission will be given for an extension to existing industrial or business premises provided that:

- i) it is contained within the curtilage of the existing buildings; and
- ii) it fulfils the General Development Criteria, Policy GD1.

Justification :

5.47 Industrial development in the countryside is likely to detract from the appearance of the District, to be remote from population and consequently incur long journeys to work and to be not well served by public transport. Also it may impinge on areas of agricultural land or land valued because of its landscape or nature conservation interest. For these reasons, and in accordance with Government guidance, it is generally considered undesirable.

5.48 PPG7 expresses the need to accommodate employment generating uses within the countryside. The Plan meets this requirement by allocating approximately 15ha of industrial land in the Weardale and Tow Law area of which nearly 12ha is new allocation. The plan also encourages the conversion of farm buildings to workshops and employment generating uses in the countryside (BE20).

5.49 Some industries, however, need to locate adjacent to raw materials, such as mineral processing, or the production of agricultural or forestry products, and as such can demonstrate the need for a rural location. Such exceptions, however, need to conform to other Local Plan policies, particularly the need to minimise loss of landscape value, environmental quality and the amenity of local residents. In addition, opportunities exist for the conversion of redundant buildings in the countryside to industrial use. Such conversions, as described in Policy BE20 and in accordance

with Government Planning Policy Guidance Note 7, should respect the style and character of the original building and seek to protect its recognised qualities through both conversion and operation.

5.50 There are a number of businesses within the District but located outside the towns and villages which have developed over time. It would be unreasonable to prevent these firms from expanding further. Extensions to existing industrial operations will be considered in relation to their impact on the environment, landscape and adjacent properties. The expansion of "Bad Neighbour" uses near residential areas for example will be resisted. Such uses when requiring larger premises should look to relocate to more suitable locations. The Council will assist where possible in finding more appropriate premises.

5.51 Proposals for industrial or commercial use in the countryside, if uncontrolled, may intensify to become unacceptably intrusive. Unless this intensification amounts to a material change in the character of use, it cannot be controlled, if unconditional planning permission has been granted. Consideration will, therefore, be given to the use of planning conditions and/or planning agreements to safeguard the environment and local amenity, where considered appropriate for preventing foreseeable problems.

Implementation : Through the processing of planning applications.

**INDUSTRY AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

**Industrial Allocations Requiring Related Infrastructure**

**Proposal I14 :** Industrial/business development on the following sites will only be allowed on the completion of the indicated major infrastructure works:-

Site	Inset No.	Infrastructure Works
Bracks Farm Office/ Business (I2)	1	Roundabout on A688 Bishop Auckland Bypass
St Helens Auckland Extension (I2)	1	West Auckland Bypass
West Auckland Industrial Estate Extension (I5)	1	West Auckland Bypass
Fieldon Bridge (I5)	1	Bishop Auckland-Shildon Link
Thistleflat Industrial Estate Extension (I5)	9	Southern section of the A689 Crook Bypass
Pulverite Site, Willington (I9)	10	Willington relief road
East of Blairs, Stanhope (I6)	21	New Foundry Access.

Justification :

5.52 The development of major new areas of industrial land puts a demand on existing infrastructure and, in certain circumstances, requires major infrastructure provision to be established prior to development. The development of infrastructure on site is usually the responsibility of the land developer. Off-site infrastructure again falls to the developer to provide. The development of Bracks Farm for an office/business park will be conditional on the developer installing a roundabout on the A688 Bishop Auckland bypass. The development of the West Auckland bypass and the A689 Crook bypass will be the responsibility of Durham County Council, but such developments need to be in place before the identified industrial land can be developed.

5.53 Proposal T4 "Land Safeguarded for Road Proposals" notes when the West Auckland Bypass, Bishop Auckland - Shildon Link and the Crook Bypass are expected to commence as noted in the Transport Policies and Programme 1995/96.

Implementation : District and County Councils, English Partnerships and private developers for on-site infrastructure and off-site infrastructure where appropriate, through the use of section 106 agreements.

Durham County Council for major road infrastructure requirements.

- Wolsingham Steel
- Eldon Brickwork (in Sedgefield District)
- Stanhope Foundry
- Spoor Ltd., Bishop Auckland
- Northern Gas, St. Helens Auckland
- Blackdene Fluorspar Plant
- Leasingthorne/Shildon, British Gas notifiable pipelines

5.55 Applications for development within the consultation areas described around such sites need to comply with the requirements of the Health and Safety Executive. In considering such applications, the Council will need to be satisfied that proposals do not increase unacceptably risk to the local population.

Implementation : District Council in consultation with the Health and Safety Executive.

## NOTIFIABLE INSTALLATIONS

### Notifiable Installations

**Policy 115 :** Proposals for new or expansion or intensification of existing notifiable installations will not be approved unless:

- i) the proposed site is within a general industrial area or an existing industrial site;
- ii) there would be no significant increase in the potential risk to surrounding land uses; and
- iii) the related consultation zone or extended consultation zone for the Health and Safety Executive does not inhibit the realisation of other development opportunities on adjacent or nearby sites.

### Development Near to Notifiable Installations

**Policy 116 :** Developments near to notifiable installations will only be approved where the Health and Safety Executive are satisfied there would be no risk to existing and potential residents, workers or visitors.

Justification :

5.54 There are 8 installations which effect the District notified by the Health and Safety Executive as handling or storing potentially hazardous substances, located at:-

- Supergas, Leasingthorne



# Chapter 6

## TOURISM

### GENERAL POLICY

TM1 Criteria for Tourist Proposals

### TOURISM WITHIN THE AONB

TM2 Tourism within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

### TOURISM FACILITIES

TM3 New Tourist Facilities

### TOURIST ACCOMMODATION

TM4 Hotel Allocation

TM5 New Tourist Accommodation

TM6 Redevelopment of Caravan Parks

TM7 New Caravan and Chalet Sites

TM8 Occupancy Conditions for Static Caravans, Chalets and Self Catering Accommodation



6.1 Tourism is now widespread and an important economic activity generating about £24.4 billion annually for the British economy. It has been estimated that about 1.25 million visitors are attracted to the Durham Dales each year and that these visitors spent about £2.3 million supporting full-time jobs in pubs, hotels, guest houses, shops and other tourist facilities. Tourism has become vital in supplementing the local economic base and has helped to diversify the local rural economy. Wear Valley District Council will endeavour to encourage tourism development as a way of diversifying and strengthening the rural economy.

### Protection of Natural Environment

6.2 It is vital, however, that the natural environment of the District which provides the fundamental resource upon which the tourist industry is based is protected from harmful development and where appropriate enhanced. The general attractiveness of the area, much of which has been shown national recognition through designation as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, is one of the most important reasons why so many people visit the countryside.

6.3 In line with recent national guidance it is of paramount importance that a balance is achieved between the economic benefits of tourism and the protection of the natural environment, the primary tourist resource of the District.

6.4 In addition to the natural environment the District has a wide range of visitor attractions. These include Roman, Christian and Industrial heritage attractions, the historic market towns and villages of Bishop Auckland and Stanhope and a variety of sporting activities including walking, skiing, golfing and fishing.

6.5 To cater for visitors to the District a network of accommodation, information points and centres and picnic areas/country parks have been established. The A68 is the most important tourist route through the District.

### Tourist Accommodation

6.6 There is a varied range of tourist accommodation currently available in the District. In 1993 there were 657 bed spaces in 51 serviced establishments and 31 non-serviced establishments in the District. There are approximately 1600 permanent and non-permanent caravan spaces in the District, the vast proportion of which are located in the Weardale area.

### Picnic Areas and Country Parks

6.7 There are currently 8 areas which provide car parking and picnic facilities.

6.8 Formal car parking for visitors has also been provided by the District Council at Frosterley and St John Chapel and by Durham County Council on the Auckland Walk at Coundon Station and Bracks Farm.

### Visitor Management

6.9 The District Council have implemented a series of

visitor management schemes including picnic areas, country parks and tourist information points in partnership with Durham County Council. The District Council will continue this programme through the plan period.

### Green Tourism

6.10 The Council will seek to encourage the development of Green Tourism and in doing this embrace the principles of "Green Tourism in the Countryside" established by the Countryside Commission and the English Tourist Board. This encourages:-

- \* the promotion of activities which draw on the character of the countryside;
- \* encourage tourist development which is compatible with the purposes of conservation and recreation;
- \* the planning, design, siting and management of new tourist developments should be in keeping with the landscape;
- \* investment in tourism should support the rural economy and seek a wider geographical spread and more off peak visiting to avoid congestion and erosion of resources/attractions; and
- \* those who benefit from and participate in tourism should help to conserve and enhance the countryside and nature conservation interests.

#### 6.11 The Local Plan aims:

- 1 To realise the tourist potential of the District and to bring forward and encourage proposals which are sympathetic to the landscape, nature conservation interest and the general environment of the District.**
- 2 To promote the concept of "Green Tourism" in the District particularly those areas of special landscape and environmental quality.**
- 3 To promote principles for the balanced development of sustainable tourism, to maximise its economic and social benefits whilst seeking harmony between the visitor, the place and the host community.**
- 4 To encourage the provision of facilities for tourist use, including leisure facilities and accommodation in the form of hotels, bed and breakfast, farmhouse accommodation etc. where this does not impair the District's ability to meet other demands, including the need for low cost housing in the rural west of the District.**
- 5 To realise the employment potential of the tourist industry to help diversify the economy of the District.**
- 6 To encourage and promote tourism to all parts of the District and to spread tourism throughout the year.**

## GENERAL POLICY

### Criteria for Tourist Proposals

**Policy TM1 :** The Council will give encouragement to schemes which provide tourism facilities in the District provided they:

- i) are of a scale and intensity compatible with their surrounds; and
- ii) can be absorbed into the landscape by taking advantage of existing tree cover and/or the topography of the site and surroundings; and
- iii) do not conflict with other proposals contained in the local plan, particularly those which seek to safeguard the landscape, agricultural land and nature conservation interests; and
- iv) can be accessed safely, adequate parking facilities are provided, and do not create unacceptable levels of traffic which exceed the capacity of the local road network; and
- v) the scale of the development does not affect the amenities of local residents adversely; and
- vi) fulfil the General Development Criteria, Policy GD1 and they do not conflict with Policies ENV1,2,3 and 4.

Justification :

- 6.12 Tourist proposals must be suitably located and not be detrimental to the amenity of surrounding land uses. The District Council will encourage new tourist facilities to be located within or adjoining existing towns and villages. The development must be adequately accessed and not cause undue impact on the local transport network or on local communities.
- 6.13 Tourism can play an important role in the economic regeneration of the North East. Tourism not only provides jobs directly but also helps to support a much larger number of jobs indirectly. The Northumbrian Tourist Board estimate that about 60,000 people could be employed in the tourist industry in the region, a significant number of these will be employed in Durham County.
- 6.14 Tourism is a growth industry, the British Tourist Association estimates this trend to increase by 2% per year. Tourism is an important supplement to the local rural economy and helps in the diversification in the local job market. In rural areas of the District where services and facilities are limited, such as Weardale, additional tourist expenditure helps to support and sustain the level of services and facilities. Tourism development will be encouraged particularly where it will be of benefit to the local community all year round.

Implementation : Through the development control process.

## TOURISM WITHIN THE AONB

**Policy TM2 :** Tourism development proposals within the AONB will be allowed only if they fulfil the following criteria:

- i) do not detract from the landscape quality and built environment of the AONB and are in keeping with the upland rural character of the area;
- ii) proposals which generate large volumes of traffic which exceeds the capacity of the local road network will be resisted;
- iii) due to the tranquil nature of the AONB, developments will be limited to those that allow the quiet enjoyment of the countryside; and
- iv) the development should fulfil the criteria i identified in Policy TM1 and does not conflict with Policy ENV2.

Justification :

- 6.15 It is vital that the natural environment of the District, which provides the fundamental resource upon which the tourist industry of Wear Valley is based on, is actively protected. The natural environment should be regarded as an inheritance, i.e. something that should be cared for and protected and handed on to future generations to enjoy. Over intensive tourism use and inappropriate development can effect the essential character of the area which is probably the most important attraction in itself.
- 6.16 Particular attention should be given to the sensitive areas of the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty which provide unique scenic quality and sites of nature conservation importance. These should be protected from the adverse effects of tourism development.
- 6.17 The A689 is the only road through the Dale and suffers from visitor congestion at certain times. New tourist proposals should not contribute to the existing problem. Proposals, therefore, which generate large amounts of visitor traffic will be resisted.
- 6.18 The type of tourism activities which would be accepted in the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty includes those that build on the resources which this landscape has to offer e.g. walking, cycling, outdoor (including water based) activities, horse riding and, farm based tourism including bed and breakfast facilities, small farm shops, the reuse of farm buildings to provide bunk houses or small scale craft workshops.

Implementation : Through the development control process.

## TOURISM FACILITIES

### New Tourist Facilities

**Proposal TM3 :** The Council will support the provision of the following new or improvements to tourist facilities as identified on the Proposals Map:

- i) visitor centre at Binchester Roman Fort;
- ii) the development of Stanhope Station and the Bishop Auckland to Eastgate Railway (Inset No. 21);
- iii) the development of additional car parking and informal recreation at Tunstall Reservoir;
- iv) the development and interpretation of lead mining at Boltsburn Mine, Rookhope and the creation of a lead mining trail;
- v) car parking, Market Place, Wolsingham (Inset No. 23);
- vi) visitor car park and picnic areas at Wearhead (Inset No. 32), Cowshill (Inset No. 31) and Westgate (Inset No. 30) (see Policy T9);
- vii) picnic area at The Batts, Bishop Auckland (see Policy BE22); and
- viii) improvements to the rights of way network (see Policy RL12 and 13).

Justification :

- 6.19 Visitor management is essential to accommodate the pressures from tourism whilst balancing the needs of the local communities and other land uses. Visitors to the area bring economic benefits and employment opportunities for the District. The Council's Tourism Strategy aims to harness visitor interest in the area whilst protecting the District's environment. The three main themes of tourism in the District are Christian Heritage, Industrial Heritage and the landscape quality of the AONB. Visitor pressure can lead to congestion and parking problems, erosion of footpaths, imposition of additional costs to landowners through trespass and damage to walls, fences and private property and damage to sensitive wildlife areas.
- 6.20 A detailed programme of development is in hand at Killhope Wheel to manage tourist needs and a management plan is underway for Bollihope Common. Management plans will also be considered during the plan period for Slit Woods at Westgate, Stanhope and Wolsingham Riverside.
- 6.21 Visitor car parking has in the past been a particular problem. Picnic areas and car parks have been provided in strategic locations to attempt to control and guide visitors. More are required particularly in the Upper Dale and in the market towns of Stanhope and Wolsingham. Car parks have been successfully provided recently at Frosterley and St. Johns Chapel. Additional visitor car park provision is identified in Policy T9.
- 6.22 The provision of car parks not only solves the problems of road congestion but provides a point at which all tourists arrive at and can be informed through information points about all services and facilities available as well as directions to tourist attractions/activities. It is important that visitor car parks incorporate, or are near to, facilities such as

toilets, information/interpretive material, litter bins and where possible local shops. Creating parking sites within villages will provide additional off-street parking for the local community, as at the Frosterley visitor car park. Car parks have the added benefit of enabling visitors to enter a village easily, allowing them to contribute to the local economy, supporting local services. The sites identified at Wearhead, Westgate, Stanhope and Cowshill are well located in relation to the local footpath network and in the case of Wearhead, to local facilities. These sites will incorporate picnic areas.

Implementation : Wear Valley District Council  
Durham County Council.

## TOURIST ACCOMMODATION

### Hotel Allocation

**Proposal TM4 :** Permission will be granted for a new hotel development, as identified on Proposals Map Inset No. 1, at Bracks Farm, Bishop Auckland.

**Proposals will be required to satisfy the General Design Criteria, Policy GD1.**

Justification :

- 6.23 New hotel development in an appropriate location creates an important facility to serve the accommodation needs of business and visitors alike. Hotel development can also benefit the local community by providing jobs and supporting the local economy.
- 6.24 The development of Bracks Farm to the east of Bishop Auckland town centre for a Business Park and housing offers the opportunity for the creation of a hotel and associated conference centre on the site of the farm. Bishop Auckland lacks such a development and linked with the proposed Business Park will be a complementary use which both has easy access to Bishop Auckland bypass and the A1 and to the town centre itself.

Implementation : Through the development control process.

## New Tourist Accommodation

**Policy TM5 :** The Council will allow new tourist accommodation within the development limits of towns and villages, providing the proposal is not contrary to other policies and proposals in the plan and fulfils the General Development Criteria, Policy GD1.

**New tourist accommodation will be allowed in the countryside provided it is limited to expansion of existing hotels, guest houses and farm accommodation and the conversion of existing buildings (see Policy BE20).**

**Proposals should fulfil the following criteria:**

- i) retain the architectural character and quality of the existing building;**
- ii) alterations and extensions are in keeping with the architectural style of the building;**
- iii) the intensification of use is not to the detriment of the character and setting of the building; and**
- (iv) the proposal satisfies the General Development Criteria, Policy GD1.**

Justification :

6.25 It is expected that most new visitor accommodation will be provided within existing towns and villages. Where proposals come forward for such development in other areas, they will have to fulfil the above criteria. Sites along the A68, the main tourist route through the District, would be particularly appropriate for hotel development.

6.26 Hotel developments are large land users and can be very prominent in the landscape. It is, therefore, essential that any proposal does not impinge on the landscape quality of the surrounding area. In addition, it is necessary for any proposal to be adequately landscaped and its siting, scale, design and materials should be related to the surrounding environment. Adequate car parking and suitable access points should be provided.

6.27 Many areas that are popular tourist destinations owe their attraction to the exceptional quality of the landscape, however, these are precisely the areas where development is likely to be subject to more restriction than elsewhere. One way of overcoming this is to allow in certain circumstances the reuse of redundant, and the change of use of existing buildings for tourism uses, such as farm bed and breakfast, bunk barns. Allowing this type of tourism use will help with the diversification of the rural economy. It is vital that any reuse should be in keeping with the architectural character and style of the existing building and any extension should be related to the building's scale, design and materials. Implementing this will provide a tourism facility in the countryside which would not have a detrimental impact on the countryside.

Implementation : Through the development control process.

## Redevelopment of Caravan Parks

**Policy TM6 :** Within existing caravan sites the replacement of static caravans with chalets will be permitted providing it fulfils the General Development Criteria, Policy GD1.

Justification :

6.28 An adequate range of visitor accommodation serving all aspects of the market is essential to the growth of the country's tourist industry and to encourage people to visit its attractions. It is vital that provision is made for self catering accommodation.

6.29 The redevelopment of caravan sites to self catering chalet developments would have the benefit of:

- a) helping to raise the standard of facilities on offer;
- b) providing an all year tourist facility which will contribute significantly to the local economy. Caravans are occupied predominantly on a seasonal basis although chalets would be available all year round; and
- c) reducing the environmental impact on the surrounding area as they are more visually attractive if carefully and sensitively designed and built.

Implementation : Through the development control process.

## New Caravan and Chalet Sites

**Policy TM7 :** The development of new sites in the countryside for camping and touring caravans will be permitted provided they fulfil the criteria identified in Policy TM1. Proposals within the AONB will be required to fulfil Policy TM2.

**The development of new sites for chalets may be allowed in disused quarries or other locations well-screened all year round, provided the proposal fulfils Policies TM1 and TM2 and would not have an adverse impact on nature conservation.**

**New sites for static caravans and caravan storage will not be allowed west of the A68. Elsewhere in the District, proposals will be required to fulfil the criteria identified in Policy TM1.**

Justification :

6.30 The impact of caravans in Weardale has long been a matter of contention. However, caravan parks meet a demand for less formal rural based accommodation, although static caravans make only a limited contribution to the available tourist accommodation stock in the Dale. There are about 1600 caravan spaces available in the District, the vast majority of which are in Weardale. The Council, therefore, considers there are sufficient caravan spaces to satisfy the demand for such accommodation. Additional provision of permanent static caravan sites will be intrusive in the landscape and therefore detrimental to the character and scenic quality of Weardale.

6.31 Whilst the number of static holiday caravans is high

in Weardale there may be scope for camping and touring caravan sites which are only temporary and so less obtrusive in the landscape. Proposals for new sites must conform to the criteria listed in Policy TM1, to reduce their impact on the surrounding landscape.

6.32 It has been shown that some villages such as Edmundbyers and Eastgate have an excess of caravan population over local residents and Westgate has nearly equal resident and visitor populations. These villages also do not have an adequate range of facilities to cater for visitors. Such settlements as Stanhope, Wolsingham and Frosterley, whilst having a good range of facilities are already visited regularly by a large influx of caravanners each year. Potential may exist in the disused quarries of the District for chalet developments without undue impact on the environment. The Council will judge these proposals upon their individual merits and visual landscape impact. It should be noted that self-regeneration of disused quarries can produce important habitats for nature conservation. Proposals will be resisted which threaten such areas.

6.33 Permissions for holiday chalets will have an occupancy condition to prevent the development being used for permanent residential accommodation.

Implementation : Through the development control process.

### Occupancy Conditions for Static Caravans, Chalets and Self-Catering Accommodation

**Policy TM8 : Proposals for static caravans, chalets and other self-catering accommodation will only be approved subject to an occupancy condition of up to three months.**

Justification :

6.34 Static caravans, chalets and self-catering units provide the majority of visitor accommodation in the District. In order to ensure this accommodation is kept open for the tourist industry a 3 month occupancy condition will be imposed on all existing and proposed units. This will allow an individual to use a caravan, chalet or other self-catering accommodation including holiday cottages for up to 3 months in a year but will prevent the unit from becoming a permanent home in the countryside. Visitor accommodation is not built, designed or located for permanent residential use. Allowing such a use would undermine the tourist accommodation stock for the area, have a detrimental impact on the surrounding area and set a dangerous precedent for allowing building in the countryside.

Implementation : Through conditions attached to planning permission.

# Chapter 7

## SHOPPING

### TOWN CENTRES

- S1 Town Centres

### RETAILING IN BISHOP AUCKLAND

- S2 Newgate Street North Shopping Area
- S3 Newgate Street South/Fore Bondgate Shopping Area
- S4 Market Place
- S5 Retail/Office Opportunity Sites

### RETAILING IN CROOK

- S6 Retailing in Crook

### RETAIL ALLOCATIONS

- S7 Growth Areas

### LOCAL SHOPPING AREAS

- S8 Local Shopping Areas
- S9 Cockton Hill Local Shopping Area, Bishop Auckland
- S10 Outside Shopping Areas

### OTHER RETAILING POLICIES

- S11 Hot Food Takeaways
- S12 Retailing from Industrial Estates
- S13 Shops in the Countryside
- S14 Petrol Filling Stations, Garden Centres and Car Showrooms
- S15 Shop Fronts
- S16 Expansion of Existing Retail Properties





- 7.1 Retailing and commerce are traditionally linked with our town centres. It is, to a large extent, the success or otherwise of this role that contributes to making our towns vibrant and attractive places in which to live. Maintaining retailing as the prime central activity of town centres is, however, dependent upon many factors and commercial influences which are largely beyond the control of the Local Planning Authority.
- 7.2 Increased leisure time and greater personal disposable income has made the purchase of goods and services to be perceived by some as a leisure activity. People expect to be able to shop in a safe, clean and pleasant environment, with convenient car parking and the availability of other facilities. The growth in personal car ownership has enabled people to choose which area they prefer to shop in, stimulating competition between shopping areas.
- 7.3 The Local Planning Authority has little influence over the commercial decisions of retailers. Indeed, Government advice on retailing developments (Planning Policy Guidance Note 6 : Town Centres and Retail Developments) indicates that commercial interests are not a land use planning consideration, competition should not be inhibited and nor should existing commercial interests be preserved. It does however underline the need to maintain the diversity and activity of town centres if they are to retain their vitality and central service function for the surrounding area. Commercial centres, such as town centres and local shopping areas, do not only serve a consumer function but provide a vital social focus for every community. Shops are a weekly, even daily, meeting point for many people particularly in rural communities. In isolated rural areas the closure of shops can have a detrimental effect upon the sustainability of the community. Shops in villages increase the range of services available and so attract people to the area helping to reverse rural depopulation.

### Shopping Hierarchy

- 7.4 It is the District Council's aim to promote a shopping hierarchy which maintains a range of retail facilities to meet the requirements of shoppers throughout the District. Bishop Auckland is the principal retailing area within the District and is the second most important centre in the County. Together with Crook they are the two Town Centre shopping areas in the Local Plan Area and provide a wide range of durable and convenience goods. This function will be maintained.
- 7.5 The second tier of the hierarchy is the Local Shopping areas, such as Wolsingham, Willington, Coundon, Stanhope and Tow Law which provide for the daily requirements of shoppers. The third tier are local shops, such as corner and village shops which serve the immediate surrounding area.
- 7.6 The shopping hierarchy has been defined as:
1. Town Centres :  
The two identified Town Centres are Bishop Auckland and Crook. The District Centres contain the best possible range of shopping opportunities outside those available in larger urban areas.

They offer a wide range and variety of convenience, comparison and non-shopping outlets. National multiples are found in these centres.

#### 2. Local Shopping Areas :

These centres are located in Stanhope, Tow Law, Willington, Wolsingham, Coundon and West Auckland. The local centres generally contain a range of convenience and some comparison outlets. They provide for the day to day convenience needs and some weekly or occasional shopping requirements of a fairly small area. Local centres will normally have only a limited range of durable shopping facilities. The type of outlets found in these centres will be small and probably local independent traders.

#### 3. Local Shops :

Local shops are found in rural villages and housing estates serving the immediate area. These shops provide the opportunity for top-up shopping and to purchase items daily. Although serving only a small local population, local shops can often provide a surprising range of products and other services, particularly in a rural area.

#### 7.7 The Local Plan aims to:

- 1 **Promote the provision of an adequate range and type of shopping facilities throughout the District;**
- 2 **Balance the requirements of shoppers and those of the retail industry;**
- 3 **Maintain and enhance the economic vitality of the traditional shopping centres of the District and to encourage small-scale facilities throughout the District, including the more remote rural areas, especially in those areas where facilities are inadequate;**
- 4 **Maintain a level of shop provision for rural communities in the District; and**
- 5 **Improve the environmental quality of shopping area by making them safe and attractive locations to shop in.**



### TOWN CENTRES

**Policy S1 :** The District Council will seek to maintain and protect the town centres of Bishop Auckland and Crook as identified on the Proposals Map Inset Nos 1A and 9 as the major retailing centres in the District. Proposals for shops, offices and other commercial activities (Class A1 to A3) will be permitted within the town centres subject to:

- i) the restriction of uses set out in Policies S2, S3 and S4 in Bishop Auckland, and S6 in Crook; and
- ii) retail uses (Class A1) being restricted to the shopping frontages identified in Policies S2,S3,S4 and S6.

**Proposals for retail developments which undermine the vitality and viability of these town centres will be resisted.**

**Justification :**

7.8 Bishop Auckland and Crook are the two major retailing centres in the District for durable and convenience shopping. Due to the location of Bishop Auckland and its wide range of high street shops, it acts as an important shopping centre for County Durham, being the second largest shopping centre in the County in terms of floorspace. Although the shopping function of Crook plays a secondary role to Bishop Auckland, it provides an important shopping facility for the centre of the District.

7.9 In accordance with PPG 6 the District Council considers it vital to maintain and protect these two town centres to fulfil their individual function. Retail developments which undermine the vitality and importance of Bishop Auckland and Crook as retailing centres will be resisted.

Implementation : Through the development control process.

**Justification :**

7.10 The Newgate Street North Shopping Area comprises the retail units of north of Great Gates and the pedestrianised part of Newgate Street, north of Tenters Street including the Newgate Centre. It is the prime retail area of the town and national multiple stores are represented, along with other retail outlets and a number of offices, banks, building societies and cafes which contribute to the vitality and attraction of that part of the town centre. It also remains one of the few centres in County Durham which retains its attractiveness for pure retail shopping, particularly food, and one which is very much dependent upon public transport.

7.11 The District Council are committed to maintaining, and where appropriate, improving the appearance of the Newgate Street North Shopping Area, as the 'heart' of commercial activity in the town. The Newgate Street North Shopping Area should be attractive to both shoppers and investors.

7.12 There were originally about 50 commercial units at ground floor level in the Newgate Street, North Shopping Area, these are divided as shown in Table 6. The number of units has now increased to 70 following the extension of the Newgate Street North Shopping Area to include the units north of Great Gates. The policy pursued in the former Policy S2 area has over recent years been successful and its coverage has been extended to include additional national multiples such as Boots and Burtons. This extension will help to expand the prime retail area of the town.

7.13 The District Council is concerned that the predominance of retail outlets should be maintained in the Newgate Street North Shopping Area. As shown in Table 7 there has been a decline in the number of pure retail uses since 1987. The type of outlet which should be encouraged in the area are those which would be incorporated within normal shopping trips to the town centre. Such outlets include the national multiple stores which are traditionally found in the main street of any healthy shopping centre.

7.14 Offices (Class A2) also contribute to the range of facilities available in the Newgate Street North Shopping Area. However, their draw of shoppers to the area is not as strong as a multiple retail outlet. Shopping floorspace is at a premium in this area, and most national banks and other offices are already well represented in the area. Use of prime shopping floorspace by offices (i.e. on the ground floor premises of the Newgate Street North Shopping Area) should, therefore, be restricted to the existing level of provision. This will ensure that a predominance of retail outlets is maintained and

### RETAILING IN BISHOP AUCKLAND

#### Newgate Street North Shopping Area

**Policy S2 :** Within the Newgate Street (North) Shopping Area of Bishop Auckland, as identified on Proposals Map Inset No. 1A, at ground floor level planning permission will only be allowed for retail use (Class A1). Proposals for the change of use of ground floor premises from retail (Class A1) to office use (Class A2) or food/drink outlets (Class A3) will not be allowed.

**Table 7: Newgate Street, North Shopping Area : Retail Uses 1987/1989/1992**

	1987		1989		1992	
Shops (Class A1)	38	(81%)	33	(72%)	34	(74%)
Offices (Class A2)	8	(17%)	8	(17%)	8	(17%)
Food and Drink	0	(0%)	2	(4%)	2	(4%)
Retail outlets(Class A3)						
Vacant	1	(2%)	3	(7%)	2	(4%)
Total	47	(100%)	46	(100%)	46	(100%)

Source : Wear Valley Planning Department Survey - August 1987/1989 and June 1992.

that the area remains an attractive and convenient area for shoppers and for other potential stores.

7.15 Food and/or drink retailing outlets (Class A3) are generally considered to be an important element in complementing traditional shopping uses in the Newgate Street North Shopping Area. Such outlets should contribute to the area's prestigious image and economic prosperity, by way of visual appearance and generation of pedestrian flow. The District Council will treat applications for food and drink outlets on their merits, having regard to the development's contribution to the visual character of the area, and to its economic significance in drawing shoppers to the area (see Policy S11 for criteria). Proposals for outlets which do not serve shoppers, for example, being open only outside shopping hours, will not normally be approved. It is important to prevent "dead" shop frontages occurring within the Newgate Street North Shopping Area caused by outlets whose opening hours do not coincide with normal shopping hours. Dead shop frontages during the day reduces the attractiveness of Newgate Street.

Implementation : Through the development control process.

### Newgate Street South/Fore Bondgate Shopping Area

**Policy S3 :** Within the Newgate Street (South)/Fore Bondgate Shopping Area of Bishop Auckland, as identified on Proposals Map Inset No. 1A, at ground floor level planning permission will only be allowed for retail use (Class A1) and office use (Class A2). In addition, proposals for food and drink outlets (Class A3) will be allowed in the Newgate Street (South)/Fore Bondgate Shopping Area subject to Policy S11. Any new shopping development and redevelopment or improvements will need to reflect the small scale character of the shopping frontages of the area in their design and appearance.

Justification :

7.16 The Newgate Street South/Fore Bondgate Shopping Area is identified on Proposals Map Inset 1A. It comprises Newgate Street, between Great Gates and the Railway, and includes the Former Goods Yard, and Fore Bondgate. That part of Newgate Street, between Princes Street and Great Gates, is similar in character to the area to the north which is included in the Newgate Street North Shopping Area (see Policy S2). It has,

however, suffered in the past from a high number of vacant premises (see Table 8). It is, therefore, not considered appropriate to attempt to prohibit offices or food and drink outlets from ground floor locations in this area.

7.17 By contrast the area of the Newgate Street South/Fore Bondgate Shopping Area south of Princes Street is characterised by small scale shopping developments and specialist shopping uses. It also suffers from a high number of vacant premises. It is important that any shopping redevelopment/improvement schemes in this area enhance the existing small-scale character of the shopping frontage. A larger scale development should therefore reflect the small-scale character of the shopping frontage.

Implementation : Through the development control process.

### Market Place

**Policy S4 :** In the Market Place of Bishop Auckland, as identified on Proposals Map Inset No. 1A, the District Council:

- i) will allow changes of use to offices (Use Class A2) hotels, small scale shops (Use Class A1) tourist uses, small scale food and drink outlets (Use Class A3) and restaurants; and
- ii) will not allow changes of use to nursing and residential homes, industry, large scale retailing and warehousing.

All proposals must be designed to be compatible with the architectural and historic character of the market place and contribute to the potential of the town to attract tourists.

Justification :

7.18 The Market Place is the focus of the town's Conservation Area, and with the Bishop's Palace and Town Hall is particularly important for tourism in the area. Market days transform the open pedestrianised area to a bustling trading area. The character of the existing buildings is essential to the quality and atmosphere that the Market Place holds.

7.19 Premises which are used for shop purposes are those which are immediately adjacent to Newgate Street and Fore Bondgate fronting on to the actual site of the twice weekly market -in the south-western corner of the Market Place.

7.20 The mixture and essentially small-scale character

Table 8 : Newgate Street South/Fore Bondgate Shopping Area : Retail Uses 1989/90/91/92

	1989	1990	1991	1992
Shops (Class A1)	133 (68%)	120 (61%)	130 (65%)	135 (68%)
Offices (Class A2)	17 (9%)	25 (13%)	24 (12%)	21 (11%)
Food & Drink				
Retail Outlets (Class A3)	20 (10%)	21 (11%)	20 (10%)	23 (11%)
Vacant	25 (13%)	31 (16%)	24 (13%)	20 (10%)

Source : Wear Valley Planning Department Survey - August 1989/1990/1991 and June 1992.

of building uses fronting the Market Place adds to the area's character. Preserving this character relies to a certain extent on maintaining this mixed land use. Certain land uses are therefore considered acceptable within the Market Place, while others are not. Proposals designed to cater for old and/or infirm people including nursing/residential homes and sheltered housing schemes, are considered incompatible with the Market Place because of the likely conflict with traffic, noise and disturbance, including possible late night disturbance, the lack of open space for inhabitants and the absence of any community into which old people should be integrated. For these reasons such uses will be resisted. Proposals for all new uses in the Market Place should have regard to the character and quality of its buildings and conservation area designation.

7.21 In the Market Place, which is the business centre of Bishop Auckland, in contrast to the primary shopping area, change of use or development of ground floor premises for office purposes will normally be encouraged. All developments must pay particular attention to the character of the Market Place as a Conservation Area, and to the individual properties, the majority of which are listed buildings. A high standard of external design in any change of use/development proposal will be necessary to add to and complement the character of the Market Place.

7.22 The District Council recognises the tourist potential of the Market Place particularly because of its place in the Conservation Area, its fine buildings and improved townscape and its position in relation to Auckland Castle Park. Future developments should, therefore, contribute to the character of the area and be of a high standard of design to complement the visual appearance of the area (see Built Environment Chapter). Modern shopping developments can often be inappropriate in such areas because of their scale and shop front designs and, therefore, should be resisted. Small scale retail outlets orientated to the needs of tourists may, however, be acceptable, for example, craft shops, bookshops, in addition to cafes and restaurants.

Implementation : Through the development control process.

### Retail/Office Opportunity Sites

**Proposal S5 :** Retail/office and other development opportunity sites exist within the Town Centre of Bishop Auckland, as identified on Proposals Map Inset No. 1A. Permission will be granted for the following uses provided the proposals fulfil Policies S2, S3 and S4:-

- i) West end of Fore Bondgate - retail/office.
- ii) Former British Legion Club, Market Place - retail/office/hotel.
- iii) The Elms, Market Place office/hotel/residential.
- iv) Site to rear of B & Q - retail/office.

Justification :

7.23 Within the town centre of Bishop Auckland there are a number of opportunity sites for development. These sites range from the vacant plot in Fore Bondgate, the re-use of the Elms and the redevelopment/re-use of the former Odeon Cinema and British Legion Club.

7.24 The Council will give favourable considerations to imaginative schemes which contribute to maintaining the vitality and viability of the town centre and help to improve the built environment of the centre.

Implementation : Through the development control process.

## RETAILING IN CROOK

**Policy S6 :** Within the shopping area of Crook, as identified on Proposals Map Inset No. 9, the District Council will permit retail uses (Class A1) and office uses (Class A2) to ground floor premises. Proposals involving redevelopment or change of use to food and drink outlets (Class A3) will be allowed provided they fulfil Policy S11.

Justification :

7.25 Crook serves as one of the two Town Centres for retailing in Wear Valley. Although Crook has a smaller retailing core than Bishop Auckland, it acts as an important shopping facility for the centre of the District.

7.26 The commercial core of Crook includes Hope Street, the Market Place and Church Street. All areas contain a variety of users which would be associated with a town centre; these range from shops (Class A1), financial and professional offices such as banks, building societies and estate agents (Class A2) and hot food and drink outlets (Class A3) - see Table 9. The District Council will encourage the continued use of shops and financial and professional services (Classes A1 & A2) within the commercial core of Crook, as identified on Proposals Map Inset 9. The change of use or redevelopment of premises for food and drink outlets (Class A3) may be allowed in the shopping area, provided it fulfils the criteria set out in Policy S11.

7.27 From Table 9, it can be seen that Commercial Street, although containing some commercial premises, is dominated by other uses, in particular houses. The through traffic, narrow pavements and the dispersed nature of the shops does not make Commercial Street an attractive environment in which to shop in. Although the inner relief road will reduce the volume of through traffic, this will not take place for several years and therefore it is felt that future shopping development should be concentrated along Hope Street, Church Street and the Market Place.

7.28 The vacancy level of shop premises within the commercial area of Crook has declined since 1989 (see Table 10). The majority of vacant premises are found in the southerly half of Hope Street and Elliot Street. The District Council recognises the negative effect vacant premises have on the vitality of shopping centres. Although the vacancy rate is

Table 9 : Use of properties in Crook Town Centre

SHOPPING ZONES	TOTAL UNITS 100%	OCCUPIED					VACANT
		A1	A2	A3	OTHERS		
Hope Street - North of Addison Street	27	20 (74%)	1 (3%)	3 (11%)	2 (7%)	0 (0%)	
Hope Street - South of Addison Street	43	24 (56%)	7 (16%)	6 (14%)	1 (2%)	5 (12%)	
Church Street	20	13 (65%)	2 (10%)	3 (15%)	2 (10%)	0 (0%)	
Market Place - Elliot Street/South Street	15	3 (20%)	3 (20%)	3 (20%)	4 (27%)	2 (13%)	
Commercial Street	36	8 (22%)	1 (3%)	5 (14%)	22 (61%)	2 (6%)	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>142 (100%)</b>	<b>68 (49%)</b>	<b>14 (10%)</b>	<b>20 (14%)</b>	<b>31 (21%)</b>	<b>9 (6%)</b>	

Source: Wear Valley District Council Shopping Survey 1992.

Table 10 : Vacancy rates in Crook Town Centre

	1989	1991	1992	% of Shops
Hope Street North	1	0	0	0%
Hope Street South	10	5	5	12%
Commercial Street	1	4	2	6%
Church Street	0	0	0	0%
South Street Market Place	3	2	2	13%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6%</b>

Source: Wear Valley District Council Shopping Survey 1989, 1991, 1992.

Table 11 : Shopping facilities at Coundon and Willington

	Shops (Use Class A1)	Offices (Use Class A2)	Food & Drink (Use Class A3)	Vacant	Others	Total
Coundon	20 (25%)	0 (0%)	6 (8%)	1 (1%)	52 (66%)	79(100%)
Willington	43(42%)	8 (8%)	114(14%)	11(11%)	27 (26%)	103(100%)

Source : Wear Valley District Council Survey 1992

only 7% of all ground floor premises in the commercial core, further reductions to this rate will help to increase the range of shopping outlets and improve the environment of the shopping area. To help maintain this low vacancy rate, all commercial uses (Class A1, A2, A3) will be allowed in the shopping centre, provided they are in accordance with the other policies in the plan.

Implementation : Through the development control process.

## RETAIL ALLOCATIONS

### Growth Areas

**Proposal S7 :** Retail development (Class A1) is proposed at the following locations, as identified on the Proposals Map:-

- i) 0.7 hectares of land north of High Street, Willington (Inset No. 10).
- ii) 1 hectare of land at Hillside Road, Coundon, subject to relocation of allotments (Inset No. 2).
- iii) 1.2 hectares of land at Greenfields Road, Bishop Auckland (Inset No. 1).

### Justification :

7.29 The shopping facilities at Coundon and Willington are limited to small individual shops supplying the local shopping needs for the immediate area. From Table 11 it is clear that Coundon has a loose-knit shopping core which has developed along Collingwood Street and is dominated by non-retail uses, in particular houses. Shops (Use Class A1) form the major commercial use in this area. Willington has a more compact shopping area with 42% of premises being used for retail uses (Class A1), however, a quarter of all premises have non-commercial uses, such as houses.

7.30 The increase in population through the proposed developments, as identified in Policy H3, will require substantial improvement and expansion of retailing facilities to adequately cater for the increased local consumer needs of the three settlements.

7.31 The provision of additional floorspace in both settlements will improve the range and choices of shopping facilities in Coundon and Willington and provide for the increased demand on the local shopping facilities. Both proposals are adjacent to the existing shopping areas. Centrally located, they provide good pedestrian access to the

adjoining residential areas. The development of both proposals should be designed for the pedestrian shopper and should not only cater for the car borne shopper. Providing adequate local shopping facilities close to areas of significant residential growth will help reduce the distance to travel for shoppers and should therefore cut down the number of car journeys. This will not only create a better local shopping environment but will help reduce the levels of CO2 emissions into the environment. (PPG12).

7.32 The proposal at Willington will provide up to 1860 m<sup>2</sup> (20000 sq ft) gross of retail floorspace and will be developed in conjunction with the construction of the Willington relief road. The development will be required to put in the necessary junction improvements and stretch of road linking Front Street with the C34.2 minor road to Oakenshaw. The development should orientate itself to allow the creation of a focal point along Front Street and to front onto the existing shops. The existing car parking facility should be maintained and the proposal will be required to incorporate the existing shop units on site. The open setting of Albion House will need to be maintained and the plan protects the open area to the north as informal open space. Sufficient landscape planting and screening will be required to mitigate the impact of the bypass. The development will be required to incorporate environmental improvements to Front Street in terms of design, orientation and layout.

7.33 The proposal at Coundon will be limited to 930 m<sup>2</sup> (10000 sq ft) gross and will come forward as part of the comprehensive development of land north of the bypass. The proposal will be required to relate to the existing shops in Coundon and be orientated towards pedestrian shoppers, facing onto Hillside Road. The layout of the proposal should be designed to allow the dual use of its car park with the recreation ground and changing facilities. A single vehicular access off Hillside Road should be used to serve both the retail proposal and the residential development. A comprehensive development brief will be prepared for this site which also includes residential and recreation allocations.

7.34 There are no shopping facilities in the Etherley Dene/Greenfield area of Bishop Auckland. Population in this area has increased dramatically in the last 10 years or so without the provision of associated social, community and shopping facilities. Land at Greenfields Road is well located to provide the facilities of a local shopping area, and could accommodate in addition to shopping uses, community uses and a public house. Shopping development should be limited to 930 m<sup>2</sup> (10000 sq ft) in gross floor area to create essentially a local facility and therefore minimise any impact such development may have on the town centre of Bishop Auckland.

Implementation : Through the development control process and the preparation of development briefs.

## LOCAL SHOPPING AREAS

**Policy S8 :** In the following settlements shopping proposals (Class A1 and A2, and A3 subject to Policy S11) will be permitted in local shopping areas, as indicated on the Proposal Map:

Willington (Inset No. 10)	Stanhope (Inset No. 21)
Tow Law (Inset No. 22)	West Auckland (Inset No. 1)
Wolsingham (Inset No. 23)	Etherley Dene, Bishop Auckland (Inset No. 1)

providing the proposal fulfils Policy GD1.

Justification :

7.35 Local shopping areas are an important element in all towns and villages. As well as supplying goods and services to the consumer they also provide a focus for the community. Shops need to be located close to each other to provide a convenient shopping facility for the consumer and to focus activity on the central area of the town and village so reducing the disturbance caused to adjoining uses, such as residential areas. It is therefore important to define local shopping areas and to maintain the attractiveness and vitality of them by limiting retail development to these areas.

7.36 The principle of a Local Shopping Area on the Rosehill Estate, Etherley Dene was previously identified in the Bishop Auckland Local Plan. Since 1977 residential development has expanded significantly to the west of Bishop Auckland. This area is not locally provided with shopping facilities. Even daily shopping requirements necessitate a bus or car journey. It is therefore considered important to provide shopping facilities that serve an immediate local need in the Etherley Dene area.

Implementation : Through the development control process.

### Cockton Hill Local Shopping Area, Bishop Auckland

**Policy S9 :** In the Cockton Hill local shopping area as identified on Proposals Map Inset No. 1 the District Council will permit new retail and office units (Class A1 and A2) up to 100m<sup>2</sup>. Proposals for food and drink outlets (Class A3) will be required to satisfy Policy S11. All proposals must fulfil Policy GD1.

Outside the defined local shopping area, change of use from residential will not be permitted in Cockton Hill Road.

Justification :

7.37 Cockton Hill local shopping area serves the local population for daily shopping needs. The Plan aims to ensure a range of facilities are provided in these centres, whilst maintaining their local character and not drawing trade away from the Town Centre Shopping Areas. Due to the small nature of the existing shops and the character of the terraces, proposals will be restricted to 100m<sup>2</sup> (1100 sq ft).

7.38 Cockton Hill's shopping centre is not clearly

defined because commercial development is interspersed with residential along Cockton Hill Road. The Plan aims to consolidate commercial development by limiting future change of use from residential to offices or shops to those terraces which already contain mixed commercial premises, subject to adequate parking provision being made to the County Engineer's requirements and subject to the proposed uses having no detrimental impact on the residential amenities of the surrounding terraces. This will ensure that the character of primarily residential terraces and the appearance of individual buildings is protected. Change of use to Class A1 to A3 (Retail and Offices) will only be considered in the following terraces on Cockton Hill Road, as defined on the Proposals Map:

25 - 33 Odd Nos. Cockton Hill Road  
 35 - 41 Odd Nos. Cockton Hill Road  
 43 - 59 Odd Nos. Cockton Hill Road  
 61 - 87 Odd Nos. Cockton Hill Road  
 01 - 09 All Nos. Kensington  
 32 - 34 Even Nos. Cockton Hill Road  
 36 - 54 Even Nos. Cockton Hill Road

Implementation : Through the development control process

### Outside Shopping Areas

**Policy S10 :** Outside the shopping areas, as identified in Policies S2 to S9, permission will only be granted for Class A1 and A2 uses if it constitutes small scale provision, provided that the development:

- i) does not prejudice the local amenity of the area surrounding;
- ii) does not detract from the environment or townscape of the surrounding area;
- iii) adequate access and parking provision can be achieved; and
- iv) is not more than 100 sq.m. in floor area.

Justification :

7.39 Individual local shops such as the 'corner shop' are essential to provide for immediate shopping needs within residential areas or isolated rural areas. Their location must not cause unnecessary danger for road pedestrians and road users, or create any adverse effect on the amenity of nearby residential areas, or impinge on the surrounding landscape and town scape of the area. So as not to undermine the established shopping areas, the size of individual local shops should be no more than 100m<sup>2</sup>. The car parking standards adopted by the Council are contained in F.P.G.2.

Implementation : Through the development control process.

## OTHER RETAILING POLICIES

### Hot Food Takeaways

**Policy S11 :** In existing shopping areas, proposals for, or the change of use to, hot food and drink uses (Class A3) including hot food takeaways, will be allowed provided that:

- i) it does not adversely affect the amenity of neighbouring residential properties; and
- ii) it would not create unacceptable levels of traffic which exceeds the capacity of the local road network; and
- iii) it does not undermine the vitality and main function of the existing retail area; and
- iv) it does not conflict with other policies of the plan.

Justification :

7.40 Hot food and drink uses (Class A3) include restaurants, pubs, cafes, snack bars and takeaways. By their very nature these uses require good access to the public. However many open in the evenings, cause on-street parking problems, and can cause nuisance through cooking odour, litter and noise especially in residential areas. To minimise these problems hot food and drink outlets will be required to fulfil the above criteria.

7.41 The Council is concerned by the proliferation of non-retail uses within some established shopping areas, undermining the main retail function of the area. Hot food outlets should be seen as being ancillary to the main function of retailing area, that being shopping. A proliferation of hot food takeaways will be prevented in retailing areas to help maintain this primary function, their vitality and the amenity of the local shopping centres. The District Council will monitor closely the cumulative impact of such uses on established shopping centres.

Implementation : Through the development control process.

### Retailing from Industrial Estates

**Policy S12 :** Retailing (Class A1, A2 and A3) from industrial premises, will only be permitted where it is ancillary to the main industrial use of the building and where retailed goods are manufactured on the premises.

Justification :

7.42 In many circumstances, a small amount of retailing is permitted where goods produced on the premises are sold. General retailing from these premises which could involve a significant loss of trade from central and local shopping areas will not normally be approved.

Implementation : Through the development control process

## Shops in the Countryside

**Policy S13 :** Change of use from a retail use (Class A1) to other uses will be resisted in villages where the shop is the last remaining retail facility.

Justification :

7.43 In isolated rural villages especially in Weardale, the shop not only provides a vital retail function but also acts as a focal point for the surrounding community. The existence of shops within rural settlements is vital to provide a level of facilities to serve and maintain the local population. Without a basic level of services, local depopulation of rural communities cannot be addressed and halted. Paragraph 2.13 of PPG7 (Countryside and the Rural Economy) advises local planning authorities on the need to maintain a healthy rural economy, which should be taken into account when faced with applications for the change of use of existing shops to dwellings. In accordance with this guidance where there is one remaining retailing facility, change of use, particularly to residential, will be resisted. The District Council will encourage the creation of services in rural settlements where there is a proven need for such facilities.

7.44 Farm shops play a similar function in meeting the needs of the local community in rural areas. The Council will encourage the creation of farm shops as part of farm diversification initiatives provided the proposals fulfil the criteria set down in Policy BE21.

Implementation : Through the development control process.

## Petrol Filling Stations, Garden Centres and Car Showrooms

**Policy S14 :** The development of new petrol filling stations, garden centres and car showrooms will be approved provided that the proposal:

- i) is within or adjoining the built-up area; and
- ii) adjacent to major traffic routes; and
- iii) associated retail provision will be required to be ancillary to the main function of the proposal; and
- iv) is not prominent in the landscape or an extension into open agricultural land; and
- v) fulfils Policy GD1.

Justification :

7.45 Petrol filling stations, garden centres and car showrooms are desirable within the built-up area where they can complement other shopping facilities. Both activities require relatively large areas of land to assist vehicle movement and parking.

7.46 There has been a growing trend for petrol filling stations, in particular, to widen the range of products on sale to accommodate general convenience shopping. This can have a detrimental impact upon existing local shops which would not be able to obtain such a prominent location for retailing. The Council will,

therefore, ensure that the retail function of these proposals remains ancillary to the main function of the development through the use of planning conditions. These will ensure the retail use remains in connection with the main use of the site and will avoid any undesirable fragmentation of uses on the site.

Implementation : Through the development control process.

## Shop Fronts

**Policy S15 :** New shop fronts will be permitted provided they fulfil the following criteria:

- i) shop fronts should be in keeping with the character of the building and the surrounding area. It should be designed and sited to harmonise with its setting and not detract from the building's appearance and visual amenity of the immediate neighbourhood; and
- ii) existing architectural features should be retained and incorporated in new shop front designs.

Justification :

7.47 Shop fronts play an important part in forming the character of the District's commercial areas. Inappropriate designs can seriously damage the historic and architectural character of towns and villages. Proposals should seek to take advantage of traditional shop front features such as mouldings, cornices and pilasters and look to add to the quality and character of high streets and original buildings. The Council will encourage the replacement of architectural features which have been lost and the development of traditional signs and shop fronts.

Implementation : Through the development control process.

## Expansion of Existing Retail Properties

**Policy S16 :** Proposals for the expansion of retail/commercial uses within existing buildings will be allowed provided that:

- i) the proposals do not result in the loss of an existing separate access to the front of the building from an existing residential use on the upper floor(s) unless there are overriding security or operational considerations; and
- ii) the proposals do not conflict with other policies and proposals in the Plan.

**In considering proposals for the residential use of the upper floors of commercial properties the provision of a separate satisfactory access would be required.**

Justification:

7.48 It is important to give retail and commercial uses the opportunity to expand in situ within their existing building. This helps to retain such uses particularly in town centres. Any alteration should respect the fabric of the building, particularly

internal circulation space such as lobbies and staircases which serve residential properties on upper floors. Alternative access arrangements to these floors from the rear of properties will not normally be acceptable. Access of this nature is often along narrow, unlit back streets. This raises concerns over personal security and would cause disruption to the efficient servicing of the flat by the postal service and other delivery services. Issues relating to personal security have been highlighted in Government guidance (Circular 5/94) and planning authorities are encouraged to consider these in determining applications.

Implementation : Through the development control process.



# Chapter 8

## RECREATION AND LEISURE

### GENERAL POLICY

RL1 New Provision

### URBAN BASED RECREATION

- RL2 Protection of Existing Provision
- RL3 Targets for Open Space Provision
- RL4 Children's Playing Space Target
- RL5 Sport and Recreation Target
- RL6 Recreation Allocations
- RL7 Dual Use of Existing Recreational Areas
- RL8 Improvement to Existing Open Spaces
- RL9 Allotments

### RECREATION IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

- RL10 Recreation in the Countryside
- RL11 Opportunities for Recreation Provision

### RECREATIONAL ROUTES

- RL12 Public Rights of Way
- RL13 New Recreational Routes
- RL14 Coast to Coast Recreational Route



8.1 The provision of sport and recreation facilities in the District is considered in this section. It is important that a sufficient supply and range of recreational facilities, to meet the diverse elements of the population, is made available in the Local Plan, and that criteria are established against which to assess unforeseen proposals for recreational activities.

8.2 Over the past 10 years or so the District Council has built up a good network of recreational facilities throughout the District. This provision ranges from large scale facilities such as leisure complexes to the more small scale such as children's play space. Certain areas, however, still have a short fall in recreation provision and it is proposed that the Local Plan should set the framework to deal with these.

8.3 There are approximately 130 hectares of recreational open space available for public use in the District. Measured against the National Playing Field's Association "6 acre" (2.4 hectares) per 1000 population standard, a total of 152 hectares should be provided. The District, therefore, has a shortfall of 22 hectares of recreational open space. Of the 130 hectares of recreational open space available for public use about 35 acres or 26% is available through the dual use of educational facilities.

8.4 The categories of space are included within the NPFA standard namely :-

i) Outdoor Playing Space for Sport (1.6 to 1.8 hectares per 1000) including pitches, greens, courts, athletics tracks, and other sports facilities, of which the District has 88 hectares, 14 hectares below the NPFA Standard.

ii) Children's Playing Space (0.6 to 0.8 hectares per 1000) which comprises the following categories :

- local areas for play (LAP);
- local equipped areas for play (LEAP); and
- neighbourhood equipped areas for play (NEAP)

of which the District has 40.9 hectares, 2 hectares above the NPFA standard.

8.5 These standards on their own do not however take account of the demand for or usage of facilities, or in fact any location factors. Proposals and policies included within the local plan whilst reflecting the need to achieve national standards are based on a more detailed demand-led assessment of facilities. In addition this section examines the need for indoor sports facilities, allotments and recreational facilities within the countryside.

8.6 The District has developed four multi-purpose leisure complexes well located to serve the main population concentrations of the District, but evidence provided by the Sports Council suggest an un-met demand for 2 sports halls, an indoor bowling green, a golf course and squash facilities in the District. There are, additionally, over 40 acres of allotments in the District providing over 870 plots. At present however only 76% are used. There is therefore a need to reassess demand for

such facilities and to seek rationalisation where appropriate.

8.7 The District Council are committed to producing a District Sports & Recreation Strategy in 1997. This document will set out how the District Council wants to achieve or influence to improve opportunities for participation and performance in sport and recreation for all sectors of the community. It will provide clear guidance for all organisations in the public, commercial and voluntary sectors on what the needs of the community are and identify where the local authority can work in partnership with others to meet these needs. This strategy will be used to inform the Review of the Local Plan.

8.8 The countryside of the District provides a unique recreational resource, not only for the District's population but also for visitors and tourists. The countryside because of the inherent attraction needs protection, and whilst offering scope for use, should be used in a way which does not impair its value.

8.9 **The Local Plan aims:-**

- 1 To ensure that there are sufficient opportunities for all members of the community to participate in leisure activities.**
- 2 To protect existing recreational open space from development where appropriate.**
- 3 To ensure an adequate range of facilities, in all parts of the District, including the more remote rural areas, to meet all general leisure demands and, where possible, to meet specialised demands including the needs of residents to participate in sport at the highest competitive levels.**
- 4 To encourage the greater public use of existing recreation and leisure facilities/resources in the Countryside.**
- 5 To seek to make provision for organised sports.**
- 6 To provide opportunities for residents to appreciate and participate in the arts.**

## GENERAL POLICY

### New Provision

**Policy RL1 :** The District Council will give encouragement to schemes which will provide a range of recreation and leisure facilities provided they:

- i) complement existing facilities;
- ii) are located within or adjacent to existing built-up areas; and
- iii) fulfil the General Development Criteria, Policy GD1.

In addition the District Council will encourage schemes which are in areas of identified shortfall and/or where otherwise underused or derelict land would be restored to beneficial public use.

#### Justification :

- 8.10 Proposals which seek to create additional and complimentary recreational facilities within the District are to be encouraged. Such facilities should meet the needs of all sections of the District's present and future population. In particular all new facilities should allow the disabled to participate in sport and recreation.
- 8.11 Inappropriately located facilities can, however, cause problems to surrounding uses due to traffic generation, noise or simply because they act as focal points of activity. Within residential areas careful consideration needs to be given to locational criteria (see General Development Criteria GD1). Also in locating new recreational areas, especially in the countryside, impact on agricultural and farming land, the landscape and nature conservation interests need to be minimised.
- 8.12 People living in the countryside have no less a need for recreation than people in the towns. There is a need for sport and recreation facilities in the rural parts of the District, to serve small villages and towns. Encouragement will therefore be given to making available opportunities for residents to participate in sport and recreation throughout the District.
- 8.13 Policy RL1 establishes the context for the provision of new private and public recreation, leisure and sporting facilities throughout the District. The District Council fully appreciates the role active sports clubs have within the District and within the culture of the District's population. In this respect the Council will actively work with established clubs to maintain and improve their facilities where necessary. Bishop Auckland Football Club have an urgent requirement to relocate from their existing ground at Kingsway to maintain their status as one of the premier clubs of County Durham. The Council will encourage the development of an appropriately located new ground for the Club within the terms of Policy RL1.

Implementation : The District Council, as resources permit.  
Parish Councils where relevant.  
The private sector through development control powers.

## URBAN BASED RECREATION

### Protection of Existing Provision

**Policy RL2 :** Development which would result in the loss of public and private playing fields and allotments within or on the edge of the settlements will not be allowed unless:

- i) it would lead to the more effective use of existing recreational land and safeguard its use for future generations;
- ii) suitable replacement land can be provided for the type of recreational land lost to public use within 100m for Local Areas of Play, 400m for Local Areas of Play, 1000m for Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play and 800m for allotments. Replacement children's open space will not be accepted where access is across traffic routes, and will be expected to be accessed on foot. Location of replacement land should fulfil the criteria in Policy RL4, RL5, ENV12 and ENV13; and
- iii) with regard to the use of amenity open space in residential areas for private gardens, this would not lead to the loss of effective open space or general public amenity.

#### Justification :

- 8.14 Existing open spaces have both a recreational and visually aesthetic role within towns and villages of the District. The demand for recreational facilities is increasing, as shown by increasing participation levels nationally and locally at District Council facilities. As existing provision in the District is below accepted standards, there is a need to protect such facilities from development, to safeguard their use by not only the current population but also for future generations. Government guidance in the form of PPG17 "Sport and Recreation" highlights the need for such protection to promote opportunities for recreation and sport throughout the community for reason of health, sense of well-being and for sporting excellence, and because of its valuable social and economic role.
- 8.15 The PPG also recognises the value of open spaces not only as an amenity but also as a contribution to the conservation of the natural and built heritage of the area. Town parks, gardens and informal open spaces provide valuable green spaces within built up areas. Glenholme Park and Crook Beck, town recreation ground in Bishop Auckland are good examples of such open spaces which contribute to the urban environment.
- 8.16 Loss of such open spaces should be resisted. Opportunities may exist, however, for development of open land within built up areas if suitable alternative spaces can be provided within a reasonable walking distance of the displaced facility and that the replacement facility can continue to serve the same population and locality.

Implementation : Through the development control process.  
District Council as landowner.

## Targets for Open Space Provision

**Policy RL3 :** The District Council will seek to ensure that acceptable recreational open space is provided to meet the needs of the District's existing and future population. The District Council will endeavour to achieve at least 2.4 hectares of recreational open space per 1000 population during the plan period, of which 1.6 to 1.8 hectares would be formal provision for sports and 0.6 to 0.8 hectares for children's play space within or adjacent to housing areas. Within rural areas this informal open space standard may be relaxed.

Justification :

8.17 The provision of sufficient recreational open space for the population of the District is a fundamental aim of the Local Plan. As a target the Council has adopted the National Playing Fields Association "6 acre" (2.4 hectares) standard which it will seek to achieve through the plan period.

8.18 Compared to the "6 acre" standard the District should have a total of 152 hectares of land, 22 hectares above existing provision. Whilst it is not possible to meet this standard at present the District Council will seek to reconcile this discrepancy during the plan period by:

- (i) the allocation of 23.2 hectares of land in the Local Plan (see proposal RL6);
- (ii) providing additional land through negotiation with land owners on new residential developments;
- (iii) seeking to extend the use of existing private recreational land (including educational land) to the public; and
- (iv) seeking to identify new opportunities to develop land as and when they arise;

8.19 Whilst seeking to achieve this general target the District Council is aware and will allow for locational differences within the District and will seek to respond to:

- (i) areas of identified shortfall;
- (ii) demand for certain types of provision; and
- (iii) the proximity to areas of countryside available for public access and use which may reduce the demand for informal open space provision.

Implementation : Through the development plan process.  
District Council as the Landowner.

## Children's Playing Space Target

**Policy RL4 :** For every 1 hectare of land developed or redeveloped for residential purposes, see Policies H5 to H7, at least 400 square metres of land should be made available for children's play space. The play space should consist of a range of facilities within the development intended to meet a variety of needs for different age groups, and include any of the following:

### Local Areas for Play

These should be:

- i) located within the development so that no home is located more than 100 metres by foot from the sites; and
- ii) located to enable supervision by surrounding dwellings.

### Local Equipped Areas for Play

These should be:

- iii) located within the development so that no home is located more than 400 metres by foot from the site;
- iv) located to enable supervision by surrounding dwellings or from well used pedestrian routes; and
- v) designed and equipped to meet all current British Safety Standards and Recommendations which apply to children's play areas.

### Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play

These should be:

- vi) located so that no home is located more than 1000 metres by foot from the site; and
- vii) designed and equipped to meet all current British Safety Standards and Recommendations which apply to children's play areas.

All types of children's play space should:

- viii) be pleasantly situated and landscaped to provide a good and safe environment for play;
- ix) not be located to cause nuisance or disturbance to properties, particularly those specifically designed for the elderly; and
- x) not be located where access or traffic may cause safety problems.

**On sites under 1 hectare (approx 24 dwellings) a proportion of this requirement would be expected. This proportion would not be required where, due to its small size, the area's usefulness was negligible.**

Justification :

8.20 The provision of local areas for play for pre-school children is a fundamental requirement within housing developments. Their role is important in developing educational and social skills of the youngest members of the community. Such play areas can be accommodated in housing developments suitably located as part of the development to allow for supervision and surveillance by surrounding properties. Such sites should be suitably landscaped to provide a pleasant environment. Sites should be located so that no child has more than 100m to walk and that children should not have to cross main roads to reach such sites.

8.21 The requirements of children of early school age for equipped play facilities is equally important to

assist child development both physically and socially. Local Equipped Areas for Play are required to be situated within housing developments, in order to enable supervision or surveillance by neighbouring properties, and in order to reduce the possible threat of vandalism. Such areas should be located so that no home is located more than 400 metres by foot from the site and that children should not have to cross main roads to reach such sites.

8.22 Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play are mainly unsupervised sites servicing a substantial residential area, equipped mainly for older children but with opportunities for play for younger children. Such areas are required to be situated within or on the fringe of housing developments, and should be located so that no home is more than 1000 metres by foot from the Area and that children should not have to cross main roads to reach such sites.

8.23 In both types of equipped children's play space adequate landscaping is required but this should not reduce the ability for uninhibited play or lead to future destruction of such landscaping by play itself, and should not create pockets of vegetation which may reduce safety for participants. Such sites should be equipped to an acceptable standard to the satisfaction of the Local Authority to promote safe and constructive play.

8.24 In accordance with the NPFA standard all new developments should allow for at least 400 square metres of children's play space for every hectare of land developed for family housing. Such a requirement would not be expected on sites developed specifically for single person or elderly accommodation, and on sites smaller than one hectare (or on average of 24 dwellings) a proportion of the requirement would be expected. This proportion would not be required where, due to its small size, the areas usefulness would be negligible. For the larger housing sites development briefs will be produced. These briefs will specify the need for children's play areas within the scheme.

Implementation : Through the development control process.  
Development briefs.

**Sport and Recreation Target**

**Policy RL5 :** For every 1 hectare of land developed or redeveloped for residential purposes, at least 1300 square metres of land should directly be made available on- or off-site for sporting or recreational use as part of the development or developers will be expected to make a contribution to the provision of such facilities, including changing rooms, by other agencies. Such land should be located and developed to accord with the provisions of proposal RL1.

**On sites under 1 hectare (24 dwellings) a proportion of this standard will be expected.**

Justification :

8.25 Playing pitches and other leisure facilities are available for much wider public use, and not just

restricted to children's use. Travel to such facilities is therefore not necessarily supervised and consequently is over greater distance. Such facilities need not necessarily therefore be included on new residential developments. A new development, however, generates a demand for such facilities within the wider community and therefore should contribute towards its provision.

8.26 There is a shortfall of such land in the District amounting to about 14 hectares. The areas of greatest need are:-

Settlement/Area	Existing Provision as a % of Target provision
Crook	20%
Henknowle	25%
St Helen Auckland	25%
Willington	39%
Tow Law	43%
Howden-le-Wear	44%
Wolsingham	46%
Cockton Hill	63%
Billy Row	65%
Coundon Grange	73%

8.27 Whilst Henknowle and Cockton Hill are under-provided, this shortfall could be met from existing provision and further dual-use elsewhere in Bishop Auckland.

8.28 Proposal RL6 allocates new land and proposal RL7 seeks to extend the dual-use of private recreational facilities to increase the availability of such land in those and other settlements. Further opportunities to increase provision need to be identified and proposal RL6 therefore stipulates a contribution should be made by all new developments either on or off-site. Such a contribution should satisfy the recreational demands created by the new development and is not expected to fulfil the shortfall in provision in the District. Such land should accord with the general principles set out in proposal RL1, include suitable changing/showering facilities appropriate for sport in the 1990's, and creating the right environment to promote both participation and sporting excellence.

8.29 In accordance with the NPFA standard all new developments should allow for at least 1300 square metres of recreational provision for every hectare of land developed for family housing. On smaller residential developments contributions to recreation provision will only be required where it is reasonable to do so, in the context of local need. For example, it would be unreasonable to expect recreational provision for the development of 2 houses.

Implementation : Through negotiation with developers.  
By the local authority.  
Section 106 agreements.

## Recreation Allocations

**Proposal RL6:** The following sites are allocated for development and use as public recreational use in order to meet existing and future land requirements for sporting and recreational activities:-

SETTLEMENT	INSET NO.	SITE	AREA (HA)	USE
Bishop Auckland	1	Etherley Dene	6.0	Informal Recreation
West Auckland	1	River Gaunless	5.2	Informal Recreation
Coundon	2	Hillside Road and South of Cleveland View	3.5	1 Playing pitch / Changing facilities / Informal open space / Community Centre / Allotment relocation
Dene Valley	3	Close House	0.4	Children's play space
Witton Park	5	Low Queen Street	1.6	Informal open space
Crook	9	Former Eclipse Site	1.6	1 Playing pitch / Informal open space
Willington	10	Victoria Street	1.9	Playing pitches
Howden le Wear	11	Park Terrace	2.0	Playing pitches
Wolsingham	23	Ward/Attwood Terrace	1.0	Informal open space / Children's play

## Justification :

8.30 The above proposal is put forward to increase the amount of recreational open space available for public use in the District. Sites at Coundon and Howden-le-Wear are expected to come about through the development of adjacent land for residential development. Development at the former Eclipse Works, Crook will help to create an open space/landscaped buffer zone between proposed and existing residential uses and existing industrial land. It will also provide recreational land to serve the wider area. At Hillside Road, Coundon the allotments could be relocated as part of the comprehensive redevelopment of the whole site which includes a playing pitch and informal open space. The respective recreational allocations will each be identified as part of larger mixed use schemes at each location for which development briefs will be produced explaining the amount, siting of and relationship between the uses. Land at Wolsingham will come forward as a result of a comprehensive scheme for industry and housing adjacent to the Steelworks. Land at Willington will come forward as a result of industrial development and the provision of a relief road and at West Auckland the proposal involves the formalisation of open space uses on land served by the proposed bypass. Land at Witton Park is dependent on housing development which should be designed to recreate village form or village green areas.

8.31 Additional recreational opportunities may result from the work undertaken in the Newfield and Witton Park Landscape Action Areas (Policy ENV5).

Implementation : Through the development process.

## Dual Use of Existing Recreational Areas

**Proposal RL7:** The District Council will encourage developments which allow recreational facilities to be made available to the general public provided that:

- i) there is no adverse impact on adjoining residents; and
- ii) proposals meet the requirements of Policy GD1.

## Justification:

8.32 Recreational land in private use can, if used by the public, contribute greatly towards the availability of land in the District. At present, some 26% of the publicly available land is owned by Durham County Education Authority and managed by local schools. If outdoor sports land in educational or other ownership has adequate ancillary facilities, consideration should be given for further dual-use. Opportunities may arise at existing private recreational uses which will enable wider access to the general public to recreational facilities. Such opportunities could include alterations to buildings for example in schools to provide separate access to changing facilities, the upgrading of existing recreational facilities, the provision of floodlighting and car parking. Opportunities arise for use or greater use of educational facilities in the following locations to seek to meet identified shortfalls of playing pitches:-

Willington  
Wolsingham  
Crook  
Cockton Hill

The District Council will seek to negotiate with the relevant organisations to release additional land and buildings for public use.

Implementation : Through negotiation with private and other public agencies and land owners.

**Improvement to Existing Open Spaces**

**Policy RL8 :** The District Council will seek to improve where appropriate areas of public open space in order to enhance their appearance, where equipment is provided to improve such equipment to a satisfactory condition in accordance with current safety standards, and to provide modern changing facilities for sport.

**Justification:**

- 8.33 Many areas of open space within the District are under-utilised and consequently suffer neglect, resulting in a poor appearance. Facilities, such as playing pitches, are often featureless and, whilst contributing to open space provision do not significantly contribute to the general attractiveness of the District. The District Council will endeavour to identify areas in need of improvement and seek to achieve this through landscaping and tree planting where appropriate.
- 8.34 Many areas of children’s play equipment were provided many years ago, and as such may not comply with modern safety standards. Over the past few years, the District Council have modernised a significant number of play areas at Coundon, Bishop Auckland Town Recreation Ground, Hunwick, Sunnyside, Binchester, St John’s Chapel, Tow Law, and Cockton Hill Recreation Ground, and will endeavour to continue its modernisation programme during the Plan period.
- 8.35 Improvements and new provision are needed to changing facilities at many recreation grounds in the District. The District Council will endeavour to modernise such facilities to enable a modern sporting environment to be created.

Implementation : By the District Council and other agencies where appropriate.

**Allotments**

**Proposal RL9 :** The District Council will seek to achieve improvement to existing allotment areas, to control uses on such sites and to implement rationalisation of sites where no demand exists and sites have been unused for some time. In areas of demand, existing sites will be protected from development, in accordance with Proposal RL2. The following sites are identified as underused to be subject to rationalisation and developed for other purposes:-

	<u>Inset No.</u>
Hillside Road, Coundon (Policy H5)	2
Close House Allotments, Dene Valley (Policy H6)	3
Chapel Street, Stanhope (Policy H7)	21
Bondisle, Stanhope (Policy H7)	21
Allotment Site, Stanley (Policy H6)	15
Westgate Allotments (Policy TM3)	30

**Justification :**

- 8.36 Allotment gardens perform an important recreational function particularly in the urban parts of the District. There are currently 43 officially recognised areas of allotment gardens, 34 in public ownership and 9 in private ownership. On the 34

public sites, there are some 876 available plots of which 670 (76.4%) are occupied. Occupation varies across the District as follows:-

Settlement	No. of plots	Occupancy
Crook	112	95%
Bishop Auckland	230	93%
Willington	192	80%
Coundon	211	51%
Tow Law	52	33%

- 8.37 The Bishop Auckland Local Plan recognises the high level of occupancy and demand in the Bishop Auckland area, with many of the existing allotments being used to their maximum potential and have a waiting list indicating further demand. Where a demand exists for allotments, as shown by high occupancy and existing waiting lists, there will be a strong presumption against any development which would result in the loss of sites (in accordance with Proposal RL2). There is, however, scope in some areas to reduce the area taken by allotments where land is underused and has reverted to derelict land. Areas of concern in this respect are parts of Weardale, the Coundon area and the Dene Valley.
- 8.38 The general environment and some uses on allotments has in the past been a cause of concern. Some appear unsightly due to location or the numerous structures which have developed on them. The District Council will seek to identify those sites which need to be improved. Better landscaping and upgrading can improve sites, but a better and more stringent management is needed to restrict unauthorised building, such as limiting building to one greenhouse and/or shed, specially sited, to give proper control to the appearance of the site.

Implementation : Through the development control process.  
 Management of sites by the Local Authority.  
 District Council land improvement and rationalisation schemes.

**RECREATION IN THE COUNTRYSIDE**

**Recreation in the Countryside**

**Policy RL10 :** Outside towns and villages, planning permission may be granted for recreation developments in the countryside provided that they fulfil the General Development Criteria, Policy GD1 and Environmental Policies ENV1 to ENV4.

**Justification :**

- 8.39 The countryside of the District provides an important resource to meet the recreational and tourist needs of residents and visitors to the District. Development within the countryside needs to be carefully controlled to protect the appearance

of the landscape, good quality agricultural land, areas of nature conservation and archaeological interest, and the general amenity of local residents. Whilst it is not always possible to identify and predict the new uses that will be pursued and come forward for consideration during the plan period, Policies ENV1-4 and RL1 are designed to provide a framework to enable the Council to consider such proposals.

8.40 Opportunities exist in the countryside for recreational activities which are consistent with the need for farm and rural economic diversification, to reclaim derelict and underused land which has been affected by past mineral extractions and to utilise underused resources, such as forests and reservoirs. Areas identified, so far, for development are set out in Proposal RL11. Such activities could include outdoor sports, water-based sports, golf courses and horse riding. It is important that large recreational land users such as golf courses complement the environmental and landscape framework of the District. Proposals which are detrimental to the landscape quality of the District will be refused. Consideration should be given to other such uses in relation to the framework provided in Policies ENV1 and 2. In the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, whilst recreation is not an objective of its designation, the demand for recreation may be met so far as is consistent with the conservation of the natural beauty of the area.

8.41 It is essential that a careful balance is struck between the need for recreation and the environment in all parts of the District. In the countryside, the need to achieve this balance is of utmost importance and where conflict occurs, the District Council will promote appropriate management measures. In accordance with Government Guidance (PPG17) sport and recreation activities in the countryside should be appropriate and in harmony with it. The Local Plan strives to achieve this aim.

Implementation : Through guidance to developers and land owners, and through the development control process.

### Opportunities for Countryside Recreation Provision

<b>Policy RL11 :</b> Opportunities exist for countryside recreation development in the following locations, as identified on the Proposals Map:	
<b>Site</b>	<b>Possible Uses</b>
Land to east of Wolsingham	Golf course
Land to south of Hunwick	Golf course
River Gaunless/West Auckland (Inset No. 1)	Water based recreation

Justification :

8.42 The sites included have potential for appropriate countryside recreational activities.

8.43 At West Auckland, an area is safeguarded for future sand and gravel extraction. Should

extraction take place, recreation activity should be considered as part of the reclamation after-use of the site subject to other considerations including agriculture. Water based recreation is defined as those activities which are compatible with the quiet enjoyment of the water facility such as sailing, boating, windsurfing, canoeing, etc. Noisy activities, such as water skiing, jet skiing and power boating will be resisted, due to their adverse effects on nearby residents or the quiet character of the countryside.

8.44 At Hunwick, land has planning permission for golf course development which, when implemented, will help to fulfil the short fall in golf course provision within the District. East of Wolsingham, the Council has been minded to grant permission for a golf course subject to a legal agreement to ensure the protection of this prominent area of countryside; if successfully developed this would provide an added facility for visitors to Weardale.

8.45 Further opportunities for countryside recreation may come forward as a result of landscape improvement in the Newfield and Witton Park Landscape Action Areas (ENV5) and as a result of reclamation schemes (ENV6). Within Witton Park LAA, there may be potential for water based recreation at Low Wadsworth Farm where sand and gravel extraction is currently taking place. The mineral permission, links the extraction to the reclamation of Etherley Tip and reclaims land back to agriculture. Further investigations are required to look into this after use.

Implementation : Through legal agreement and by private developers.

## RECREATIONAL ROUTES

### Public Rights of Way

**Policy RL12 :** Proposals which would result in the loss of public rights of way will be resisted.

### New Recreational Routes

**Proposal RL13 :** The District Council will seek to maintain existing major recreational routes, and to provide new routes, as indicated below (as shown on the Proposals Map :-

- i) Former railway, Leazes Lane, West Auckland to Etherley.
- ii) Former railway, Leazes Lane, West Auckland to Butterknowle.
- iii) Former railways, Weardale.

Justification :

8.46 Durham County Council are the relevant authority with responsibility for maintaining and protecting public rights of way. The District Council will work with the County to ensure that the rights of way network in the District is safeguarded and provides an opportunity for both residents and visitors to enjoy the countryside. The Council will encourage the maintenance and improvements of bridleways, footpaths and public rights of way to facilitate



public access to the countryside.

- 8.47 The existing network in the District provides for many opportunities for both long distance and short distance walks, including the Weardale Way and the Wear Valley Way. Durham County Council have developed many disused railways as walkways, including Bishop Auckland to Spennymoor, Bishop Auckland to Brandon, and the Waskerley Railway. Further opportunities exist on disused railways between West Auckland and Etherley, West Auckland and Butterknowle in Teesdale, West Auckland and South Church, and in Weardale. Such routes should be developed as walkways and cycleways during the plan period. Further schemes will be taken on in partnership with the West Durham Groundwork Trust and Durham County Council.
- 8.48 The Council recognises the deficiency within the District of purpose built cycleways. Where the opportunity arises and is appropriate, cycle provision will be included in the creation of new recreational routes.
- 8.49 Wherever practicable, new routes will be designed and constructed to be accessible to people with disabilities. Where possible existing networks will be adapted to help facilitate the needs of the disabled user.
- 8.50 The Council is aware that the creation of new footpath networks can have an impact upon agricultural land, especially around the urban fringe. Farmers, landowners and MAFF will be consulted when new routes in the countryside are put forward.
- 8.51 There is also a network of local footpaths which are well used by residents. The District Council will seek to identify those parts of the footpath network which need to be improved or where new links need to be created. Possibilities exist for the enhancement of footpaths in and around towns and villages such as:
- a) River Gaunless area, Bishop Auckland.
  - b) Etherley Dene, Bishop Auckland.
  - c) Bracks Wood, Bishop Auckland.
  - d) Willington Denes.
  - e) Howden-le-Wear Jubilee Park.
  - f) Crook Beck area.
- 8.52 The District Council has produced a series of walk leaflets promoting walks around Bishop Auckland, Escomb, Witton-le-Wear and Stanhope. It is anticipated that this will continue concentrating on other areas of the District in particular for Binchester, Westgate and Ireshopeburn.

Implementation : Durham County Council.  
 Wear Valley District Council.  
 West Durham Groundwork Trust.  
 Coast to Coast Recreational Route

## Coast to Coast Recreational Route

**Policy RL14 :** The Council will support and safeguard a route, as identified on the Proposals Map, for part of the coast to coast footpath/cycleway.

Justification :

- 8.53 The "sea to sea" footpath/cycleway is a long distance right of way which will cross the county from Sunderland to Whitehaven. It will create a recreational route for walkers, cyclists and in some cases horse riders, the majority of which will be off road. The section through Wear Valley will be in the North Pennines AONB and will utilise, where possible, the disused railway lines. The Council will assist in creating the route through the District by helping to choose the route and safeguarding it from inappropriate development. Areas of nature conservation interests will be protected.

Implementation : Wear Valley District Council.  
 Durham County Council.  
 Sustrans.

# Chapter 9

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES

### HEALTH

- C1 General Hospital Redevelopment
- C2 Health Centres

### EDUCATION

- C3 St Cuthberts School, Crook



### Health

- 9.1 Health care facilities in the District range from the general hospital in Bishop Auckland to local doctors. Apart from the redevelopment of the General Hospital by the Health Authority, it is not foreseen that there will be the development of any new major health facility during the Local Plan time period.
- 9.2 Care in the community will continue to require group accommodation within residential areas to help relocate patients from the existing large facilities. Although it is not possible at the present time to identify sites for all the District's health facility needs, the District Council will continue to assist the Health Authority in appropriately locating its facilities through the plan period.
- 9.3 In recent years there has been a growth in the number of residential care and nursing homes in the District. Between 1988 and 1990, 17 new homes were established of which 15 were private sector establishments. It is estimated that the demand for rest homes will continue through the plan period with a forecasted 17% increase in the over 80's in the District. It is anticipated that this demand will be provided by the private sector.

### Education

- 9.4 During the 1980's the total number of children on school rolls in the District declined by 20% (2000 children). A 6% growth in numbers of school children in the District during the Plan period is predicted. Secondary education is provided at Bishop Auckland, Wolsingham and Willington. Rationalisation has taken place at Willington Parkside Comprehensive to create a single site for the school. Future plans to rationalise Wolsingham Comprehensive may release land for development. It is estimated that there will be sufficient spare capacity in existing Primary and Secondary schools to meet the expected increase in school rolls during the Plan period with the exception of the western part of Bishop Auckland and Crook where additional educational land has been identified. The release of surplus educational land may provide opportunities for development and public recreation in the District.
- 9.5 During the Plan period the rise in population is likely to increase pressure on existing nursery school provision. Additional provision will come from the private sector and require the change of use of existing premises.

### Community Centres

- 9.6 Community centres are an important focus for all villages and neighbourhoods. The majority of the District's villages have established community centres or village halls which are well supported by the local community. There may be the need, however, to provide new, either in villages or as part of large residential developments, or replacement facilities.
- 9.7 The District Council shall assist local communities in the location and planning of future community centres where there is shown a need for such a facility.

#### 9.8 The Local Plan aims to:

- 1 Encourage the provision of community facilities to meet the major needs of the District; and**
- 2 Maintain and improve the health, community and social service provision within the District.**

### HEALTH

#### General Hospital Redevelopment

**Proposal C1 :** Land adjacent to Escomb Road (North and South), Bishop Auckland as identified on Proposals Map Inset 1, will be reserved for the redevelopment of the Bishop Auckland General Hospital.

The District Council require that adequate off-street parking be provided to meet the needs of the hospital, including whilst development takes place.

#### Justification :

- 9.9 The major task facing the South West Durham Health Authority (SWDHA) is the improvement and expansion of facilities at the Bishop Auckland General Hospital. A new hospital complex on the existing site has been approved by the Regional Health Authority. This redevelopment scheme will update existing facilities and cater for any future increase in demand. Increased provision of health facilities is intended for day patients, the handicapped, the elderly and the disabled. Final approval for the scheme by the Department of Health is still awaited. Allocation of land for the new Bishop Auckland General Hospital is necessary to ensure that the redevelopment, once formally approved, will be as speedy as possible. Land in the vicinity of Escomb Road/ Warwick Road is allocated for the redevelopment of the Bishop Auckland General Hospital and its associated car parking needs. The development will need to provide for adequate parking provision for the hospital whilst work is on-going, which will be a period of several years.
- 9.10 The SWDHA is becoming increasingly concerned to accommodate handicapped or disabled people in a normal residential environment with appropriate care at hand, and to minimise their need for formal hospital stays. The District Council will continue to support the Health Authority's search for appropriate small group homes. These should be within the residential areas where a reasonable range of services and facilities are available, including public transport and local shops. Criteria for assessing such proposals are set out in Policy H17.

Implementation : Through the local plan and development control process.

#### Health Centres

**Policy C2 :** Proposals for new Health Centres will be permitted provided they:

- i) are located in/close to a residential area; and
- ii) are accessible to public and private transport; and
- iii) are located on sites which allow level pedestrian access; and
- iv) fulfil the General Development Criteria (GD1).

#### Justification :

- 9.11 The continuing trend in the Health Service is for

care in the community. This has led to greater community facilities and a growth in the number of health centres to relieve the pressure on the existing facilities. The District Council will assist in the location of future community health centres and ensure that proposals adequately meet the needs of the local people. The above criteria will assist in the location of such proposals.

Implementation : Through the development control process.

### EDUCATION

#### St Cuthbert's School, Crook

**Proposal C3 :** Land to the rear of St Cuthbert's Mixed Junior and Infants School, Crook, as shown on Proposals Map Inset 9 will be reserved for educational purposes.

#### Justification :

- 9.12 Future school roll predictions suggest a need to increase the number of nursery school pupil places beyond its present level during the Plan period. Existing schools find it necessary to operate on a part-time basis to accommodate a maximum number of pupils. Financial restrictions means that there is unlikely to be further nursery school provision by the Education Authority. Any other agencies who may wish to establish their own pre-school playgroups or nursery school provision in or adjacent to residential areas will be considered favourably if the location is suitable for both the children and any local residents.
- 9.13 During the Plan period the projected increase in pre-school aged children will have moved into the Primary School age bracket. By that stage the County Education Authority may have found it necessary to develop the land it owns at St Cuthbert's School, Crook for primary school purposes. Access to the proposed site at Crook will be gained through the existing school site onto Church Hill.

Implementation : Through the local plan and development control process.

# Chapter 10

## TRANSPORTATION

### HIGHWAY PROPOSALS

- T1 General Policy
- T2 Environmental Impact of Roads
- T3 Traffic Calming
- T4 Land Safeguarded for Road Proposals
- T5 Road Haulage

### RAIL PROPOSALS

- T6 Land Safeguarded for Railway Purposes

### TAXIS

- T7 Taxi Ranks

### CAR PARKING

- T8 Development of Car Parks
- T9 New Parking Provision
- T10 Joint Use of Private Car Parks in Bishop Auckland
- T11 Operational and Non-operational Parking Spaces
- T12 Non-operational Parking Provision in Bishop Auckland and Crook
- T13 Parking Opportunities in the Commercial Sector, Bishop Auckland

### DISABLED ACCESS

- T14 Disabled Access

### GARAGES

- T15 Garages
- T16 Rear Servicing and Access Ways

### CYCLING

- T17 New Provision

### TELECOMMUNICATIONS

- T18 Telecommunications



- 10.1 The County Council is the Highway Authority responsible for transportation and highway proposals in the District. Together with the District Council the County Council continues to seek and plan for an effective transport system throughout the plan area. A balanced approach towards integrated transportation and planning can make vast improvements to safety and amenity whilst also contributing to the more efficient passage of people and goods. In addition, efficient communications play an important role in increasing employment opportunities, by attracting new industry to the District and helping existing industry to prosper.
- 10.2 The District Council will seek to integrate an efficient transport network with land use allocations closely linked to the public transport network to reduce the need and distance to travel and so help reduce the levels of CO2 emissions. Access to, and facilities for alternative forms of transport, such as cycling and walking will play an important part in reducing the effects of CO2 emissions, which lead to global warming through the greenhouse effect. (Central Government advice PPG12).

### Road Network

- 10.3 There are 250km of County classified roads and 272km of County unclassified roads in the District, four routes are classed within the primary road networks and are classified as lorry routes in the County Structure Plan, namely the:
- A68
  - A689 (from Bishop Auckland eastwards)
  - A690 (recently downgraded from primary route status)
  - A688
- and also included in the Structure Plan - A6072 (Tindale Crescent to Shildon).
- 10.4 The A68 is a major route linking the District to the A1 in the south and the Scottish Borders in the north. This road is a major tourist route for visitors and well used by freight transport. Approximately a tenth of all traffic on this route is from medium to heavy goods vehicles.
- 10.5 The A689 is the major east-west route in the District linking in the east with the A1(M) and A167 north/south regional route and the A19 coast road to Teesside. In the west the road serves the Weardale part of the District linking with Cumbria. The western section of the A689 is well used by tourist traffic during the summer and by freight traffic serving Eastgate Cement Works and other industry in the Dale. The central section of the road serves as a main link between Bishop Auckland and Crook and is used by commuter and freight traffic. The eastern section serves commuter and freight traffic linking with the east of the County and Teesside.
- 10.6 A690 - this road links Crook and Willington with Durham and the A167 and A1 north/south routes. The main traffic users on this route are commuters and freight traffic.
- 10.7 U3312 - this unclassified road runs from the A688 to Howden-le-Wear and is used by 2100 vehicles per day. Of this 222 (10.6%) medium and heavy

goods vehicles use this route to gain access to Bishop Auckland.

- 10.8 A688 - this south-west to north-east road runs along the southern boundary of the District linking the Bishop Auckland area with the A68 and A167 north/south routes. This route incorporates the recently completed Bishop Auckland bypass. The predominant users are commuters and freight traffic and tourists and it is the busiest route in the District. Further improvements are needed, notably the West Auckland by-pass, to take this traffic away from residential areas and local centres.

### Rail Network

- 10.9 A railway line links Bishop Auckland with Darlington and the east coast main line. The line also has stops at other settlements such as Shildon, Newton Aycliffe and Heighington. The line has recently stopped its freight and passenger service up Weardale. However investigations are underway to utilise the potential of the line for tourism, commuting, freight and waste traffic.
- 10.10 The railway line therefore has a crucial role to play in transport and can help to reduce the number of cars and particularly lorries on the already congested A689 Weardale road. Its retention is important to both the long-term economy and environment of the District, particularly Weardale.

### Freight

- 10.11 The environmental effects of certain types of vehicles using unsuitable roads in the rural areas, town centres and through villages can be particularly damaging and cause serious disturbances to local residents and others. The impact of heavy lorries on rural roads is also a particular problem. In most cases this cannot be avoided altogether because of the raw material being transported. The Council will continue to

#### 10.12 The Local Plan aims:-

- 1 To seek to locate significant new developments in a way which will reduce the demand for movement.**
- 2 To seek the safe and efficient use of the existing communications network.**
- 3 To promote improvements to the highway networks especially to resolve existing highways problems, to achieve environmental improvement in towns and villages, and to open up new land for industrial and housing development.**
- 4 To support the County Council's efforts to ensure the provision of a public transport system throughout the District.**
- 5 To provide adequate and suitable parking areas in all parts of the District.**
- 6 To encourage and initiate environmental improvements and in particular to reduce the adverse environmental impacts of traffic on shopping and residential locations, and of heavy and mineral-related traffic on the District's towns and villages.**
- 7 To encourage the use of the District's freight and passenger railway, and to increase its use for the movement of goods and to promote its potential as a tourist resource.**

press for measures to minimise the impact of such traffic by traffic management schemes, restricting access where appropriate and the imposition of relevant conditions on planning permission.

### HIGHWAY PROPOSALS

#### General Policy

**Policy T1 :** All developments which generate additional traffic will be required to fulfil Policy GD1 and :

- i) provide adequate access to the developments;
- ii) not exceed the capacity of the local road network; and
- iii) be capable of access by public transport networks.

Where the Highway Authority requires highway works to be carried out in order for the proposal to be acceptable, these requirements will be met at the developers expense, unless:

- iv) the Highway Authority has an interest in the development; and
- v) other agencies involved are willing to fund the highway works.

Justification :

10.13 In considering proposals for new development, account will be taken of existing and likely traffic conditions. New development will be located so as to make the best use of the existing transport system.

10.14 The District Council will look favourably on those developments which reduce the need to travel. Permission for new development will not normally be granted if, as a consequence, adequate travel flows cannot be maintained. If, though the provision of road or junction improvements, additional capacity can be created in the highway network to the satisfaction of the District Council and Durham County Council as Highway Authority permission may be given for development. All new developments should take into account the needs of the disabled (see Policy T14). The cost of any necessary works will be borne wholly by the developer and must be implemented in advance of the completion/occupation of the development or as a part of a planning programme agreed with the Local Planning Authority.

10.15 It is expected that use will be made of agreements under Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980 with Durham County Council as the Highways Authority in order to control works on the Highway.

Implementation : Through the development control process.

#### Environmental Impact of Roads

**Policy T2 :** The District Council, when considering improvements or changes to the transport network, will have particular regard to the environmental impact of such schemes, fulfilling Policies ENV9-11, ENV 13-15 and BE1.

Justification :

10.16 Durham County Council are the determining Authority for all road building and highway improvements in the District. The Council is

consulted on all highway schemes and in looking at highway proposals, every effort will be taken to reduce the impact of such a development on the surrounding environment, ensuring that little detrimental impact is caused to the character of the area or on local communities.

Implementation : Consultation with Durham County Council.

#### Traffic Calming

**Policy T3:** New residential developments will be required to incorporate traffic calming measures in their design and layout in order to minimise traffic speeds and secure a pleasant residential environment.

Justification:

10.17 Traffic management measures can greatly improve the quality of life in those areas which are under pressure from the increased number of motor vehicles. Roads can be adapted with the use of, for example, speed humps, lateral shifts in the carriageway and shared surfaces. These measures can improve safety for everyone, enhance the appearance of a street, create new on-street parking areas, reduce traffic speeds and discourage the non-essential use of unsuitable routes.

10.18 In existing residential areas where vehicle speeds can be shown to be a problem the highway authority will be encouraged to implement traffic calming measures.

Implementation : Through the development control process and consultation with Durham County Council.

#### Land Safeguarded for Road Proposals

**Proposal T4 :** Land will be safeguarded from development for the following routes as identified on the Proposals Map:

- i) A689 Crook Bypass;
- ii) A689 Crook Inner Relief Road;
- iii) A688 West Auckland Bypass;
- iv) A689 Shittlehopeburn - Frosterley Stage 1 Road realignment;
- v) C96 Willington/Spennymoor;
- vi) Etherley Lane to Newgate Park Link Road, Bishop Auckland;
- vii) Howden Relief Road;
- viii) Willington Relief Road; and
- ix) Wolsingham Industrial Access

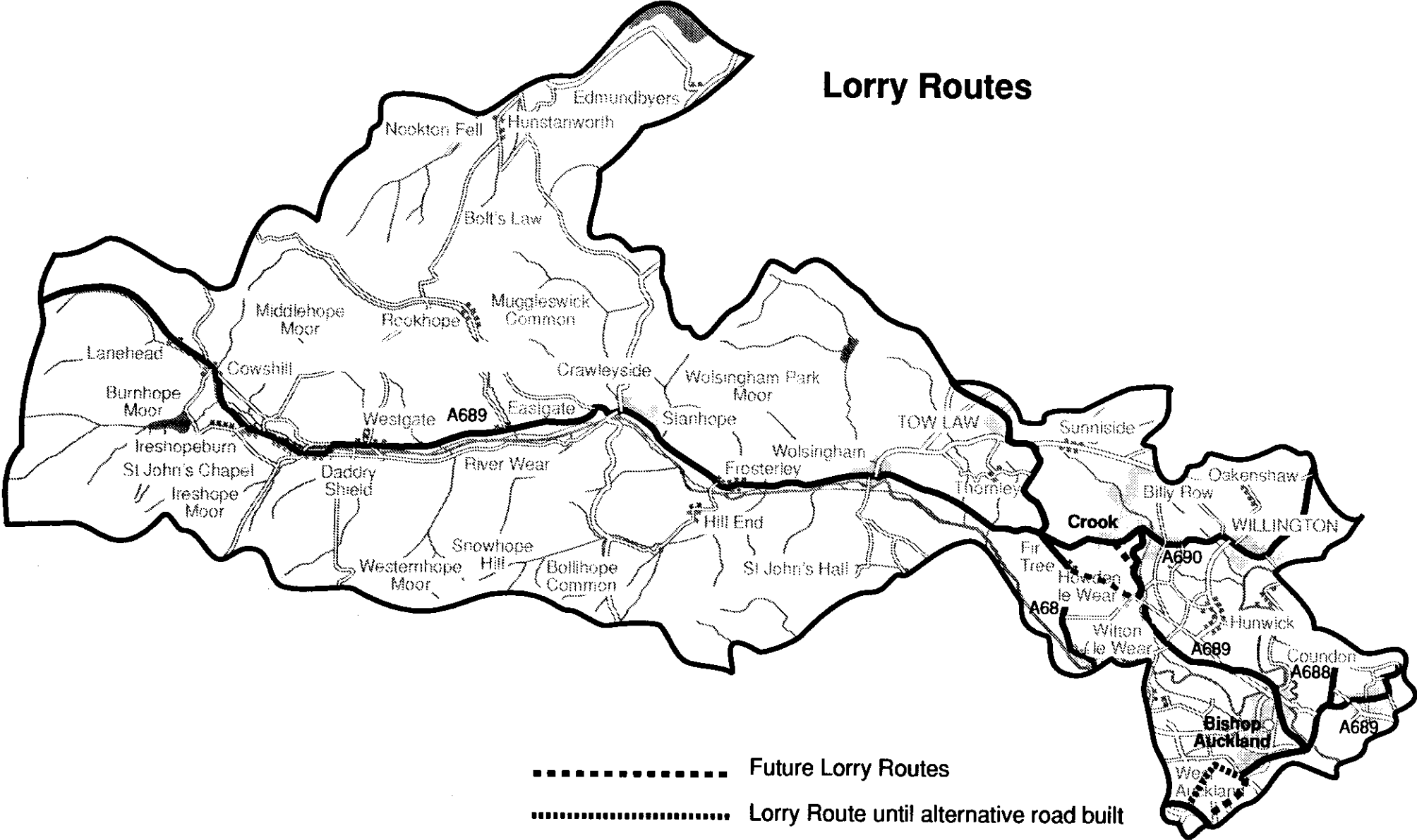
Justification :

10.19 These schemes will bring benefit to the towns of Crook, West Auckland, St. Helen Auckland, Willington and Howden le Wear by the reduction of through-traffic and of industrial traffic i.e. heavy good vehicles. They will also enable about 30 hectares of new industrial land to be made available for development:

- (i) A689 Crook bypass



# Lorry Routes



- Future Lorry Routes
- Lorry Route until alternative road built
- Defined Lorry Routes

**(ii) A689 Crook Inner Relief Road**

The construction of these roads will help reduce traffic in the town centre and along New Road, Commercial Street and Church Street resulting in an improved environment for existing properties on these roads. In addition new industrial and residential land will be opened up. The Crook Bypass is included as a future major scheme (to commence in 1997/98) in Durham County Council's Transport Policies and Programme (TPP) 1996/97. The Inner Relief Road is included in the TPP 1996/97 pool of minor highway schemes to start after 1996/97.

**(iii) A688 West Auckland Bypass**

The West Auckland bypass, which will link with the A688/A6072 Bishop Auckland/Shildon link at Dilks Street, and the A68 south of West Auckland will take traffic currently using the A688 through St. Helen Auckland and West Auckland on a line to the south of the built-up area and return to the A688 south-west of West Auckland. The actual road line has not been drawn up but to safeguard a possible line, a "corridor" has been identified which should be protected from development which could inhibit the implementation of a road line. It is included in the TPP as a major scheme to commence 1999/2000.

**(iv) A689 Shittlehopeburn - Frosterley**

The A689 is an important route through Weardale connecting County Durham with Cumbria and carries 4,500 vehicles per day of which 15% are heavy goods vehicles. Straightening this stretch of road will improve horizontal alignment and in addition overcome a potentially dangerous situation where the existing embankment has fallen away over the years taking away with it the footpath and verge. This scheme is included in the TPP minor works programme. Works are expected to commence post 1996/97.

**(v) C96 Willington/Spennymoor**

This will overcome the problems being experienced by traffic at Binchester in particular the junction onto the A688 road to Spennymoor. It is included in the TPP pool as two minor highway schemes to start after 1996/97.

**(vi) Etherley Lane to Newgate Park Link Road**

This will relieve traffic on Etherley Lane and provide a new access into the town centre of Bishop Auckland. It is included in the TPP pool of minor highway schemes to start after 1996/97.

**(vii) Howden-le-Wear Relief Road**

As a result of public consultation on the Draft District Local Plan, the route identified for the proposed relief road will utilise the line of the former railway. This will relieve traffic congestion along the High Street and improve north/south traffic flows. The Howden-le-Wear Relief Road is included in the TPP pool of minor highway schemes to start after 1996/97.

**(viii) Willington Relief Road**

This will be constructed in conjunction with the development of Low Willington Industrial Estate

and the proposed retail development on High Street. The road line will utilise the C34.2 and join up with Low Willington Industrial Estate road to the south east of the pulverite plant. The relief road will help to alleviate the problems of through traffic in Willington and provide the opportunity for environmental improvements along Commercial Street/High Street. This road will be constructed in conjunction with Low Willington Industrial Estate and the proposed retail allocation. It is included in the TPP pool of minor highway schemes to start after 1996/97.

**(ix) Wolsingham Industrial Access**

Wolsingham is the largest settlement in Weardale and is seen by the District Council and the Rural Development Commission (in the West Durham Rural Development Area Operational Plan) as a priority area in which to provide new housing and employment opportunities for the residents of the town and the whole Dale. The access road and new roundabout on the A689 are likely to be constructed during the period 1995-98. The road will serve existing and proposed housing and industrial land at the Sawmill Site and adjacent to the Steelworks.

Implementation : Durham County Council, developers, WVDC through the development control process.

**Road Haulage**

**Proposal T5 : In considering development proposals the Council will ensure that use is made of existing lorry routes to minimise the impact on the District's road network.**

Justification :

- 10.20 Significant amounts of freight traffic are causing problems of congestion, visual intrusion and a decline in the environment of areas within Wear Valley. Freight traffic is a particular issue in Weardale, Willington, Crook and the area from Tindale Crescent to A68 West Auckland, where large amounts of freight traffic cause problems of congestion, noise, visual intrusion and a decline in their environment. Freight traffic constitutes approximately 13% of all traffic, using these routes.
- 10.21 The future road proposals identified for Crook, Willington and West Auckland should help overcome problems in these areas; however, no plans exist to deal with the Weardale villages.
- 10.22 During the local plan period, attempts should be made to look at the two remaining areas and solutions found, for example, the straightening of roads, the provision of bypasses and the provision of passing spaces, and weight restrictions on roads, for example, the U3312, an unclassified road between Fir Tree and Howden le Wear which is used by 222 (10.6%) Medium and Heavy Goods Vehicles per day.
- 10.23 The map of the District on the previous page shows the lorry route network that connects the main centres of population and industry. The Council will ensure as far as possible that use of

these is made when development proposals are granted planning permission and the Council will implement this policy through Section 106 agreements and will be a pre-requisite to the granting of planning permission.

Implementation : Through legal agreement.

## RAIL PROPOSALS

### Land Safeguarded for Railway Purposes

**Proposal T6 :** Land will be safeguarded for the Bishop Auckland to Eastgate railway line, as defined on the Proposals Map. Proposals associated with the development of the railway for passenger, tourist, industrial or commercial uses will be allowed provided they fulfil the General Development Criteria, Policy GD1. The rail network, where opportunities arise, will be used to carry freight.

Justification:

10.24 It is vital to protect the railway line in order to prevent other development which may prejudice the future use of this line. The railway can provide an effective public transport facility which will reduce dependence on the car to reach sensitive rural areas and contribute to the removal of vehicles, particularly lorries, from the A689. Tourist use of the line may include the running of steam engines. Development associated with the railway may include road/rail freight transfer facilities, for example at Parsons Byers near Stanhope, which will be identified in Durham County Council's Waste Disposal Local Plan, the provision of new halts and maintenance and storage facilities for the railway.

10.25 To encourage the utilisation of the railway for the transport of freight, the council will negotiate with developers through the use of Section 106 Agreement.

Implementation : Development control process and the use of legal agreements.

## TAXIS

### Taxi Ranks

**Policy T7:** The Council will approve the siting of taxi ranks where appropriate provided that such a proposals would:

- i) not cause highway problems and traffic congestion; and
- ii) be safely and easily accessed by pedestrians; and
- iii) not be detrimental to the character and environment of the surrounding area.

Justification :

10.26 There is a need to ensure that where there is a need for taxi ranks that suitable locations are found. Care is required when choosing sites to ensure that the taxi rank would not lead to an unacceptable increase in traffic and congestion to

the area and that the character of the area is not adversely affected by the proposal.

Implementation : Through the development control process.

## CAR PARKING

### Development of Car Parks

Justification :

10.27 In the interests of safety, convenience and

**Proposal T8 :** Developments which would reduce the capacity of existing car parks will only be allowed if alternative provision can be made. The District Council will seek to maintain the availability of existing car parks and achieve physical improvements to the parking surfaces of existing parking facilities when resources allow.

economic viability of the District, existing areas of car parking are needed to ensure that adequate provision is retained for the parking of cars in locations conveniently placed for the main centres of commercial and leisure activity. The District Council will review car parks in respect of their access arrangements, the need for environmental improvement and sympathetic design of facilities, particularly where such sites are in prominent locations. Work will be carried out where resources permit.

10.28 This proposal does not fully take account of the national planning guidance contained in PPG13 - Transport which aims to reduce the need to travel, especially by car by, amongst other things, limiting parking provision for developments and other on or off street parking provision to discourage reliance on the car for work and other journeys where there are effective alternatives. Proposal T9 is therefore provisional pending the preparation of new Countywide parking standards by the Highway Authority. It is intended that these new standards will be used to inform a review of the Local Plan at the earliest opportunity.

Implementation : Development control process and Wear Valley District Council as landowner.

### New Parking Provision

**Proposal T9:** The following sites, as identified on the Proposals Map, are allocated for car/coach parks:-

	Inset No.
i) Rudds Yard, Bishop Auckland, car park	1
ii) Wearhead, visitor car park and picnic area	32
iii) Cowshill, visitor car park and picnic area	31
iv) Westgate, visitor car park and picnic area	30

Justification :

10.29 With the projected increase in car ownership

levels, surveys reveal that sufficient car parking capacity exists in the majority of the main centres of the District. In Bishop Auckland there are about 1950 available car parking spaces but there will not be sufficient to meet demand throughout the plan period. Current capacity exceeds usage by 650 on non-market days but on market days usage exceeds capacity by almost 200.

- 10.30 This situation will be exacerbated in the popular parking areas by the loss of informal off-street parking spaces due to the re-development of vacant sites for example at Fore Bondgate, Kings Lodge, The Elms and along Kingsway. Proposals to restrict access and thus on-street parking in parts of the town centre will result in a greater demand for off-street car parking spaces including from disabled drivers. There are currently 26 off-street spaces for disabled drivers (Orange Badge Holders) and at peak times there can be over double that number of disabled drivers in the town centre. In Crook 520 car parking spaces are available and sufficient space exists.
- 10.31 It is important to look at ways to reduce demand for private car usage and encourage alternative forms of transport but the lack of off-street car parking in towns, villages and residential areas particularly in Weardale has led to problems of congestion and danger to pedestrians caused by on-street parking which also detracts from the attractive environments of these areas.
- 10.32 In these locations, the District Council will endeavour to achieve additional parking provision. Although few opportunities are available, the Council has been successful in providing car parks at Frosterley and St. John's Chapel to overcome these problems and further car parks are planned for other Dale villages. The plan identifies visitor car parks at Wearhead, Westgate, Cowshill and Stanhope and additional car parks at Rudd's Yard and to the Rear of the DLI Club, Bishop Auckland.
- 10.33 Attempts will be made in new developments or redevelopment to provide additional spaces or redesign existing car parks to make more efficient use of space. Where resources permit, the Council will purchase land for car parking in popular areas would provide extra car parking and allow local shops and services to benefit from a higher turnover rate of visitors.

Implementation : Wear Valley District Council.

### Short term parking in Bishop Auckland

- 10.34 The town centre's car parks are not currently subject to short-stay restrictions. Whilst the existing car parking capacity would appear to meet peak market day demand for the next few years there are two major reasons why short stay restrictions may have to be considered in some of the town's car parks, during the Plan period:-
1. Current capacity figures include the 370 new spaces provided at Morrisons on the Goods Yard site. These car parking spaces are used by shoppers for the whole of the town centre and not just by the superstore customers. This car park is unlikely to serve the needs of short stay shoppers wishing to

shop only the northern part of the town, but would be more appropriate for long stay purposes to serve the whole of the town centre. However, it should be noted that Morrisons car park is privately owned and it cannot be assumed that Morrisons would continue to make the car park publicly available.

2. Within the public car parks at the northern end of the town centre, there is an element of long stay commuter parking which take up valuable spaces required by shoppers. Restrictions on parking to short stay periods only would discourage non-shopping parking.
- 10.35 The District Council would like the Newgate Centre, North Bondgate and Kingsway car parks to be given priority to short stay parking (under 2 hours) and will investigate how this could best be achieved. This would promote a higher turnover of public parking in the northern part of Newgate Street, discourage commuter parking, and encourage long stay car parking on the former Goods Yard site. This may have benefits in encouraging pedestrian flows from the southern part of Newgate Street, northwards.

### Joint Use of Private Car Parks in Bishop Auckland

**Policy T10 :** During the Local Plan period the District Council will seek joint use schemes by agreement to provide public use of private car parks within Bishop Auckland Town Centre (Proposals Map Inset No. 1A).

Justification :

- 10.36 Within Bishop Auckland Town Centre, there are 626 private spaces which comprise small yards within the curtilage of business premises. In addition to these, under-utilised rear yards exist where car parking is currently carried out on an ad-hoc basis. The District Council will encourage the development of public off-street parking facilities by agreement and joint management of private facilities. These measures would improve the parking requirements and improve the appearance of derelict areas within the Town Centre.
- 10.37 There will be occasions where the public use of private car parks may cause security or other problems. This may be particularly where the business or operation undertaken does not attract members of the public as customers. In such circumstances the public use of such car parks would not be required.

Implementation : Through agreement with owners and joint management schemes.

## Operational and Non-operational Parking Spaces

**Policy T11 :** Operational parking space will be required within the curtilage of all new development. Outside the town centres of Bishop Auckland and Crook as identified on Proposals Map Inset Nos. 1A and 9, non-operational parking space will also be required within the curtilage of all new development. (Operational and non-operational parking is defined in Further Plan Guidance Note 2)

## Non-operational Parking Provision in Bishop Auckland and Crook

**Policy T12 :** In the central areas of Bishop Auckland and Crook as identified on the Proposals Map, the provision of non-operational parking spaces will not be required unless:

- i) sufficient space is available within the curtilage for the provision of both operational and non-operational parking space; and
- ii) existing traffic and parking congestion and conflict in the locality dictate that further problems should be avoided where it is possible to incorporate non-operational parking within the curtilage.

Where planning permission is sought within the town centres for developments which attract members of the public as customers, legal agreements will be expected to safeguard the public use of non-operational car parking or such developments will be expected to make a contribution towards public car parking provision (see Further Plan Guidance Note 2).

### Justification :

10.38 The District Council will normally require operational car parking to be provided in all development proposals. The aim is to reduce unnecessary conflict between pedestrians and delivery vehicles, and to seek an improvement in appearance through regular use of rear yards. In some circumstances the provision of operational parking within the curtilage of the development will not be possible, particularly in the Town Centres. The District Council would rather see the use of a redundant building than see it remain empty due to there being inadequate operational parking space within the curtilage. However, the County Engineer cannot guarantee that servicing will always be allowed from the highway.

10.39 Outside town centres, non-operational car parking will normally be required. Within town centres it will not normally be required. When non-operational parking is provided, it should be made publically available. Otherwise developers will be required to make a commuted payment towards public car-parking provision.

Implementation : Through the development control process and the use of legal agreements.

## Parking Opportunities in the Commercial Sector, Bishop Auckland

**Policy T13 :** During the Plan period the District Council will investigate the opportunities to provide car parks within and in the vicinity of the Commercial Sector of Bishop Auckland (refer to Policy I10), as identified on the Proposals Map, to cater for long stay parking needs for residents and employees use. The best means of providing this facility will be investigated by way of negotiations with local property owners and residents.

### Justification :

10.40 Development proposals outside Bishop Auckland Town Centre will normally require operational and non-operational parking to be provided within the curtilage of any new development to reduce the need for on-street parking which may be detrimental to highway safety or residential or other amenity.

10.41 Outside the Town Centre there are two localities where traffic congestion is acute causing conflict between commercial, industrial and residents vehicles. The two areas of concern are:-

#### 1. Peel Street/Chester Street/Railway Street/Union Street

This area is identified as the Commercial Sector on the Proposals Map. It mostly contains industrial workshops, wholesale warehouses, associated office space and a small number of residential units. Not all premises incorporate appropriate space for operational and non-operational parking needs. In these cases roads are used for loading/unloading purposes and residents parking, limiting available space for visitors and employees vehicles.

#### 2. Blakett Street/South View/rear Newgate Street

Here a mixture of commercial and workshop units are located in close proximity to housing. Again, the lack of operational and non-operational parking space within the curtilage of the various properties, combined with narrow access and exit into the area generate vehicular conflict and lack of amenity for all concerned.

10.42 The District Council's attitude to development in these areas is twofold:

- a) that the mixed use nature of the area is unlikely to change during the Plan period; and
- b) opportunities will be sought to improve the vehicular conflict and parking problems in the area during the Plan period. This would involve provision of long stay off-street parking and possible management of traffic movement.

10.43 The problem of parking space is better assessed in terms of long stay and short stay requirements. Where possible, the provision of off-street parking space for long stay vehicles (residents and employees) will be made to vacate on-street parking space for short stay (loading/unloading, visitors' cars and emergency vehicles).

10.44 Investigations into the use of vacant sites and buildings in the area as a long stay car park will be carried out as opportunities arise during the Plan period. The District Council will normally require operational and non-operational parking needs to be met within the curtilage of all new development in these areas.

Implementation : By negotiation with landowners and developers.

## DISABLED ACCESS

### Disabled Access

**Policy T14 :** All development proposals will be required to provide reasonable provision for disabled people to gain access to and to use the premises. Car parking for disabled people will be provided in accordance with Parking Standards in F.P.G.2.

Justification :

10.45 Disability covers a wide range of conditions which hinder ease of movement. The built environment very often makes no allowances for access for the disabled and it is important in developments that the needs of disabled people are adequately assessed. In most cases, some level of disabled access should be attainable.

10.46 The design and layout of new developments particularly where public access is expected should always include suitable access for disabled people. Wherever practicable, alterations or changes of use should also incorporate improved access for disabled people.

10.47 Whenever practicable, new recreational routes will be designed and constructed to be accessible to people with disabilities. Wherever possible existing networks will be adapted to help facilitate the needs of the disabled user (see Policy RL13).

10.48 Many disabled people are particularly dependent on motor transport though they will often find its use difficult. With both public and private transport, ease of use is vital. Traffic management schemes where appropriate should include reserved parking for orange badge holders. Pedestrian areas should avoid reliance on steps and instead make use of dropped kerbs, particularly at crossing points. Changes in surfacing can warn those with impaired vision of possible hazard. Public transport facilities should provide clear information signs. Pick up points for taxis and buses should be close to town centres bearing in mind the mobility ranges of disabled people.

Implementation : Wear Valley District Council.

## GARAGES

### Garages

**Policy T15 :** Proposals for private garages will be approved where:

- i) on new developments garages are located 6 metres from the rear of the highway; or
- ii) on rear access ways and back lanes garages are located at least 2 metres from the rear of the highway; and
- iii) they fulfil other policies of the Local Plan.

Justification :

10.49 In new developments locating garages 6 metres back from the highway will provide sufficient space to allow off-street parking in front of the garage. For garages to rear access ways and backlanes, a distance of two metres allows for sufficient manoeuvring space and ensures opening garages do not overhang the highway.

Implementation : Through the development control process.

### Rear Servicing and Access Ways

**Policy T16 :** The District Council where appropriate will seek to provide improvements to rear service and/or access facilities for commercial properties within the shopping areas.

Justification :

10.50 The provision of appropriate service facilities to all commercial properties reduces vehicular and pedestrian conflict and provides an opportunity to lessen vehicular congestion within shopping areas. Where rear access cannot be achieved, the Council will look to other traffic measures, such as the provision of lorry bays and the introduction of waiting restrictions.

Implementation : Wear Valley District Council.

## CYCLING

### New Provision

**Policy T17 :** The District Council in conjunction with Durham County Council will encourage cycling in the District, the provision of safe cycle routes and will ensure that the needs of the cyclists are taken into account when proposals for traffic management, road improvements and new developments are considered. In addition provision for the convenient and safe parking of cycles will be required from developers where appropriate through the use of planning conditions.

Justification :

10.51 Cycling has a number of benefits and should be encouraged. It is an environmentally sustainable form of transport which will help reduce

congestion. It is energy efficient and unlike motor traffic does not emit carbon dioxide or carbon monoxide. It is also a good form of exercise, of benefit to personal health and it can also be an enjoyable leisure activity. Where possible, cycle routes should be developed, linking residential areas with places of work, services and leisure areas. Less than one percent of the population of the District cycle to work. This could be due to the hilly character of the District, the dispersed nature of the population and the levels of traffic along some of the major roads. More routes need to be developed to provide safe alternatives to these roads. The Bishop Auckland and Willington areas are potentially the best locations for extending cycle routes. A route for the "sea to sea" footpath/cycleway is also being safeguarded (RL14). Further investigation will be undertaken, in conjunction with the County Council, to assess the potential of the District for cycling and to identify new cycling routes.

10.52 To avoid the ad hoc parking of cycles, the District Council, in appropriate locations, will provide purpose built bays or parks in main cycle destination areas. In addition developers will also be required to provide safe and convenient access to new developments and cycle parking, particularly at public facilities. Cycle racks should provide secure parking without causing damage to the bicycle. For retail, office or public buildings it is suggested that 1 cycle rack be provided per 500m<sup>2</sup> or part thereof. For education establishments, one rack should be provided per 8 students.

Implementation : Wear Valley District Council, Durham County Council, developers.

## TELECOMMUNICATIONS

### Telecommunications

**Policy T18 :** The Council, in considering applications for large telecommunication developments, will take into account the following factors:

- i) the specific needs and locational requirements of the development; and
- ii) the dual use of existing installations, where operationally possible; and
- iii) the availability of alternative sites; and
- iv) associated developments including access roads and ancillary buildings.

The Council will resist applications unless supported by evidence of special justification which would:

- v) detract from the character and quality of the AONB; or
- vi) adversely affect areas of ecological and geological interest; or
- vii) have a detrimental impact on, or on the setting of Conservation Areas or listed buildings.

Justification :

10.53 Large telecommunication developments can have a significant visual impact on the landscape. Due to operational requirements such developments require elevated hill top locations. The Council, when faced with an application, will attempt to ensure that prominent and intrusive locations are resisted especially within the AONB. The use of existing telecommunication installations will be encouraged and the availability of alternative sites should be considered. The Council will seek to ensure the landscape character and quality of the AONB is not compromised by the inappropriate location of new installations. The Council will encourage early consultation with the telecommunications operators to enable the requirements of telecommunications networks and routing and phasing of network development to be taken into account.

Implementation : Through the development control process.

# Chapter 11

## MINERALS, WASTE AND ENERGY

### MINERALS

MW1 Safeguarding of Mineral Reserves

### WASTE

MW2 Development on Landfill Sites

### ENERGY

MW3 Renewable Energy

MW4 Renewable Energy Allocation

MW5 Methane Gas

### CONTAMINATED LAND

MW6 Development on Contaminated Land

### WATER TREATMENT AND SEWAGE WORKS

MW7 Water Treatment and Sewage Works





11.1 Durham County Council is both the mineral and waste disposal authority and is responsible for the preparation of the Minerals and Waste Local Plans and for considering applications to extract or process minerals and to dispose of waste. The District Council is consulted on all planning applications for these matters. This Local Plan sets out in F.P.G.6 criteria which the Council will use when consulted on such planning applications. This chapter considers development on minerals and landfill sites as well as the concept of renewable energy and how it may affect the District.

### Minerals

11.2 Wear Valley District has historically been an important source of minerals and all parts of the District have been affected by mineral activity. This activity continues in the west of the District with limestone and shale supplying the needs of the cement industry. The geology of the District shows a transition in outcrop from the carboniferous limestones and sandstones in the west to the coal measures of the east, all of which yield valuable mineral resources. In the west limestone, sandstone, moulding sand and ganister have been quarried while vein minerals including lead and latterly fluorspar have been mined. In the east the coal measures have been exploited by both deep mining and now opencasting. In addition the River Wear Valley yields a source of sand and gravel.

11.3 The eastern part of the District lies on the exposed Durham Coalfield, which has seen a great amount of opencast coal activity in recent years, and in some locations the landscape has changed significantly with opencast working. The District has accounted for approximately 23% of the annual total County Durham out-put since the 1970's.

11.4 Pressure for further opencasting will continue throughout the plan period. The Durham County Structure Plan seeks to minimise the impact of opencast coal extraction through the designation of opencast no-go areas. The Council will support the County Council in the extension of the Helme and Harperley no-go areas to include undisturbed areas of agricultural land which contain attractive and historic field patterns. The destruction of mature hedgerows, field boundaries and small copses would not only remove an attractive traditional farmed landscape but also remove a rich, established wildlife habitat.

### Waste Disposal

11.5 There are at present two domestic waste disposal sites in the District, at Brown's Houses near Frosterley and at Scoby Scaur near Willington. These deal with the waste originating from Weardale, and Crook and Willington respectively. The waste originating in the Bishop Auckland area is also currently transported to Scoby Scaur. These disposal sites do not have an indefinite life and other options will be considered in Durham County Council's forthcoming Waste Local Plan. Options might include transfer stations, more distant landfill sites or incineration.

11.6 Durham County Council in the Waste Disposal Plan adopted in 1984 identifies the quarries of Weardale as potential areas for future waste disposal (see Appendix 5), to be used after the more accessible quarries in central Durham have been exhausted. The District Council have always maintained that should such a use be proposed it should only be implemented by the use of the Weardale railway to transport the waste in bulk, to avoid any increase in heavy lorry traffic on the A689.

11.7 Former waste disposal sites are abundant in the District. Recent concern has been expressed about the possible emission of methane gas from such sites. The County Council have an extensive programme of monitoring landfill gas generation which includes the introduction of gas control systems. The presence of such sites and the problems now occurring with gas emission is a matter which needs to be considered in proposing new land uses in the District.

### Minerals and Waste Strategy

11.8 The strategy for minerals laid down in the Durham County Structure Plan is to ensure that the essential need for minerals should be met, provided that the scale of working does not lead to an overall increase in the adverse effect of mineral working on the environment of the County.

11.9 Central Government requires the County Council, being the minerals authority, to prepare a minerals local plan for the County, carrying forward policies relating to the winning and working of minerals. The Magnesian Limestone Escarpment Local Plan, adopted 1987, which covers the eastern edge of the District is the current minerals plan for part of the District. The County Council is committed to preparing a Minerals Local Plan following the publication of the draft review of the Durham County Structure Plan.

11.10 Planning Policies for Waste Disposal for the District are contained in the Durham County Waste Disposal Plan. The strategy for the plan is to adequately meet the waste disposal requirements of the County whilst being economical and environmentally acceptable. This plan is currently under review.

### Energy

11.11 "This Common Inheritance", the Government's Environmental Strategy advocates the development of a wide range of renewable energy sources. Sources such as wind and water produce no emissions and consequently in the long run will reduce our emissions of environmentally harmful gases, for example CO<sub>2</sub>, sulphur dioxide and oxides of nitrogen. In addition the use of methane from landfill sites has more immediate potential and could be utilised to meet our energy needs at a local level.

11.12 In the past, the Rookhope area of Weardale has been subject to investigation as a source of wind power and energy from hot rocks. More recently a countryside study by the Department of Trade and Industry and Durham County Council has identified areas with potential for the wind

generation of electricity. The Local Plan, therefore presents a framework within which such developments could be considered should they come forward in the future.

### MINERALS

#### Safeguarding of Mineral Reserves

**Policy MW1 :** Areas of identified mineral resources of economic importance as shown on the Proposals Map will be safeguarded from development. Permission will only be given to non-mineral uses, where significant sterilisation of resources would not occur in these areas.

#### Justification:

11.13 Minerals are located in specific areas and therefore require safeguarding from non-related development which could sterilize the mineral deposit. Within the District, the Consultation Draft County Durham Minerals Local Plan identifies a number of Mineral Consultation Areas where deposits of valuable materials should be safeguarded. These include land for limestone/dolomite in Weardale, sand and gravel near Binchester, Bishop Auckland, Witton le Wear and Wolsingham and brickclay/shale near Newfield.

11.14 These areas are intended solely as a means of protecting finite resources to meet long term needs and do not give any indication that mineral working will be acceptable. They do not necessarily stop other, minor non-mineral developments if for example they are within an established built up area or there are no other suitable locations.

Implementation : Through the development control process.  
Consultation with Durham County Council.

### WASTE

#### Development on Landfill Sites

**Policy MW2 :** Development will only be permitted on former landfill sites as identified on the Proposals Map provided that investigations have shown that development may proceed without risk to public health because of mitigating measures. Developers will be required to bear the costs of the investigation and any mitigating works required. Proposals will be required to conform to other policies of the Local Plan.

#### Justification:

11.15 There are a number of former landfill sites which have been identified throughout the district which may provide opportunities for development. In such cases the Council will have to be satisfied that a full investigation has been carried out to assess the problems of the release of landfill gases, possible contamination of surface water and groundwater, and land stability of the site. This investigation should include evidence that the site has been monitored over a period of time by the applicant to assess the release of gases, possible contamination of surface water and groundwater, and the stability of land. The views

of the Environment Agency will be sought in such cases.

Implementation : Through advice to development and the development control process.

### ENERGY

#### Renewable Energy

**Policy MW3 :** Proposals for the generation of electricity using renewable resources and their associated developments will be allowed provided that they fulfil the General Development Criteria, Policy GD1 and Protection of Historic Heritage, Policy BE1 and in addition that:

- i) applications include details of associated developments for example, access roads, electricity transmission lines and installations, visitor or interpretation facilities and other ancillary buildings; and
- ii) proposals include a satisfactory scheme to restore the site to its original condition once operations have ceased.

Renewable energy developments which adversely affect the scenic quality of the AONB will not be permitted.

Permissions will be subject to legal agreement to guarantee the mitigation of any adverse impacts and the restoration of the site.

#### Renewable Energy Allocation

**Policy MW4 :** Proposals for the development of wind turbines will be allowed on land identified on the Proposals Map, provided that they fulfil the following criteria:

- i) they do not adversely affect the amenity, health and safety of neighbouring properties and residents by reason of noise, vibration, visual dominance, shadow flicker or reflected light; and
- ii) no electromagnetic interference is likely to be caused to existing transmitting or receiving systems and that measures will be taken to remedy or mitigate any such interference.

Proposals for the erection of wind turbines which adversely affect the scenic quality of the AONB will not be permitted.

Sites with planning permission for turbines or operational turbines will be safeguarded from development which would prejudice the generation of electricity.

#### Justification

11.16 Renewable energy covers those resources which occur and recur naturally in the environment including wind, solar, landfill gas, biofuels and hydropower. Such resources include heat from the earth or the sun, power from the wind and from water, energy from plant material and from the recycling of domestic, industrial or agricultural waste.

11.17 The encouragement of alternative sources of renewable energy is fundamental in order to help in increasing the diversity and security of energy

supplies and building a suitable lifestyle for future generations. PPG22 also notes the need for energy conservation and the reduction of harmful emissions to the atmosphere.

11.18 Renewable energy sources such as wind turbines have an important role to play in achieving these aims. Electricity generation using wind turbines involves no release of carbon dioxide, nor of acid rain or radioactive pollutants. They can however be visually intrusive and have a significant impact on landscape and nature conservation interests. Wind turbines can also have a significant impact on residential property by virtue of noise, shadow flicker etc. The distance between wind turbines and occupied buildings will be established on the basis of expected noise levels from the turbines and existing background noise, and as indicated in PPG22 should be no less than 350-400 metres although lesser distances may be acceptable depending on the turbines used and the specific conditions at the site. Applications for the development of renewable energy will be expected to include details of associated developments, for example access roads, electricity transmission lines and installations, visitor or interpretation facilities and other ancillary buildings. Many renewable energy projects are at an early stage of development. It is important that if such projects fail or cease operation the infrastructure is removed and the site restored. It will be expected that this will occur once a facility has ceased producing electricity for 6 months.

11.19 PPG22 suggest that local plans should identify broad locations suitable for renewable energy installations. In identifying land north of Crook and Willington on the proposals map, the Council has looked at various factors including wind speeds, grid connections and impact on the surrounding landscape. In line with other plan policies, there will be a strong presumption against these developments in designated areas, particularly the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Implementation : Through the development control process.

## Methane Gas

**Policy MW5 :** The District Council will encourage the use of methane produced from landfill sites in ways which are of public benefit and seek to reduce pollution and energy consumption, providing schemes are in accordance with General Development Policy (Policy GD1).

Justification :

11.20 Methane production from landfill sites is both a pollutant and a loss of a potential valuable energy resource. Encouragement should therefore be given to ways of using such gases to public benefit, as long as such schemes meet the other development criteria in the Local Plan.

Implementation : Through the development control process.

## CONTAMINATED LAND

### Development on Contaminated Land

**Policy MW6:** In considering proposals for the use or development of land known to be contaminated, the District Council will expect from developers a full site investigation and the carrying out of all necessary remedial work prior to development.

Justification:

11.21 Government Circular 21/87 gives guidance on the Development of Contaminated Land. It recommends that Local Plans bring forward policies for the reclamation and use of contaminated land. Policy ENV6 puts forward a detailed programme of land reclamation, however, all land subject to contamination in the District has not been identified. Proposals on land known to be contaminated should be subject to detailed investigation by the developers and should development be acceptable (in relation to other policies of the Local Plan) all necessary remedial work should be undertaken prior to development. The views of the Environment Agency will be sought in such cases.

Implementation : Through the development control process.

## WATER TREATMENT AND SEWAGE WORKS

### Water Treatment and Sewage Works

**Policy MW7 :** The District Council will permit development which will enable water and sewage undertakers to meet their statutory obligations provided the development does not have a detrimental impact on the landscape quality of the area and sites of nature conservation importance.

All new treatment works will require comprehensive landscape and boundary treatment to help mitigate the visual impact of the development.

Justification:

11.22 Providing clean water and dealing with sewage is an important requirement in the District. The statutory obligations and compliance with the relevant environmental standards and EC legislation, (Urban Waste Water Directive (91/27/EEC) and Drinking Water Directive (80/778/EEC)) will require the water and sewage undertakers to extend existing and develop new sites for such treatment. The views of the Environment Agency will be sought in such cases. Permission will normally be granted for such development provided that it does not effect areas of nature conservation importance. Sites of international significance such as Ramsar Sites or Special Protections Areas (for Birds) will normally outweigh the need for treatment works (Circular 17/91).

11.23 For sites which are particularly sensitive in terms

of nature conservation and landscape, the Council may require an Environmental Statement to be submitted with a planning application. All new treatment works will require comprehensive landscape and boundary treatment to help mitigate the visual impact of the development.

Implementation : Through the development control process.

# Part 3

## Settlement Studies

## SETTLEMENT STUDIES

The Districtwide Local Plan is written in three parts. Part 1 and 2 deals with the Strategy of the Plan and contains all the proposals and policies which refer to the whole District. Part 3 identifies how these policies effect the individual towns and villages of the District. It gives additional background on the identified settlements, briefly describing local plan strategy, development constraints and opportunities of the town and villages.

Part 3 only contains those settlements which require a defined limit to development and/or have specific land use proposals identified in the policies and proposals. Those villages which are not included within Part 3 are classed as being in open countryside.

The District has been divided into three sub-areas Bishop Auckland, Crook/Willington and Weardale. A brief description of each sub-area is included comprising of information on context, population, employment and Local Plan strategy.

Part 3 of the Local Plan should be read in conjunction with Parts 1 and 2 of the Plan.

Each settlement statement is accompanied by an Inset Map on an Ordnance Survey base which depicts the planning policies and proposals applicable to that settlement.

### Content

INSET NO.	TOWN/VILLAGE
<b>Bishop Auckland Sub-Area</b>	
1	Bishop Auckland (including West Auckland, St. Helen Auckland and South Church)
2	Coundon/Leeholme
3	Dene Valley - Eldon Lane, Coronation, Coundon Grange, Close House, Auckland Park and Gurney Valley
4	Escomb
5	Witton Park/Woodside
6	Binchester
7	Toronto
8	Newfield
<b>Crook and Willington Sub-Area</b>	
9	Crook
10	Willington (including Sunnybrow)
11	Howden-le-Wear
12	Fir Tree
13	Hunwick/Lane Ends
14	North Bitchburn
15	Stanley/ Mount Pleasant/ Billy Row
16	Sunniside
17	Roddy Moor
18	Witton-le-Wear
19	Oakenshaw
20	Helmington Row
<b>Weardale and Tow Law Sub-Area</b>	
21	Stanhope
22	Tow Law
23	Wolsingham
24	Frosterley
25	St. John's Chapel
26	Ireshopeburn
27	Edmundbyers
28	Eastgate
29	Rookhope
30	Westgate
31	Cowshill
32	Wearhead

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## BISHOP AUCKLAND SUB AREA

The sub-area is dominated by Bishop Auckland which is the principal town in the District and contains over one third of the District's population. It is an important focal point for the surrounding area containing a range of services and facilities to cater for the needs of such a large catchment area. Bishop Auckland is identified at a strategic level as a major centre within the District and an important strategic town within County Durham. The area provides the major housing and major industrial area for the District. The majority of industrial land is to the south of the town in Tindale Crescent and St. Helens Auckland. The sub-area also contains Coundon/Leeholme which is identified as an area to accommodate further growth in the District. The rest of the sub-area is rural in nature with villages, such as Witton Park, Newfield, Auckland Park and Coundon Grange, being formed to facilitate the mining industry through the nineteenth century. These former mining villages have experienced housing clearance programme and land reclamation schemes in the past. The past mining industry is an important element in the formation and character of this area of the District.

To the north of the Bishop Auckland town is Auckland Castle and Park, the Castle is the residence of the Bishop of Durham and is a Grade 1 listed building. The Park forms part of the Area of Landscape Value and contributes to the attractive landscape setting of the River Wear to the north.

### Population

The total population of the sub-area is 31414 (Census 1991), however, since 1951 the total has fallen by almost 4500, a change of 14%. Much of this decline occurred prior to 1981, since then overall decline has slowed down to 3.3%.

During this period, since 1981, there has been variations in decline within the sub-area. Bishop Auckland has experienced little change in population from 22581 to 22513, a fall of 68. In the same period Coundon's population dropped from 5196 to 4636, a fall of 560 (11%) and the Dene Valley experienced a significant decline in population, 3615 to 2132, a drop of 1483 (40%). The Witton Park/Escomb area had a gain in population since 1981, rising from 2092 in 1981 to 2226 in 1991, a rise of 134 (6%).

### Employment Rates

In the period between 1986-1990 the number of people unemployed in the sub-area dropped from 3027 in 1986 to 1393 in 1990, a reduction of 54%. Since 1990 this rate has increased and stands at 1800 (Dec 1992) still remaining 40% below the 1986 total. The most significant drop in unemployment since 1986 has been in the Woodhouse Close Ward, where the number of unemployed has dropped from 740 in 1986 to 406 in 1992, a reduction of 45%.

The 1992 employment survey showed that of the 4000 jobs recorded on industrial sites in the area, over 50% were taken by local people.

### Strategy

The Local Plan strategy for the Bishop Auckland sub-area is to maintain Bishop Auckland Town as the major centre for the District and retain its importance at a county level, in terms of housing, employment and commercial development. This will be achieved by the allocation of 18.7 hectares of residential land and 57.4 hectares of industrial land. The construction of the West Auckland Bypass will open up development opportunities for additional industry. The by-pass has been programmed for 1999/2000.

Coundon/Leeholme is identified as an area suitable for significant growth and will facilitate the development of housing, commercial and industrial allocations. Coundon/Leeholme is ideally suited for growth, having good access to the A689 and the A1 and the opportunity to accommodate additional growth. This will be achieved by the development of 10.8 hectares of residential land and 9.3 hectares of industrial/commercial land. The growth of Coundon/Leeholme will incorporate the provision of additional recreational and retail facilities.

The Plan strategy identifies the need to help stimulate investment in the former colliery villages and to help improve the surrounding environment. To achieve this the Plan has allocated 5.6 hectares for residential land and 1.2 hectares for industrial land in the Dene Valley and 4.3 hectares of residential land and 1.1 hectares of industrial land at Witton Park. Reclamation schemes, environmental improvements and the creation of community woodland will assist in the creation of attractive and improved landscape quality for these former mining communities.



## INSET 1 - Bishop Auckland

### Character

Bishop Auckland is located in the south east of the District. From its Roman and Medieval origins it has become established as the major residential, commercial and employment centre for West Durham. It has been the residence of the Bishops of Durham since the twelfth century which has allowed the town to grow in importance, first as a market town and then as an industrial centre.

The town has developed from the market place and Auckland Castle south along Newgate Street as a continuous built-up area to West Auckland. The linear form of Bishop Auckland has been caused by growth of the town around its original Roman Road alignment along Newgate Street. The oldest part of the town is around the market place and the northern part of Newgate Street containing a wide range of architecturally important buildings. A conservation area covers this part of the town. New housing development has developed to the west of the town, south of the railway. Housing estates have been developed in St. Helen Auckland and West Auckland.

West Auckland was originally a separate village but now is joined to St. Helen Auckland. It has an attractive village centre with a number of historically important listed buildings looking on to The Green.

Bishop Auckland's industrial centres have developed in Tindale Crescent and St. Helen Auckland. South Church Enterprise Park has been developed as a prestige industrial site to the east of the town. Bishop Auckland contains a wide range of facilities and is the second most important retailing area in County Durham.

The current population of Bishop Auckland, which includes West Auckland and St Helen Auckland, stands at 17713, over one third of the District's total population (1991 Census data).

### Strategy

The Local Plan will maintain the role of Bishop Auckland as a major housing, employment and commercial centre for the District and West Durham. Bishop Auckland has in the past ten years dominated the housing market within the District, with nearly 60% of all new house building taking place within the town. The Bishop Auckland Local Plan (BALP) identifies about 860 new plots, sufficient to meet such a role up until 1996. The Plan will roll forward these allocations, maintaining the current building rate of the town. Peripheral growth will not be promoted but developments encouraged essentially within the defined limits to development and where opportunities arise. It is only with this restriction of new peripheral housing estate development will other parts of the strategy, namely the desire to keep open space breaks between the town and the surrounding settlements (Escomb and the Dene Valley) and the desire to regenerate through new housing in those surrounding settlements, will be achieved.

### Opportunities

The Plan identifies major housing sites at Etherley Lane, Darlington Road, Bracks Farm, South Church Depot, Leazes Industrial Area and Etherley Dene Farm. Additional housing development opportunities will be restricted to the reuse of urban land within the development limits of Bishop Auckland. BALP also identifies sufficient industrial land to meet the needs during the plan period.

Land at Bracks Farm will allow the opportunity for residential development, hotel and conference centre and an office/business research park. The site is well contained close to the town centre and offers good access onto the A688 Bishop Auckland Bypass. The redevelopment of Leazes Industrial Area will provide the opportunity for the relocation of the present uses to a more suitable location.

The development of the West Auckland bypass will open up development opportunities and industry, particularly around Fieldon Bridge. Development of these sites will be conditional on the construction of the bypass.

Bishop Auckland contains a number of disused railway lines, the Plan proposes the use of these lines as long distance recreational footpath/cycle way routes.

### Constraints

To the north of Bishop Auckland the River Wear and Auckland Park constrains development. To the east of the town it is important to maintain the open gaps between the neighbouring villages of Coundon and Coundon Grange and Bishop Auckland. The west and north of the town is bordered by open countryside designated as an Area of Landscape Value. Recent housing development has encroached towards this area, in particular in the Etherley Dene area. It is important that future growth of Bishop Auckland should relate to the existing services and facilities of the town and not create unrelated peripheral housing estates.

Policies			
<b>GD1</b>	<b>General Development Criteria</b>	<b>I9</b>	<b>Service Industrial Sites</b> - Romanway - Romanway East
<b>ENV4</b>	<b>Historic Parkland Landscapes</b>	<b>I10</b>	<b>Commercial Sector</b>
<b>ENV 6</b>	<b>Reclamation</b> - Masons Arms - Wear Terrace - Wear Chare - St Helens Colliery Heap.	<b>I15</b>	<b>Related Infrastructure</b> - Bracks Farm - West Auckland Industrial Estate Extension - St. Helen Auckland Extension - Fieldon Bridge
<b>ENV8</b>	<b>Phasing of Agricultural Land</b>	<b>TM3</b>	<b>New Tourist Facilities</b> - The Batts
<b>ENV11</b>	<b>Sites of Nature Conservation Importance and Local Nature Reserves</b>	<b>TM4</b>	<b>Hotel Allocation</b> - Bracks Farm
<b>ENV 15</b>	<b>Ancient Woodlands</b>	<b>S1</b>	<b>Town Centres</b>
<b>BE5</b>	<b>Conservation Areas</b>	<b>S2</b>	<b>Newgate St. North Shopping Area</b>
<b>BE14</b>	<b>Open Spaces within Built-up Areas</b>	<b>S3</b>	<b>Newgate St. South/Fore Bondgate Shopping Area</b>
<b>BE15</b>	<b>Scheduled Ancient Monuments</b>	<b>S4</b>	<b>Market Place</b>
<b>BE17</b>	<b>Areas of Archaeological Interest</b>	<b>S5</b>	<b>Retail/Office Opportunity Sites</b>
<b>BE22</b>	<b>Environmental Improvements</b>	<b>S8</b>	<b>Local Shopping Areas</b>
<b>H3</b>	<b>Distribution of Development</b>	<b>S9</b>	<b>Cockton Hill Local Shopping Area</b>
<b>H5</b>	<b>Allocated Sites in the Main Towns</b> - Bracks Farm - Etherley Dene Farm - Darlington Road - Oakley Street - Leazes Industrial Area	<b>RL6</b>	<b>Recreation Allocations</b> - River Gaunless
<b>H8</b>	<b>Renewal of Housing Permissions</b> - The Elms - Wilkinsons Yard - Milford Meadows - St Andrews Road - Kings Lodge - Priors Gate	<b>RL11</b>	<b>Opportunities for Recreation Provision</b> - River Gaunless/West Auckland
<b>H9</b>	<b>Related Infrastructure Provision</b> - Bracks Farm	<b>RL12</b>	<b>Public Rights of Way</b>
<b>H10</b>	<b>Relocation of Existing Uses</b> - Etherley Dene Farm - Leazes Industrial Area	<b>RL13</b>	<b>New Recreational Routes</b>
<b>H15</b>	<b>Affordable Housing</b> - Bracks Farm - Etherley Dene Farm - Darlington Road - Oakley Street - Leazes Industrial Site	<b>C1</b>	<b>General Hospital Redevelopment</b>
<b>H22</b>	<b>Community Benefit</b> - Etherley Dene Farm	<b>T4</b>	<b>Land Safeguarded for Road Proposals</b> - West Auckland Bypass - Etherley Lane/Newgate Park Link
<b>I2</b>	<b>New Industrial Allocations</b>	<b>T6</b>	<b>Land Safeguarded for Railway Purposes</b>
<b>I3</b>	<b>Business/Office Sites</b> - Bracks Farm - Fylands	<b>T9</b>	<b>New Car Park Provision</b> - Rudds Yard
<b>I4</b>	<b>Prestige Industrial Sites</b> - South Church Enterprise Park	<b>T10</b>	<b>Joint Use of Car Parks</b>
<b>I5</b>	<b>General Industrial Sites</b> - Greenfields - St Helen Auckland - West Auckland - Fieldon Bridge	<b>T12</b>	<b>Non-Operational Car Parking</b>
<b>I6</b>	<b>Local Industrial Sites</b> - Laurel Way	<b>T13</b>	<b>Parking in the Commercial Sector</b>
<b>I8</b>	<b>Bulky Goods Retailing</b> - Tindale Crescent	<b>MW1</b>	<b>Safeguarding of Mineral Reserves</b>
		<b>MW2</b>	<b>Development on Landfill Sites</b>
		<b>General</b>	
			ENV1, 7, 12, 13, 14
			BE1-4, 6-11, 23
			H4, 17-21, 23-26
			I11
			TM1
			S10, 12, 14, 15, 16
			RL1-5, 7-9
			T1, 2, 7, 14-17
			MW6

## INSET 2 - Coundon/Leeholme

### Character

Coundon and Leeholme are situated to the east of Bishop Auckland. Although originally two separate villages they have both grown to join along Leeholme Road. Despite this, Leeholme and Coundon have their own identities. Coundon/Leeholme developed through the growth of the mining industry in the area, however, unlike their neighbouring colliery villages, they maintained their size after the decline of the mining industry.

Coundon has developed along Collingwood Street and Leeholme Road, with Collingwood Street becoming the commercial core for the village. Coundon is a mixture of colliery terraces and modern housing developments which have been developed to the north and south of the village. Development along Leeholme Road joins the two villages together. Leeholme grew with the development of the mining industry creating a block of colliery terraces most of which have now been cleared. Its development and the growth of Coundon have created a green agricultural wedge between the two villages, this field has a number of well used footpaths linking the two villages.

Coundon and Leeholme have a good range of services and facilities including infant and junior schools, health centre, recreation ground, play area, a range of shops and a church. Coundon Industrial Estate lies to the south of the village and is bounded by the Coundon by-pass which runs to the south. The A689 offers good links to the A1(M) and Bishop Auckland.

The current population of Coundon, Leeholme and New Coundon stands at 3030 (1991 Census data).

### Strategy

Coundon/Leeholme has been identified as one of the two areas of growth in the district. It is strategically one of the District's best located settlements, being on the A689 less than 5 miles from the A1(M). The development of the by-pass allows Coundon to accommodate a significant amount of development without a detrimental impact on the environment and landscape quality of the area. Expansion of housing and industrial development will build upon the new improved communications of the town. To facilitate the growth of Coundon/Leeholme improved shopping and recreation provision will be provided within the settlement.

### Opportunities

The construction of the by-pass has opened up the opportunity for the comprehensive development along the southern edge of Coundon. Residential development will include the provision of sheltered housing close to the existing centre of Coundon. Shopping development off Hillside Road will provide additional retail provision to cater for the larger population and will be close enough to Collingwood Street, to link into the existing shopping core of the village. Development of the area will provide the opportunity to create additional playing fields and changing facilities for Coundon. This will serve both the existing and new inhabitants of Coundon/Leeholme. Developing this area will require the relocation of the allotment gardens to the west of the site, forming a buffer to the industrial estate. The cleared housing

sites in Leeholme provides the opportunity for the development of low cost housing and the creation of an improved local environment. The by-pass has created the opportunity to expand the industrial estate. Direct access onto the by-pass will reduce the volume of industrial traffic using the Coundon entrance.

### Constraints

To the north of Coundon the Township Fields drop away northward into a natural hollow before rising to Westerton on the ridge line. This area is open agricultural land which due to its topography makes it a very prominent site. Development has started to encroach down the slope of the hollow; with the exception of some rounding off of the village boundary, the Township Fields will be protected from further development.

To the south of the Coundon/Leeholme the by-pass acts as a physical boundary to development.

The open field between Coundon and Leeholme is an important local gap which maintains the identity of Leeholme as an individual village, and with the exception of some rounding-off, this gap will be safeguarded from development.

### Policies

- GD1 General Design Criteria**
- ENV6 Reclamation**
  - Leeholme Allotments
- ENV8 Phasing of Agricultural Land**
- BE14 Open Spaces within Built-up Areas**
- BE22 Environmental Improvements**
- H3 Distribution of Development**
- H5 Allocated Sites in the Main Towns**
  - Grey Gardens
  - Hillside Road
  - Addison Road
  - Pembroke Street
  - Sussex Street
  - Westerton View
- H10 Relocation of Existing Uses**
  - Hillside Road
- H15 Affordable Housing**
  - Grey Gardens
  - Hillside Road
  - Addison Road
  - Pembroke Street/Sussex Street
- H22 Community Benefit**
  - Grey Gardens
  - Hillside Road
- I2 New Industrial Allocations**
- I4 Prestige Industrial Site**
- I5 General Industrial Site**
- I16 Notifiable Installations**
- S7 Growth Areas**
- RL6 Recreation Allocations**
  - Cleveland View

### General

ENV1, 7, 12, 13, 14

BE12, 23

H4, 17-21, 23-27

I11, 16

TM1, 5

S10, 12, 14-16

RL2-5, 7-9

T1, 2, 7, 11, 14 - 19

MW6, 7

## INSET 3 - Dene Valley

### Character

The Dene Valley contains the villages of Eldon Lane, Coundon Grange, Close House, Coronation, Gurney Valley and Auckland Park. The villages are located to the north of the Dene Beck and grew with the development of the mining industry during the nineteenth century. Housing clearance has reduced the size of Auckland Park, Eldon Lane and Close House to their present size. The Dene Valley has experienced extensive reclamation work to its former mining areas allowing the creation of additional recreational facilities and an improved landscape. The villages consist of rows of brick terraces, with some new housing development which has taken place between Close House and Coundon Grange overlooking the recreation ground. Development of cleared housing sites within Eldon Lane/Coundon Grange by the public sector has taken place.

The present population of the Dene Valley is 1817 (1991 Census data).

### Strategy

The Dene Valley has been identified in the Plan as an area for regeneration and revitalization through the development of housing, industry and environmental improvements. Eldon Lane has a level of services which will allow development to be accommodated in the village. The services includes shops, church, primary school, recreation ground, clubs and post offices.

### Opportunities

The Dene Valley contains opportunities for additional housing and industrial land. Housing sites have been identified on the former Bridge Farm Site, creating additional housing close to the centre of Eldon Lane. On land between Close House and Gurney Valley the rationalisation of the allotments will allow the opportunity for the creation of informal open space/play area and the development of houses. This proposal will help to link Close House with Gurney Valley. There is opportunity for residential development to take place south of Close House on land bounded by the Dene to the south and the recreation ground to the west. The development of the small industrial area opposite Close House Junior School for housing will allow the workshops to be moved to a more suitable location. Housing at this location will be a more compatible use on this site. At Auckland Park there is potential for housing development on the allotments / small holdings within the limits shown; however, this needs to be done comprehensively and not on a piecemeal basis. The existing industrial use at Auckland Park and the nature of the site allows the opportunity to increase this industrial area to provide a well serviced, landscaped compound site. This will provide premises for existing small scale work shops and businesses to locate in a serviced, landscaped industrial estate. This will reduce the conflict caused in a residential area by these businesses. The opportunity exists to create a community woodland area on the lower quality agricultural land which has been reclaimed.

### Constraints

The Dene Beck is susceptible to flooding and therefore constrains development on adjoining land. Due to drainage problems of the Dene the Environment Agency have stated that no discharge shall be allowed downstream from Close House. British Coal Opencast are improving the drainage system through Eldon Lane for their Eldon Deep site. Previous areas worked for coal may lead to stability problems if developed.

### Polices

<b>GD1</b>	<b>General Design Criteria</b>
<b>ENV6</b>	<b>Reclamation</b>
	- Close House Allotments
	- Coronation Allotments
<b>ENV8</b>	<b>Phasing of Agricultural Land</b>
<b>ENV16</b>	<b>Community Forests</b>
<b>BE14</b>	<b>Open Spaces within Built-up Areas</b>
<b>BE22</b>	<b>Environmental Improvements</b>
<b>H3</b>	<b>Distribution of Development</b>
<b>H6</b>	<b>Housing Allocations</b>
	- Bridge Farm Phases 1 & 2
	- Close House Allotments
	- Close House
<b>H10</b>	<b>Relocation of Existing Uses</b>
	- Bridge Farm Phase 1
<b>H15</b>	<b>Affordable Housing</b>
	- Close House Allotments
<b>I2</b>	<b>New Industrial Allocations</b>
<b>I6</b>	<b>Local Industrial Sites</b>
	- Auckland Park
<b>RL6</b>	<b>Recreation Allocations</b>
	- Close House
<b>T6</b>	<b>Land Safeguarded for Railway Purposes</b>

### General

ENV1, 7, 12-14  
 H4, 17-21, 23-26  
 I11  
 S11, 12, 14-16  
 RL2-5, 7-9  
 T3, 7, 8, 14-17  
 MW4, 6

## INSET 4 - Escomb

### Character

Escomb is a small village set on the banks of the River Wear. It originally developed around the Saxon Church which is recognised as one of the finest in Western Europe and is one of the oldest churches in England. The village has developed up the valley side along the road to High Escomb which includes the new housing to the west of the road. The nineteenth century saw the rapid development of iron and steel industry in the area. Coke ovens were developed to the west of the village. Remarkably Escomb's form remained relatively unaltered through the period of growth and decline of this industry. These works have now been reclaimed back to agriculture. The majority of housing in the village is now modern, having replaced many of the original buildings.

The current population of Escomb is 283 (census 1991).

### Strategy

In order to allow villages to continue to develop, growth is allowed on a scale which can be physically accommodated without significant landscape and environmental impact, and can be supported by a reasonable range of social and service facilities. In accordance with the principles of the Plan, development is allocated in those villages which can accommodate growth in both environmental terms and service provision. Escomb has a basic level of facilities including a pub, a primary school at High Escomb, and a corner shop/post office but has excellent play equipment and recreation pitches, created through the reclamation scheme of George Pit to the west of the village.

### Opportunities

The residential development at Vicarage Farm has allowed access to land south of the site which is well constrained by the railway line to the south and is a natural extension to the village. Although this land rises from the River Wear the site is read against the existing built-up area.

### Constraints

Access to the village is served by a single road which allows both entry and exit into Escomb. This limits the amount of development which can be served off this road. The linear form of Escomb constrains further development of the village. Extending the village into the surrounding countryside which would be unrelated to the form of the village would be resisted. The railway to the south acts as a limit to further ribbon development leading into High Escomb. Although High Escomb is south of the railway it is separate and detached from Escomb. Further development along the road would constitute unsuitable ribbon development and will be resisted.

### Policies

<b>GD1</b>	<b>General Development Criteria</b>
<b>BE14</b>	<b>Open Spaces within Built-up Areas</b>
<b>H3</b>	<b>Distribution of Development</b>
<b>T6</b>	<b>Land Safeguarded for Railway Purposes</b>

### General

ENV1, 7, 8, 12-14
BE4, 15-18
H17-21, 23-26
TM1
S10, 13
RL2-5
MW6, 7

## INSET 5 - Witton Park/Woodside

### Character

Witton Park and Woodside are dispersed villages to the south of the River Wear. They consist mainly of colliery terraces. New house building has taken place along Main Street. Witton Park and Woodside developed rapidly in the nineteenth century with the growth of the iron and steel industries in the area using the high quality coking coals of West Durham. As imported ores replaced local supply the steel works closed down which led to a decline in Witton Park and Woodside. Further decline followed the designation in the Durham County Development Plan as Category D villages in the 1950's which cut off future investment in these villages. Housing clearance in Witton Park has left an unusually dispersed village form but also created attractive open areas within the village. The villages now have a rural feel and are set in open countryside.

The current population of Witton Park/Woodside is 859 (census 1991)

### Strategy

The Local Plan aims to regenerate and revitalise the existing communities of Witton Park and Woodside through the new housing, industrial development and environmental improvements.

### Opportunities

The housing clearance programme in Witton Park has created an open grassed area along Low Queen Street which provides the opportunity to accommodate residential development whilst retaining an area of open space through creating a village green. Opportunity for residential development exists north of High Queen Street provided an adequate access can be achieved. Although not specifically allocated the development should include some retail provision, such as corner shops or small shop units. To the north of Witton Park land off New Road provides the opportunity to create small scale industrial premises. Woodside provides the opportunity for some small scale development and infilling along the roadside frontage. The dispersed nature of the villages allows for the accommodation of residential development whilst retaining the open rural character of the villages. Environmental improvements including landscaping and tree planting can be incorporated within these open areas.

The landscape quality to the North of Witton Park will be improved during the plan period with the implementation of the restoration conditions of the outstanding mineral permissions. These have been identified in the Plan as Landscape Action Areas (see Appendix 7).

### Constraints

The dispersed character of the villages makes it difficult to draw together all parts of the village through development without allocating large inappropriate amounts of land for housing. The agricultural land between Park Road and Main Street rises to the south of Witton Park and is rural in character and helps form part of the countryside setting of the village. Development will be resisted in this area. Although

Witton Park has a range of services and facilities including a recreation ground, Environmental Centre, church, shops and station, this level of facilities would be inappropriate to serve a larger residential development.

### Policies

<b>GD1</b>	<b>General Design Criteria</b>
<b>ENV5</b>	<b>Landscape Action Areas</b>
<b>BE22</b>	<b>Environmental Improvements</b>
<b>H3</b>	<b>Distribution of Development</b>
<b>H6</b>	<b>Housing Allocations</b>
	- Low Queen Street
	- High Queen Street
<b>H9</b>	<b>Related Infrastructure Provision</b>
	- Low Queen Street
<b>H15</b>	<b>Affordable Housing</b>
	- Low Queen Street
<b>H22</b>	<b>Community Benefit</b>
	- Low Queen Street
<b>I2</b>	<b>Industrial Allocations</b>
<b>I6</b>	<b>Local Industrial Sites</b>
<b>RL6</b>	<b>Recreation Allocation</b>
	- Low Queen Street

### General

ENV1, 3, 7, 12-14

BE14

H17-21, 23-26

I11

TM1

S11, 12, 13

RL2-5, 8

T2, 3, 6, 14-17

MW6, 7

## INSET 6 - Binchester

### Character

Binchester is a small row of stone built colliery cottages located between Bishop Auckland and Spennymoor. The village has experienced the growth and decline of the mining industry of the area and in the past has been starved of investment through its designation as a Category D village in the 1950s. Despite this, Binchester has retained its character through strong community involvement which has produced a community centre and the resurfacing of Granville Terrace. The village is linear in form, set back from the main C96 road with Granville Terrace extending west to the former railway line which is now part of the Auckland Walk.

The current population of Binchester is 356 (census 1991).

### Strategy

The Local Plan aims to provide sufficient development to serve the needs of the local community of Binchester and to assist in the natural growth of the village. The local community expressed a need for additional housing in the village for the elderly, the new housing development, where possible, will be targeted to this specific group. The village has a limited range of facilities which includes a community centre, recreation ground and play area.

### Opportunity

Opportunities for development within the village are limited due to its linear form. There is potential for some small scale infill development adjacent to the Community Centre, providing additional accommodation for the elderly.

### Constraints

The linear form of the village, in particular Granville Terrace, reduces the development opportunity of Binchester to accommodate additional housing. Its limited facilities would not provide adequate service provision for any significant residential development.

### Policies

<b>GD1</b>	<b>General Design Criteria</b>
<b>H3</b>	<b>Distribution of Development</b>

#### General

ENV1, 12-14  
H17, 18, 20, 24-26  
I12, 13  
TM1  
S10,13

## INSET 7 - Toronto

### Character

Toronto is a small hamlet to the north of Bishop Auckland located above the Wear Valley. It is a ribbon settlement developing along the A689 and is a mixture of stone and brick built terraces and later semi-detached housing extending to the west. There is an operational brick works to the north of the village and the reclamation of the associated clay pit involves the tipping of inert material.

The current population of Toronto is 439 (census 1991).

### Strategy

The Local Plan takes advantage of the development opportunities the Newton Cap Diversion road scheme creates in allocating land for housing. The Plan aims to allow Toronto to grow at a scale which is in proportion with the village and its facilities. The facilities include a corner shop/post office, garage, church, recreation ground and community hall.

### Opportunity

The construction of the A698 Newton Cap Diversion will take through traffic away from the front of the houses along Jubilee Street which will substantially improve the environmental quality of Toronto. This road provides the opportunity for small scale residential development between the roadline and Addison Road. Toronto is well served by the A689 which provides easy access into the centre of Bishop Auckland.

### Constraints

The prominent location and the linear form of Toronto reduces the potential for development within the village. The Newton Cap Diversion restricts development into the agricultural land to the north of the hamlet.

### Policies

<b>GD1</b>	<b>General Design Criteria</b>
<b>BE14</b>	<b>Open Spaces within Built-up Areas</b>
<b>H3</b>	<b>Distribution of Development</b>

#### General

ENV1, 8, 12-14  
H17-21, 23-26  
TM1  
S10, 13  
RL1-5  
T1  
MW6, 7



## INSET 8 - Newfield

### Character

The village sits on the valley side elevated above the flood plain of the River Wear. It is a small village which has developed around a central green area which is used in part as the recreation ground. The village is a mixture of stone and brick built terraces, modern terraces and bungalows and contains relatively few facilities. During the 1950's Newfield was designated a Category D settlement which prevented further investment and development, despite this, the village has retained its character.

The current population of Newfield is 322 (census 1991).

### Strategy

The Local Plan aims to provide development opportunities within Newfield to assist the natural growth of the village and to improve the environmental quality of the surrounding area around Newfield. Environmental improvement will be achieved to the setting of Newfield by a comprehensive reclamation scheme of the area adjoining the River Wear (see Appendix 7). In accordance with the principle of the Plan to limit the amount of development to those villages with sufficient facilities to accommodate the needs of the development, the Plan allocates small scale developments which will come forward through the Plan period. Newfields range of facilities are limited to a club, pub, post office/shop, recreation ground and church and accordingly growth within the village will be accommodated through small scale infilling.

### Opportunities

The reclamation of this section of the Wear valley provides the opportunity to create a recreational resource which utilises the potential of the River Wear. There is opportunity for small scale residential development on the site of the former school which would help to round off the village. There are two residential opportunity sites adjoining the cemetery which will help to consolidate the village joining High Row Terrace with the village.

### Constraints

Newfield is in a very prominent rural location on the top of the river valley slope, reducing the opportunity for development being incorporated into the existing village framework without excessive visual impact. The land drops steeply towards the river to the North and West restricting development in this area. Extending the village past its existing limits would lead to an unacceptable intrusion into the open countryside.

### Policies

- GD1**      **General Design Principles**
- ENV5**    **Landscape Action Areas**
- BE14**    **Open Spaces within Built-up Areas**
- H3**        **Distribution of Development**

### General

- ENV1, 3, 6, 8, 12-14
- H17-21, 23-26

I11  
 TM1  
 S10, 11, 13  
 RL2-5  
 T1  
 MW6, 7

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## CROOK AND WILLINGTON SUB AREA

The sub-area contains the towns of Crook and Willington which are two of the principal settlements in the District in terms of employment and housing. Both towns contain a range of housing types but are characterised by traditional brickbuilt terraces. Crook is identified in the County Structure Plan as a District Centre and Willington has been identified in the Draft Districtwide Strategy as a growth area for industry and housing. To the north of Crook and Willington are a number of hilltop villages which are former mining villages such as Stanley, Sunnyside and Oakenshaw. The reduction of the mining industry saw the decline in these hill top villages which eventually lead to a substantial house clearance programme in the area. The hill top villages are traditional brickbuilt miners' cottages facing onto the main road with limited facilities.

To the south of Crook the land is more fertile especially along the flood plain of the River Wear. This area contains the villages of Howden-le-Wear, Witton-le-Wear and Hunwick.

### Population

During the period 1951-91 the population of the sub-area fell by over 5800 or 21%. Between 1981 and 1991 the population of the sub-area has begun to level out. The populations of Willington West, Stanley and Crook South all grew with the largest increase occurring in Crook South, with a rise of 323. During the same period, however, there was a 294 drop in population in the Howden Ward. These statistics indicate the past 40 years of population decline is slowing down and the population of the sub-area, although still declining is levelling out.

### Employment Rate

In the period between 1986-90 the number of unemployed in the area has almost halved. In 1986 there were 1939 unemployed in the sub-area, this number dropped by 49% to 992 in 1990. The most significant reductions occurred in the Stanley Ward where the number of unemployed dropped from 171 in 1986 to 66 in 1990, a drop of 60%. The total number of unemployed in the sub-area dropped from almost 10% in the period to just under 4%. However, since 1990 the number of unemployed in the sub-area has risen to 1689 by December 1992, a rise of 697 since 1990. This present figure is now only 13%, 31% lower than the 1986 rate.

Within the sub-area the wards which contain for the majority of unemployed are the main towns of Crook and Willington, accounting for 876, or 52% of all the unemployed in the subarea (as of December 1992). However, within the Stanley ward the total number of unemployed stands at 119.

### Strategy

The Local Plan strategy for the Crook and Willington sub-area is to maintain Crook as a major centre in the District in terms of housing, employment and commercial development and investment. Willington is identified as an area for significant growth and this will be facilitated by the development of substantial housing, commercial and industrial allocations. The development of Willington will be a cornerstone for creating greater housing and employment opportunities

for the District and to help reverse the recent decline of the District. The hill top villages of Stanley and Mount Pleasant will be regenerated and revitalised by stimulating investment through the development of housing and by environmental improvements.

The Local Plan will seek to protect the quality of the open countryside from intrusive and inappropriate development. In particular areas of specific landscape quality, such as the Area of Landscape Value along the Wear Valley, will be afforded greater protection.

This strategy will be achieved through the following new development allocations:-

Crook -	10.1 ha. residential land 10.4 ha. industrial land
Willington -	9.9 ha. residential land (already committed) 1.5 ha. industrial land (21.4 ha. already committed) 0.7 ha. commercial land
Stanley -	3.0 ha. residential land
Mount Pleasant	0.5 ha. industrial land

## INSET 9 - Crook

Crook is enclosed in a landscape basin to the north west of Bishop Auckland at a height of some 500 ft above sea level, with Crook Beck running through its centre. The town developed as a result of the coal mining industry, but now the former colliery which once had the first commercial coke plant in England has been landscaped and reclaimed back to agriculture.

Crook's commercial and administrative centre contains a range of services and facilities for the surrounding area, such as a library, sports centre, supermarkets, health centre and District Council Offices. New housing areas have been developed to the south and west of the area which gives a wide variety of housing styles and types both public and private.

The current population of Crook is 8352 (census 1991).

### Strategy

In accordance with the principle of the Draft Plan, development is directed towards those centres which can accommodate the needs of new growth in terms of service and employment provision and landscape impact. The Plan will therefore maintain Crook's role as being the second major centre in the District after Bishop Auckland. This role will be maintained throughout the plan period. The Plans allocated sites are considered sufficient to meet the needs of the town for the plan period. Approximately 320 residential plots are allocated together with existing commitments will be sufficient to meet housing demand in Crook throughout the Plan period at existing building rates; 20 hectares of industrial land is available, which will be sufficient to meet demands well beyond the end of the plan period.

### Opportunities

Two roads have been programmed for Crook with the aim of improving the centre of the town. These are the Crook Inner Relief Road and the Crook South-West Bypass. Not only will these improve the local environment they will also open up land for development. Land is allocated for housing on the former school playing fields and for industry on land to the north and south of Thistleflat Industrial Estate. Additional recreational land has been located on part of the former brickworks site to help redress the short fall in playing pitches in Crook and to act as a buffer between the housing and industrial allocations. Two housing sites are identified on the southern periphery of Crook on New Road and as an extension to the Thistleflat development. Although on greenfield site allocations they are well contained within existing landscape features, the disused tramway and Beechburn Beck, and help to round off Crook's southern boundary. The former Crook Primary School provides the opportunity to locate small office / workshop units in the centre of Crook. The offices would provide valuable sheltered starter units for new businesses to start up their operation.

### Constraints

The land rises to the north forming a natural basin around Crook which creates a physical boundary to development. Development is restricted on these slopes protecting the setting, visual and scenic quality of Crook's surrounding landscape. A large part of the valley side is included in the Crook Conservation Area

to protect the setting of Church Hill. The Environment Agency have stated that the sewerage/fresh water system in Crook is operating at full capacity and further discharge into the Crook Beck will be restricted. To accommodate further development a balancing lake to the north of Crook will be required. Contributions will be required from developers to facilitate such works.

### Policies

<b>GD1</b>	<b>General Design Criteria</b>
<b>BE5</b>	<b>Conservation Areas</b>
<b>BE14</b>	<b>Open Spaces within Built-up Areas</b>
<b>BE22</b>	<b>Environmental Improvements</b>
<b>H3</b>	<b>Distribution of Development</b>
<b>H5</b>	<b>Allocated Sites in the Main Towns</b>
	- Tennyson Terrace
	- Thistleflat Road
	- Former Parkside School South and Eclipse Site
	- South End Villas
	- New Road
<b>H8</b>	<b>Renewal of Housing Permissions</b>
	- West Road (former Eclipse Site)
<b>H9</b>	<b>Related Infrastructure Provision</b>
<b>H15</b>	<b>Affordable Housing</b>
	- Tennyson Terrace
	- Thistleflat Road
	- Former Parkside School South
	- South End Villas
	- New Road
<b>I2</b>	<b>New Industrial Allocations</b>
<b>I5</b>	<b>General Industrial Sites</b>
	- Thistleflat Extensions I and II
<b>I6</b>	<b>Local Industrial Sites</b>
	- High Hope Street
<b>I7</b>	<b>Office / Workshops</b>
<b>I15</b>	<b>Related Infrastructure</b>
	- Thistleflat Industrial Extensions
<b>S1</b>	<b>Town Centre</b>
<b>S6</b>	<b>Shopping Area</b>
<b>RL6</b>	<b>Recreation Allocations</b>
	- Former Eclipse Site
<b>C3</b>	<b>Education Purposes</b>
<b>T4</b>	<b>Land Safeguarded for Road Proposals</b>

### General

ENV1, 7, 8, 12-14  
 BE2-11, 23  
 H4, 17-21, 23-26  
 I11, 13  
 TM1,5  
 S11, 16  
 RL2-5, 7-9  
 T1, 2, 3, 7-9, 13-17  
 MW6, 7

## INSET 10 - Willington

### Character

Willington has grown along Dere Street the former Roman road to Durham. Similarly to the surrounding villages Willington has developed with the mining industry in the area. The rich coal seams facilitated the rapid growth of Willington from a small village to a large colliery community. The mines were located to the north of the town so close to the village centre that the pit heaps almost reached High Street. Landscape improvements have now reclaimed the former colliery sites back to agricultural use. Willington has a mixture of housing, having a large area of public housing to the south. There is a good range of services and facilities including shops, schools, a library and a leisure centre which includes an all-weather ski slope.

The population of Willington/Sunnybrow is 6504 (census 1991).

### Strategy

Willington is identified as one of the two growth areas in the District. Its location to the east of the District allows easy access to Durham and the A1. The town has considerable development potential to the east which will facilitate significant growth of housing and employment, 230 dwellings and 28 hectares of industrial land. These allocations are already committed with planning permissions. This additional growth will require the improvements to the retail facilities in the centre of the town.

### Opportunities

A number of opportunities exist in Willington to stimulate development in the town.

The town centre has a range of services and facilities to support new developments. This could be further improved with the development of a small supermarket on the High Street.

The low grade agricultural land to the east has allowed the opportunity for the development of the land for housing and industrial. Planning permission on this land will help to facilitate the aim of expansion at Willington. There is further development potential for housing to be accommodated to the south of Sunnybrow.

The possibility of a partial by-pass is being considered to help overcome the worst problem of congestion along Commercial Street and in Low Willington. This is caused predominantly by parked vehicles hindering through traffic using the A690 which includes a large number of heavy goods vehicles. Creation of a new road would help improve the Commercial Street environment so improving the retail core of the town. The development of the industrial allocation will give the opportunity to re-route the through traffic away from residential areas.

The plan also allocates nearly 2 hectares of playing pitches off Victoria Street on which will help to alleviate the shortfall in recreation provision in the town.

### Constraints

To the west of Willington lies attractive open countryside and woodland which runs north to south

adjacent to the western edge of Willington. This area not only provides an attractive entrance to Willington from the west, but also acts as a buffer to development maintaining a undeveloped gap between the built up areas of Willington and Crook. An important open space break also exists between Willington and Sunnybrow which includes the wooded Willington Dene.

To the east of the District the town is again surrounded by open countryside which will be protected from development and to the south lies the River Wear which forms a natural physical boundary.

The past mining activities to the north have now ceased and land has been reclaimed. The grassy reclaimed slopes rise above the town and as a result development will not be encouraged in this area.

### Policies

<b>GD1</b>	<b>General Design Criteria</b>
<b>BE14</b>	<b>Open Spaces within Built-up Areas</b>
<b>BE22</b>	<b>Environmental Improvements</b>
<b>H3</b>	<b>Distribution of Development</b>
<b>H8</b>	<b>Renewal of Housing Permission</b> - West of Willington Estate Phase II
<b>I2</b>	<b>New Industrial Allocations</b>
<b>I4</b>	<b>Prestige Industrial Sites</b> - Low Willington
<b>I9</b>	<b>Service Industrial Sites</b> - Pulverite Site
<b>I15</b>	<b>Related Infrastructure</b> - Pulverite Site
<b>S7</b>	<b>Retail Allocation</b>
<b>S8</b>	<b>Local Shopping Areas</b>
<b>RL6</b>	<b>Recreation Allocations</b> - Victoria Street
<b>RL12</b>	<b>Public Rights of Way</b>
<b>T4</b>	<b>Land Safeguarded for Road Proposals</b>

### General

ENV1, 7, 8, 12-14  
 BE23  
 H4, 17-21, 23-26  
 I11  
 TM1,5  
 S10-16  
 RL2-5, 7-9  
 T1, 2, 7, 11, 14-17  
 MW6, 7

## INSET 11 - Howden-le-Wear

### Character

Howden-le-Wear is a village due south of Crook to the west of Beechburn Beck. The village is located in a once active mining area, the nearest being North Beechburn Colliery. Although originally based on agriculture the village grew to serve the mining industry including the creation of a railway network to serve the collieries which ran through the centre of the village. Howden-le-Wear now contains a mixture of colliery terraces and modern housing to the north and west. The village contains a good range of facilities including a primary school, church, pubs, shops and garage. The village has been formed by the convergence of a number of through roads from Crook, Witton-le-Wear, Fir Tree and Bishop Auckland and is still effectively split by the former line of the railway now reclaimed. The increase in present day traffic volumes has led to traffic congestion within the village reducing the environmental quality of Howden le Wear.

The current population of Howden is 1095 (census 1991).

### Strategy

The Draft Plan aims to allocate development in towns and villages which can serve the growing needs of the local community. Howden-le-Wear has a good basic level of services including a post office, shops, play area, primary school and community hall. Its close location to Crook means that a wide range of facilities and employment opportunities are at hand.

### Opportunities

There is potential for residential development off the High Street close to the village centre. The site is naturally constrained by Beechburn Beck, unobtrusive and well related to the existing village form. There is also potential for residential development on land off Bridge Street, adjoining Park Terrace. The line of the relief road will create a new physical boundary to the south, providing the opportunity to accommodate development and to create a new playing field.

The Plan shows a corridor of interest for the re-routing of the Crook to Bishop Auckland road. Using the former railway line will help to alleviate congestion in the village.

### Constraints

The convergence of roads into the village reduces the environmental quality of Howden-le-Wear. Reducing the impact of through traffic would significantly improve the quality of the village. Fir Tree Grange to the north has an attractive parkland landscape and important tree belt, the majority of which are protected. Beechburn and Jubilee Park contains development to the east.

## Policies

<b>GD1</b>	<b>General Design Criteria</b>
<b>ENV6</b>	<b>Reclamation</b> - Howden Plantation Heaps
<b>BE14</b>	<b>Open Spaces within Built Up Areas</b>
<b>BE22</b>	<b>Environmental Improvements</b>
<b>H3</b>	<b>Distribution of Development</b>
<b>H7</b>	<b>Housing Allocation</b> - High Street
<b>H9</b>	<b>Related Infrastructure Provision</b> - Park Terrace - High Street
<b>H15</b>	<b>Affordable Housing</b> - Park Terrace - High Street
<b>H22</b>	<b>Community Benefit</b> - Park Terrace
<b>RL6</b>	<b>Recreation Allocation</b> - Park Terrace
<b>T4</b>	<b>Land Safeguarded for Road Proposals</b>

## General

ENV1, 7, 8, 12-16  
 BE23  
 H4, 17-21, 23-26  
 I11  
 TM7  
 S10, 11, 15  
 RL2-5, 7-9  
 T1-3  
 MW6, 7

## INSET 12 - Fir Tree

### Character

Fir Tree is a small village along the A68 west of Crook. It is set in open countryside overlooking the River Wear towards Hamsterley Forest. The A68 marks the eastern edge of the Helme and Harperley Area Historic Parkland which forms part of the Area of Landscape Value. Colliery terraces form the core of the village with modern bungalows having been developed south along the A68. This has created a linear form to the village. The majority of development lies to the east of the A68.

The current population of Fir Tree is 452 (census 1991).

### Strategy

The Local Plan will maintain the character and form of Fir Tree, new development will be limited to infill locations within the defined limits to developments. Due to the lack of services and limited facilities, significant levels of development would be inappropriate in accordance with the Plans aim of matching growth with the need for adequate facilities.

### Opportunities

The reclamation of the former Fir Tree Colliery will create additional recreational facilities for the village and allow the relocation of the playground to be closer to the village centre. The reclamation will also bring environmental improvements to Fir Tree.

A small housing site has been allocated to the rear of Institute Terrace. A development brief has been written for this site. The allocation relates well to the village form and is of an appropriate scale to be incorporated within Fir Tree.

### Constraints

The Area of Landscape Value to the west of the village restricts development encroaching into this important landscape area.

The linear form of the village limits opportunities for development without further extending the village or intruding into open countryside. Limited facilities makes Fir Tree inappropriate to accommodate significant additional development.

### Policies

- GD1**    **General Design Criteria**
- ENV3**   **Area of Landscape Value**
- ENV4**   **Historic Parkland Landscapes**
- ENV6**   **Reclamation**  
- Fir Tree Colliery
- BE14**   **Open Spaces within Built-up Areas**
- BE22**   **Environmental Improvements**
- H3**      **Distribution of Development**

### General

- ENV1, 12-15
- BE15, 23
- H4, 17-21, 23-26
- I11
- S10, 11, 13, 15
- RL2-5, 7-9
- MW6, 7

## INSET 13 - Hunwick

### Character

Hunwick is a small village in open countryside between Willington and Bishop Auckland to the West of the River Wear. Hunwick, originally an agricultural village, has developed along the B6286 to the former colliery village of Lane Ends which developed to serve the Rough Lea Colliery to the east. The decline of the mining industry led to housing clearance in Lane Ends, which now forms an area of informal open space and an attractive entrance to the village. The southern part of Hunwick is designated a Conservation Area and contains Hunwick Hall and Farmhouse, which dates back to the late medieval period. This part of the village contains modern housing.

The current population of Hunwick is 1231 (1991 census).

### Strategy

The Local Plan aims to maintain housing growth in villages which have the facilities and sites to accommodate appropriate levels of development. Hunwick has a basic level of facilities including a primary school, church, pubs shops and post office, sufficient to facilitate the needs of additional growth.

### Opportunities

Within the linear form of Hunwick there is potential to accommodate small scale and infill development which helps to consolidate the village. Two residential sites are allocated at Lane End and Helmington Terrace. Land south of Hunwick Hall has an unimplemented planning permission for a golf course. There is an outstanding undeveloped residential site for 84 houses at Quarry Burn Lane.

### Constraints

Land to the north and east of the village slopes down to Helmington Beck and the River Wear making development in this area prominent from views across the valley. The ribbon development of the village prevents the satisfactory accommodation of development which relates to the existing framework of Hunwick. The village's rural setting would make any development outside the defined limits of development an intrusion into open countryside.

### Policies

- GD1**    **General Development Criteria**
- BE5**    **Conservation Areas**
- BE14**   **Open Spaces within Built Up Areas**
- H3**     **Distribution of Development**
- H7**     **Housing Allocations**
  - West End
  - Lane Ends
- H15**   **Affordable Housing**
  - Lane Ends
- RL11**   **Opportunities for Recreation Provision**
  - Land to South of Hunwick

### General

- ENV 1, 12-15

- BE1-11
- H16-21, 23-26
- I11
- TM1
- RL2-5, 7-9
- S10-13, 15, 16
- T15, 16
- MW6, 7

## INSET 14 - North Bitchburn

### Character

North Bitchburn is a small village on the ridge line above the confluence of Beechburn Beck and the River Wear. It is a former colliery village serving the now closed North Bitchburn Colliery to the south. During the 1950's its Category D status prevented investment and housing from taking place, despite this, it has retained its form and character. It has developed at the junction of the Crook and Howden-le-Wear roads and consists of stone built colliery terraces, a pub, church and a small green.

The current population of North Bitchburn is 331 (census 1991).

### Strategy

The Local Plan aims to maintain the character and form of North Bitchburn by limiting further development to infill and redevelopment within the defined limits to developments.

### Opportunities

To the rear of the Red Lion pub opportunity exists for the development for housing adjacent to the committed housing site.

### Constraints

The village is located in a prominent position, development outside the existing village framework would be an inappropriate intrusion into the surrounding countryside. North Bitchburn has very limited facilities which could not serve the needs of a large amount of growth.

### Policies

<b>GD1</b>	<b>General Design Criteria</b>
<b>BE14</b>	<b>Open Spaces within Built-up Area</b>
<b>H3</b>	<b>Distribution of Development</b>

### General

ENV1, 12-14  
 BE2, 3, 6-12  
 H13, 16-21, 23-26  
 I11  
 TM1  
 S10-13  
 RL2-5, 7-9  
 T15-16  
 MW6, 7



## INSET 15 - Stanley / Mount Pleasant / Billy Row

### Character

Stanley, Mount Pleasant and Billy Row are located on the ridge line overlooking the Crook basin. Stanley and Mount Pleasant form a linear village along the B6299 to Tow Law. Billy Row follows the B6288 down the slope to Crook. The three hamlets are former colliery villages. Stanley, taking its name from Stanley Colliery which was one of the first pits in the area to produce coal, has experienced substantial housing clearance to the rear of the B6288 and Billy Row around North Roddymoor. These settlements consist mainly of former colliery terraces although a new housing estate has been developed in Billy Row. Billy Row is one of the few villages in the County to have a green, which acts as the focal point for the village.

The current population of Stanley Mounty Pleasant, Billy Row is (1345 (1991 census).

### Strategy

The villages have a relatively good range of facilities and services including primary schools, shops, post office, recreation ground, pubs, clubs and community hall. This level of services will be able to accommodate the additional needs of the proposed development. They are also easily accessible to Crook for other services and sources of employment. The Local Plan seeks to revitalize and regenerate these villages by stimulating investment led by new housing development and associated environmental improvements.

### Opportunities

Opportunities exist for residential development in Stanley south of the football ground and off High Road. Both sites are to the north of the existing built-up frontage of Stanley and help to consolidate the village. The site south of the football ground will draw Alma Terrace into the village form. Within Billy Row there is opportunity to accommodate some small scale infill development to the north of the allotment gardens. There is opportunity for the development of small workshops at the entrance of Stanley between the existing garage and Railway Terrace.

### Constraints

The prominent ridge line location limits the opportunity to accommodate development which does not intrude into the surrounding countryside. The limited range of facilities constrains the amount of new development which could be adequately served by the existing facilities.

### Policies

- GD1**    **General Development Criteria**
- ENV16**    **Community Forest**
- BE14**    **Open Spaces within Built-up Areas**
- BE22**    **Environmental Improvements**
- H3**    **Distribution of Development**
- H6**    **Housing Allocations**
  - Allotment Site, Stanley
  - South of Football Ground, Stanley
  - Well Bank, Billy Row

- H15**    **Affordable Housing**
  - Allotment Site
  - South of Football Ground

- I2**    **Industrial Allocation**

### General

- ENV 1, 7, 8, 12-15
- BE23
- H17-21, 23-26
- I11
- TM1
- S10-13
- RL2-5, 7-9
- T15, 16
- MW6, 7

## INSET 16 - Sunniside

### Character

Sunniside is in an elevated position on the B6299 east of Tow Law. It is a small former mining hamlet which consists of stone built colliery terraces. Sunniside has developed along the B6299 creating its ribbon form. Gladstone Terrace stands back from the village and is characterized by long, narrow gardens which are used for a wide range of purposes.

The current population of Sunniside is 340 (1991 census).

### Strategy

The Local Plan aims to maintain the character of Sunniside and to broaden the choice of housing within the rural area. The village has a basic level of facilities including a corner shop, post office, recreation ground and community hall. These facilities are sufficient to accommodate a limited amount of development.

### Opportunities

There is opportunity for a small residential development off Front Street in the west end of the village. There are opportunities for infill development along Front Street within the existing village framework. The development of Gladstone Terrace gardens would only be permitted if done comprehensively and not on a piecemeal basis. Environmental Improvements are proposed along the B6299 through Sunniside.

### Constraints

The linear form of the village limits opportunity for Sunniside to accommodate additional housing. Its lack of facilities restricts the amount of new development which could adequately be served by the existing facilities.

### Policies

<b>GD1</b>	<b>General Design Criteria</b>
<b>ENV16</b>	<b>Community Forest</b>
<b>BE14</b>	<b>Open Spaces within Built-up Areas</b>
<b>BE22</b>	<b>Environmental Improvements</b>
<b>H3</b>	<b>Distribution of Development</b>
<b>H7</b>	<b>Housing Allocation</b>
	- Front Street

### General

ENV1, 7, 8, 12-15  
 BE23  
 H17-21, 23-26  
 I11  
 TM1  
 S10-13  
 RL2-5  
 T15, 16  
 MW6, 7

## INSET 17 - Roddymoor

### Character

Roddymoor is located north west of Crook on rising land to Billy Row and Stanley. It is a former mining village which served North Roddymoor Colliery and Peases West Coke Ovens to the south. Roddymoor has retained some of its former colliery terraces, but now consists mainly of post-war housing.

The current population of Roddymoor is 470 (1991 census).

### Strategy

The Local Plan aims to maintain the character and form of Roddymoor, and where possible increase the housing choice within rural locations. It has very limited facilities which include a corner shop and recreation ground. It would not therefore be appropriate to allocate land for new development.

### Opportunity

Within the defined framework of Roddymoor there may be potential for infill and redevelopment opportunities.

### Constraints

The form and layout of Roddymoor limits the opportunities for additional residential development to be accommodated into the existing village framework. Its limited facilities and location in open countryside makes significant development inappropriate in Roddymoor.

### Policies

<b>GD1</b>	<b>General Design Criteria</b>
<b>ENV6</b>	<b>Reclamation</b>
	- Arthur Pit
<b>H3</b>	<b>Distribution of Development</b>

### General

ENV1, 12-15  
 H17-21, 23-26  
 I11  
 TM1  
 S10, 13  
 RL7-9  
 T15, 16  
 MW6, 7

## INSET 18 - Witton-le-Wear

### Character

Witton le Wear is an attractive stonebuilt village raised above the flood plain of the River Wear. It has developed around the Medieval church and contains an attractive tree lined green which forms part of the conservation area which includes the flood plain to the river. Witton-le-Wear has maintained its character and quality by the use of traditional building materials and style of the area. New development has taken place to the north of the village. The southern slopes of the village are heavily wooded and the break of slope is marked by the mineral railway. The A68 provides good access to the west. Witton-le-Wear has good facilities which includes a primary school, church, shops/post office, community centre and pubs.

The current population of Witton le Wear is 590 (census 1991).

### Strategy

The Local Plan aims to maintain the attractiveness and character of the village and allow development within the defined limits to development which do not detract from the character and nature of the existing village framework.

### Opportunities

Development opportunities will be limited to redevelopment and infilling within the existing framework of the village. The site north of Witton House is within the development limits and relates well to the surrounding area.

### Constraints

The village is located on the sloping valley side of the River Wear in open countryside. The location and setting of the village within the River Wear Area of Landscape Value would mean that development outside the existing village framework would be an intrusion into the countryside and would not relate to the village form. To the south the open and partly wooded slopes are important to the setting of the village, together with the flood plain area to the river. The A68 forms the western boundary to the village. To the east Cemetery Road forms the boundary of the village. Development beyond the road would be an intrusion into the surrounding open countryside and may set a precedent for further development taking place.

### Policies

<b>GD1</b>	<b>General Development Criteria</b>
<b>ENV3</b>	<b>Area of Landscape Value</b>
<b>BE5</b>	<b>Conservation Areas</b>
<b>BE14</b>	<b>Open Spaces within Built-up Areas</b>
<b>BE22</b>	<b>Environmental Improvements</b>
<b>H3</b>	<b>Distribution of Development</b>
<b>T6</b>	<b>Land Safeguarded for Railway Purposes</b>

### General

ENV1, 12-14  
 BE2-4, 6-11, 23  
 H17-21, 23-26  
 I11  
 TM1  
 S10, 11, 13  
 RL2-5, 7-9  
 T14-17  
 MW6, 7

## INSET 19 - Oakenshaw

### Character

Oakenshaw is a row of former colliery terraces in open countryside to the north of Willington. The village served the Oakenshaw Colliery to the north which has now been reclaimed back to agriculture. There has been a house clearance programme in the village which cleared the majority of houses from School Row. Oakenshaw is now a mixture of colliery terraces and modern housing, there is a self build housing scheme on part of the cleared School Row site. There is a large area of open space including play equipment to the rear of New Row. The former school is in the southern part of the village which now has the benefit of planning permission for residential development.

The current population of Oakenshaw is 264 (census 1991).

### Strategy

The Local Plan aims to allocate land for development which is consistent with the level of services available. Oakenshaw has limited facilities.

### Opportunities

Oakenshaw can accommodate within its framework housing development south of School Row. This site will help to consolidate the village form and in the case of School Row bring environmental improvements to the area around School Row. The closure of the Wear Valley Training Centre gives the opportunity for residential redevelopment to take place on this site.

### Constraints

The linear form of the village limits the opportunities for development to be accommodated into the existing village framework. The existing facilities could not

adequately serve large additional amounts of developments.

### Policies

<b>GD1</b>	<b>General Development Criteria</b>
<b>BE14</b>	<b>Open Spaces within Built-up Areas</b>
<b>H3</b>	<b>Distribution of Development</b>

### General

ENV1, 12-14  
BE23  
H17-21, 23-26  
I11  
TM1  
S10, 11, 13  
RL2-5, 7-9  
T15, 16  
MW6, 7

## INSET 20 - Helmington Row

### Character

Helmington Row is a small block of turn of the century terraces on the Durham Road between Crook and Willington. Its facilities are limited to a shop/post office, a garage and playing field.

The current population of Helmington Row is 411 (census 1991).

### Strategy

The Local Plan aims to maintain the character of Helmington Row and to allow development which is consistent with the level of services and facilities of the hamlet. This will be achieved through limited small scale and infill development, which could be supported by the limited range of facilities.

### Opportunities

The location of Helmington Row provides good access to Crook and Willington via the A680. To the rear of Front Street there is opportunity to accommodate a small scale housing development with the rationalisation of the allotment gardens. This development would form a natural extension to Helmington Row helping to consolidate the hamlet's form. The development will be dependant on adequate access being achieved onto the A689.

### Constraints

The small nature of the hamlet, limited facilities and its rural setting makes it inappropriate for Helmington Row to accommodate substantial residential development outside the village framework.

### Policies

<b>GD1</b>	<b>General Development Criteria</b>
<b>BE14</b>	<b>Open Spaces within Built-up Areas</b>
<b>H3</b>	<b>Distribution of Development</b>

### General

ENV1, 12-14  
BE23  
H17-21, 23-26  
I11  
TM1  
S10, 11, 13  
RL2-5, 7-9  
T15, 16  
MW6, 7

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## WEARDALE AND TOW LAW SUB AREA

Weardale is the largest of the three sub-area and covers part of the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty described one of the last wilderness areas in Britain. The Dale is of high scenic and ecological value containing 16 sites of Special Scientific Interest and a number of Sites of Nature Conservation Importance. This rural upland area consists of fertile valleys which have been improved by agriculture, hill farmed dales and imposing open moorland. Villages have developed along the valley bottom of the River Wear. An important feature of the Dale is the traditional stone built vernacular architecture and the dispersed loose-knit form of the villages and hamlets, particularly in the west of Weardale. The main villages in the dale are Wolsingham, Stanhope and St Johns Chapel. Although small, these villages contain a wide range of services and facilities to cater for the needs of the local farming community. The area has historically been a rich source of minerals. Much of the area still shows evidence of past extraction and today extraction still forms a vital part of the Dale economy.

Included within the sub-area is Tow Law, which although not in the Dale serves as an important village along the A68 overlooking the entrance of Weardale. It is the largest of the former mining hilltop villages and has retained a wide range of shops and facilities. At the height of the mining period in the last century, Tow Law was three times its present size. The decline in the mining industry was reflected in the growth and prosperity of the mining villages in the District.

### Population

During the period 1951-1991 the population of Weardale/Tow Law sub-area fell by over 2600 a drop of 22%. The changes in the agricultural and mining employment base in upland areas, the decline in services to remote rural areas and the lack of affordable

housing have contributed to rural depopulation, particularly in upland hill farming areas. Since 1981 this population decline has slowed down significantly. The population of the sub-area in 1981 was 9735 compared to the 1991 total of 9574.

### Unemployment Rate

Whilst the area is predominantly agricultural in 1992 nearly 900 manufacturing jobs existed, with the principal employments being the Eastgate Cement Works, Wolsingham Steelworks and the foundries at Stanhope and Tow Law. In the period between 1986-1992 the number unemployed in the sub-area dropped from 615 in 1986 to 492 in 1992, a reduction of 20%. Tow Law has a total of 159 unemployed which accounts for 32% of the overall total number of unemployed for the sub-area.

### Strategy

The strategy for the Weardale/Tow Law sub-area is to seek to protect and enhance the landscape of the AONB and the environment of the Dale as a whole, both built and natural. New housing development will be restricted outside the existing villages unless it can be demonstrated that a need exists for low-cost accommodation then permission may be granted as an exception to policies to allow schemes outside but adjacent to settlements. Elsewhere in the countryside new development will be limited to conversions of suitable redundant buildings in the countryside and to that which is considered essential to rural life.

There are 14 conservation areas within Weardale which will help to ensure the protection and enhancement of character and intrinsic quality of the built environment of the Dale.

## INSET 21 - Stanhope

### Character

Stanhope is an attractive market village in the heart of Weardale and forms part of the largest parish in England. It is located along the A689 to the north of the River Wear nestling in the river valley floor at the foot of the Stanhope Dene which rises to the north. The village has traditionally served the dale as a market place, however, during the last century it became the local focal point for the lead, iron and quarrying industry for the area. The village has developed around the market place which contains the imposing Stanhope Castle and St Thomas's Church and forms the centre of the conservation area. It contains a mixture of traditional building periods with new development to the north and east of the village.

The current population for Stanhope is 1485 (1991 census).

### Strategy

The Local Plan aims to maintain the quality and attractiveness of Stanhope. Due to the nature and layout of the village additional growth will be limited to redevelopment and infilling within the existing village framework although Stanhope is well served by a wide range of services and facilities. These facilities include a primary school, churches, recreation ground and a range of shops and professional services. Further peripheral development, other than those already allocated, would represent an unacceptable extension of the village into the dale and will be resisted.

### Opportunities

There is the opportunity for small scale residential developments through the rationalisation of Bondisle allotment and Chapel Street allotments. Developments of both these sites will be required to ensure that the existing allotments are relocated within the remainder of the site. Also, potential exists for housing development on a small site in East Lane which would round off the built-up area. Any further development will occur through infilling and redevelopment within the existing framework of the village. There is potential to improve the access arrangements to Bonds Foundry by creating a new access road through land to the east of the works. Creating such an access will allow additional land for the expansion of the foundry and the development of small scale advance workshop units. The development would require sensitive landscape treatment and the re-routing of all foundry traffic away from Bondisle Way.

There is need within Stanhope for additional car and coach parking. Opportunity exists to provide a car park and picnic area south of the river adjacent to the show ground. The car park will relieve parking congestion around the ford, provide an additional visitor car park for the town and serve the show ground. Opportunity also exists for tourist development at Stanhope Station.

### Constraints

Stanhope has limited opportunities to accommodate acceptable development due to its physical constraints. The River Wear and the railway line restricts

development to the south, the rising land and disused quarries restrict development to the north. Further linear development along the A689 will be resisted.

### Policies

<b>GD1</b>	<b>General Design Criteria</b>
<b>ENV2</b>	<b>North Penines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty</b>
<b>ENV11</b>	<b>Sites of Nature Conservation Importance and Local Nature Reserves</b>
<b>BE5</b>	<b>Conservation Areas</b>
<b>BE14</b>	<b>Open Spaces within Built Up Areas</b>
<b>BE22</b>	<b>Environmental Improvements</b>
<b>H3</b>	<b>Distribution of Development</b>
<b>H7</b>	<b>Housing Allocations</b>
	- Chapel Street
	- Bond Isle Allotments
<b>H10</b>	<b>Relocation of Existing Uses</b>
	- Bond Isle Allotments
	- Chapel Street
<b>H16</b>	<b>Exceptions Policy</b>
<b>I2</b>	<b>New Industrial Allocations</b>
<b>I6</b>	<b>Local Industrial Sites</b>
	- Bond Isle
	- Castle Gardens
	- East of Blairs
<b>TM3</b>	<b>New Tourist Facilities</b>
	- Stanhope Station
<b>S8</b>	<b>Local Shopping Areas</b>
<b>T6</b>	<b>Land Safeguarded for Railway Purposes</b>
<b>T9</b>	<b>New Car Park Provision</b>

### General

ENV1, 3, 8, 10, 12-14  
 BE1-3, 6-11  
 H16-21, 23-26  
 I11  
 TM1, 2, 5-7  
 S10-13, 15, 16  
 RL2-5, 7-9  
 T7, 14-17  
 MW6, 7

## INSET 22 - Tow Law

### Character

Tow Law lies to the north west of Crook and stands over 1000 ft above sea level on the edge of open moorland countryside. It is a linear settlement along the A68. Tow Law has a population of over 2,000 inhabitants, however in the 1880's the town was three times its present size when it had no less than three collieries and two steelworks. Mining activity in the area has declined to the present day single opencast works to the north of the village. However, a steel foundry and a steel finishing works remain in the town. Unlike other colliery towns Tow Law has retained many of its facilities and functions. Today it provides a local focal point along the A68 and contains an auction mart, a range of shopping and professional services, a community and health centre.

The current population for Tow Law is 2208 (1991 census).

### Strategy

In order to allow Tow Law to continue to develop, growth will be acceptable on a scale which can be physically accommodated without significant landscape and environmental impact and can be supported by a reasonable range of social and service facilities. New land allocations for housing and industrial development have been identified which will maintain existing housing and industrial development rates consistent with the availability of services and facilities.

### Opportunities

Opportunities exist for both housing and industrial development at Tow Law. The setting of the town on a ridge of high ground encloses a south-west facing valley. Development opportunities within this area will benefit from the micro-climatic effects of shelter from north and north-east winds. There is opportunity for housing to the rear of the football ground incorporating the creation of an all weather football pitch. Access to this site and the Valley Close site previously the subject of a planning permission, will be achieved via land to the north of the football ground. Both sites will help to consolidate the existing built form of Tow Law and increase the range of housing within the town. A level of low-cost housing provisions will be expected on new housing sites in the town. The entrance of the Inkerman site (occupied by Banks Opencast Company) gives the opportunity to accommodate some small scale industrial units in conjunction with the redevelopment of the existing premises. Underused land to the rear of Dans Castle Industrial Estate gives the opportunity to extend the existing site. This allocation will allow environmental improvements to be achieved to an area of vacant underused land. The northern limit to both these areas being defined by previous opencasting.

Further environmental improvements are planned for the A68 through the town. In addition allotments and small holdings to the rear of Campbell Street are included in the development limits of Tow law and may give the opportunity for development, provided that the area is comprehensively redeveloped. The Council will resist piecemeal development. Similarly, an area to the north of Smith Street currently occupied by farm and

vacant industrial buildings could be re-developed for housing if carried out comprehensively.

In the former opencasted area to the east, opportunities exist for the creation of a community forest, providing recreation facilities and bringing landscape improvements to the area.

### Constraints

The main constraint to development of Tow Law is its physical location. Sat perched on a ridge any new development, if not carefully located, would have a detrimental impact on the landscape. Once the newly allocated sites have been developed only limited infill will be permitted in Tow Law.

### Policies

<b>GD1</b>	<b>General Development Criteria</b>
<b>ENV16</b>	<b>Community Woodland</b>
<b>BE14</b>	<b>Open Spaces within Built-up Area</b>
<b>BE22</b>	<b>Environmental Improvements</b>
<b>H3</b>	<b>Distribution of Development</b>
<b>H22</b>	<b>Community Benefit</b>
	- Football Ground
<b>I2</b>	<b>New Industrial Allocations</b>
	- Inkerman
	- Dan's Castle Extension
<b>I6</b>	<b>Local Industrial Sites</b>
	- Dan's Castle
	- Inkerman
<b>S8</b>	<b>Local Shopping Areas</b>

### General

ENV1,12-14  
 BE23  
 H15-21, 23-26  
 I11  
 TM1, 2, 5  
 S10-16  
 RL2-5, 7-9  
 T7-9, 14-17  
 MW6, 7

## INSET 23 - Wolsingham

### Character

Wolsingham is one of the largest settlements in Weardale and is an attractive market town which serves the lower part of Weardale. It has developed on the north banks of the River Wear and along the A689. It has traditionally been the market town for this part of the dale and continues to be the focal point for the surrounding area. Wolsingham is Saxon in origin and grew through the influence of the Prince Bishops of Durham who owned large tracts of land in the area and were instrumental in the development of the iron making industry. The existing steelworks in the town was in fact the site of the first ironworks in Weardale. A large part of the village has been designated a conservation area. Wolsingham has grown around the market place developing along the Tow Law road and west along the A689. New housing estates have developed east of Waskerley Beck and south of Front Street. Wolsingham contains a good range of services, including comprehensive and primary schools, shops and recreational facilities, which would be expected to be associated with a market town.

The population of Wolsingham is 2067 (census 1991).

### Strategy

The Local Plan aims to maintain the existing housing and industrial development of Wolsingham in a way which can be adequately served by the existing facilities and services. The Plan aims to concentrate employment and residential development within the dale on the existing market towns which have an appropriate level of facilities to serve additional growth. Where possible new development will be required to provide for affordable housing to help meet local housing need. The attractiveness of the town will be maintained and intrusive development into the countryside will be resisted.

### Opportunities

The redevelopment of the sawmill and part of the steelworks will create the opportunity to provide additional industrial, residential and open space provision provided that adequate access can be achieved. Redevelopment of the former steelworks will enable the renovation of the redundant listed building south of the Steelworks for industrial/engineering use. The development of the Weardale Railway may provide an alternative railway engineering use for the building. There is opportunity to provide additional small workshop/office space on land next to Ferndale Industrial Estate. This development would help to consolidate the town and provide diversity in industrial premises and employment opportunities. Land is identified for housing north of Riverdale to the rear of Tilcon site. Should the Tilcon site become vacant, then there is potential for the housing allocation to be extended to include this site, allowing direct access from the main road provided the requirements of the Highway Authority can be achieved. Opportunities exist for an environmental improvement scheme centred on the market place including landscaping, floorscaping and traffic management.

There is an unimplemented proposal for a golf course to the east of the village.

### Constraints

Wolsingham is set in open countryside bounded by the River Wear to the south and rising land to the north. Peripheral expansion of the town to the east or west would intrude into open countryside.

### Policies

<b>GD1</b>	<b>General Development Criteria</b>
<b>BE5</b>	<b>Conservation Areas</b>
<b>BE14</b>	<b>Open Spaces within Built-up Areas</b>
<b>BE22</b>	<b>Environmental Improvements</b>
<b>H3</b>	<b>Distribution of Development</b>
<b>H7</b>	<b>Housing Allocations</b>
	- Sawmill Site
	- North of Riverdale
<b>H9</b>	<b>Related Infrastructure Provision</b>
	- Sawmill Site
<b>H10</b>	<b>Relocation of Existing Uses</b>
	- Sawmill Site
<b>H15</b>	<b>Affordable Housing</b>
	- Sawmill Site
	- North of Riverdale
<b>H16</b>	<b>Exceptions Policy</b>
<b>I2</b>	<b>New Industrial Allocations</b>
	- Steelworks Site
	- Industrial Estate, East
<b>I6</b>	<b>Local Industrial Sites</b>
	- Steelworks Site
	- Industrial Estate
	- Industrial Estate, East
<b>TM3</b>	<b>New Tourist Facilities</b>
	- Market Place
<b>S8</b>	<b>Local Shopping Areas</b>
<b>RL6</b>	<b>Recreation Allocations</b>
	- Ward/Attwood Terrace
<b>RL12</b>	<b>Opportunities for Recreation Provision</b>
	- Land to east of Wolsingham
<b>T6</b>	<b>Land Safeguarded for Railway Purposes</b>
<b>MW1</b>	<b>Safeguarding of Mineral Reserves</b>

### General

ENV1-3, 8, 12-15  
 BE1-4, 6-11, 23  
 H15 -21, 23-26  
 I11  
 TM1, 2, 5-8  
 S10-16  
 RL2-5, 7-9  
 T8, 14-17  
 MW6, 7



## INSET 24 - Frosterley

### Character

Frosterley is an attractive dales village located along A689 overlooking the River Wear. The village is a mix of traditional stone built cottages and brick built terraces. Two small post war housing estates have been built at both entrances of the village and an area to the rear of the car park in the centre of the village has permission for housing. The village has a linear form which has developed along the A689 and south to the railway line. It contains a range of services including a primary school, shops, pubs, recreation ground, community hall and church.

The current population of Frosterley is 627 (census 1991).

### Strategy

The Local Plan aims to maintain the attractiveness and quality of Frosterley. Due to the physical limitations of the village new development will be restricted to existing allocated sites, redevelopment and infilling to help ensure the traditional form and character of the village is maintained.

### Opportunities

The character and attractive appearance of the village should be maintained. Development opportunities are limited to infilling within the existing framework of the village which will help to consolidate the village form. Redevelopment opportunities may arise within the defined limits to development through the plan period. Should the industrial premises to the east of Frosterley become vacant redevelopment opportunity exists to create additional workshop space incorporating landscape improvements around the site to improve the entrance of the village.

Railway land has been safeguarded to provide the opportunity to develop the usage of the Weardale Railway for passenger, tourism and commercial uses.

### Constraints

Due to the physical constraints of Frosterley, notably the rising land to the north and the railway line to the south, there are limited opportunities for additional residential development within the existing village framework. The linear development of the village will be restricted.

### Policies

<b>GD1</b>	<b>General Design Criteria</b>
<b>BE5</b>	<b>Conservation Areas</b>
<b>BE14</b>	<b>Open Spaces with in Built-up Areas</b>
<b>BE15</b>	<b>Scheduled Ancient Monuments</b>
<b>H3</b>	<b>Distribution of Development</b>
<b>H16</b>	<b>Exceptions Policy</b>
<b>I2</b>	<b>New Industrial Allocations</b> - Broadwood
<b>I6</b>	<b>Local Industrial Sites</b> - Broadwood
<b>T6</b>	<b>Land Safeguarded for Railway Purposes</b>

### General

ENV1-4, 9, 10, 12-15
BE1, 6-11, 23
H16-21, 23-26
I11
TM1, 2, 5-8
S10, 11, 13, 15, 16
RL1
T7, 14-17
MW6, 7

## INSET 25 - St Johns Chapel

I6 Local Industrial Site  
- St Johns Chapel and Extension

### Character

St Johns Chapel is an attractive town in upper Weardale to the south of the River Wear. The town has traditionally been a focal point for upper Weardale receiving its market charter in the 17th Century. St Johns Chapel still remains an important sheep market for the area.

The town has developed around the Market Place, which contains the Georgian Church and the Town Hall and forms the centre of the designated conservation area. The town has developed west along the A689 with modern bungalows and a small post war housing cul-de-sac. English Estates have developed some workshops to the north of the village. St Johns Chapel contains a good range of services and facilities for its size.

Its present population is 344 (1991 census).

### Strategy

The Local Plan aims to maintain housing growth on committed sites within St Johns Chapel which can be adequately served by existing facilities and services. The attractiveness and setting of the town will be maintained and protected from inappropriate and insensitive development.

### Opportunities

There is opportunity for housing development to the rear of Hood Street to be accessed from Longdale Grove. This site will require careful and sensitive design and layout to ensure the scheme is in keeping with the town and surrounding dale landscape. A suburban design and layout will be resisted. There may be potential for infill development within the existing town framework. Land adjacent to the Industrial Estate is allocated to provide extra employment opportunities and workshop premises if demand exceeds the existing industrial premises.

### Constraints

The town's linear form makes further development difficult. Also, its location within the North Pennines AONB make expansion on the edge of the town inappropriate.

### Policies

<b>GD1</b>	<b>General Development Criteria</b>
<b>ENV2</b>	<b>North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty</b>
<b>BE5</b>	<b>Conservation Areas</b>
<b>BE14</b>	<b>Open Spaces within Built Up Areas</b>
<b>H3</b>	<b>Distribution of Development</b>
<b>H7</b>	<b>Housing Allocations</b>
	- Broken Way
<b>H15</b>	<b>Affordable Housing</b>
	- Broken Way
<b>H16</b>	<b>Exceptions Policy</b>
<b>I2</b>	<b>New Industrial Allocations</b>
	- St Johns Chapel Extension

### General

ENV1, 12-15  
BE1-4, 6-11, 23  
H16-21, 23-26  
I11  
TM1, 2, 5, 6, 8  
S10-13  
RL2-5  
T15, 16  
MW3, 6, 7

## INSET 26 - Ireshopeburn

### Character

Ireshopeburn is a small attractive village in upper Weardale. The village is in the valley floor of the River Wear and forms a bridging point for Ireshope Burn. It is a ribbon settlement which has developed along the A689. Ireshopeburn is a mix of traditional stone built dale cottages and farms, it has the former Blackdene Fluorspar Mine processing plant to the north and has the Weardale Outdoor Centre in Weardale House. A conservation area has been designated for the village to maintain and protect the attractive character and quality of Ireshopeburn. This conservation area also covers Newhouse. It has very limited facilities. The current population of Ireshopeburn is 173 (census 1991)

### Strategy

The Local Plan aims at maintaining the quality and attractiveness of Ireshopeburn and its surrounding landscape. New development will be restricted to appropriate infill and redevelopment within the existing village framework.

### Opportunities

Due to the ribbon form of Ireshopeburn opportunities may arise for limited infill development. Such schemes will only be permitted which do not affect the character and amenity of the village. The former Fluorspar plant at West Blackdene is subject to an outstanding reclamation condition to return the site back to agricultural use.

### Constraints

The linear form of the village reduces the opportunity for new development to be incorporated into the village form. Its limited facilities and small scale rural nature makes it inappropriate to accommodate new schemes outside the development limits.

### Policies

<b>GD1</b>	<b>General Development Criteria</b>
<b>ENV2</b>	<b>North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty</b>
<b>BE5</b>	<b>Conservation Areas</b>
<b>BE14</b>	<b>Open Spaces within Built Up Areas</b>
<b>H3</b>	<b>Distribution of Development</b>
<b>H16</b>	<b>Exceptions Policy</b>

### General

ENV1, 12-15  
BE1-4, 6-11, 23  
H16-21, 23-26  
I11  
TM1, 2, 5, 6, 8  
S10, 11, 13, 15, 16  
RL2-5  
T15, 16  
MW3, 6, 7

## INSET 27 - Edmundbyers

### Character

Edmundbyers is a most northerly village in the District set high in the Derwent Valley to the south of Derwent Reservoir in the North Pennines AONB. It is a small loose-knit village and has developed around the junction of the Stanhope and Blanchland roads and has traditionally been an agricultural village. Edmundbyers contains a number of farms, particularly around the village green. A conservation area has been designated for the village to maintain and protect its attractive character. There has been some modern development in the land enclosed by the local road network. The current population of Edmundbyers is 147 (census 1991).

### Strategy

The Local Plan aims to maintain and protect the attractiveness and quality of Edmundbyers whilst providing additional housing choice within this remote rural part of the District. The village has a basic level of facilities, capable of servicing limited growth. The village has a village shop, post office, pub, police station and Youth Hostel.

### Opportunities

There is the opportunity for housing development in the centre of the village which will allow for the creation of a larger village green. The scheme will require careful and sensitive design to ensure it is in keeping with the character and scale of the village. A suburban scheme and layout will be resisted.

### Constraints

Edmundbyers is a small rural village unsuitable for substantial growth. It is situated in open countryside on rising land, making development outside the existing village framework prominent and intrusive in the AONB landscape.

### Policies

<b>GD1</b>	<b>General Development Criteria</b>
<b>ENV 2</b>	<b>North Pennines Area Of Outstanding Natural Beauty</b>
<b>BE5</b>	<b>Conservation Areas</b>
<b>BE14</b>	<b>Open Spaces within Built-up Areas</b>
<b>H3</b>	<b>Distribution of Development</b>
<b>H16</b>	<b>Exceptions Policy</b>

### General

ENV1, 3, 12-15  
BE1-4, 6-11, 23  
H4, 16-21, 23-26  
I11  
TM1, 2, 6, 7  
S10, 13  
RL2-5  
MW3, 6, 7

## INSET 28 - Eastgate

### Character

Eastgate is a small attractive village partly included in the AONB set back from the A689. It consists of traditional stone built dales cottages and its group value is recognised by its designation as a conservation area. It is probably best known for the Eastgate Cement Works to the west. Its facilities are limited to two churches and a pub, however the Weardale Leisure Complex is located at the Cement Works.

Its present population is 315 (1991 census).

### Strategy

The Local Plan aims to maintain the attractiveness and quality of Eastgate. Development will only be allowed through redevelopment and infilling within the existing village framework.

### Opportunities

There may be opportunity for a limited infilling development and redevelopment within the existing village framework. Eastgate has few facilities which makes it unsuitable to accommodate additional development outside this.

### Constraints

Eastgate is a small village partly within the AONB. Its rural location and small size makes it inappropriate to accommodate any development allocations. Any development within the existing built form would need to be sensitively located and designed to reflect the rural character of the village.

### Policies

<b>GD1</b>	<b>General Development Criteria</b>
<b>ENV 2</b>	<b>North Pennines Area Of Outstanding Natural Beauty</b>
<b>BE5</b>	<b>Conservation Areas</b>
<b>BE14</b>	<b>Open Spaces within Built-up Areas</b>
<b>H3</b>	<b>Distribution of Development</b>
<b>H16</b>	<b>Exceptions Policy</b>
<b>T6</b>	<b>Land Safeguarded for Railway Purposes</b>

### General

ENV1, 3, 12-15  
 BE1-4, 6-11, 23  
 H4, 16-21, 23-26  
 I11  
 TM1, 2, 6, 7  
 S10, 13  
 T14-17  
 MW3, 6, 7

## INSET 29 - Rookhope

### Character

Rookhope is a small rural village located deep in the North Pennines AONB. It is sited in the Rookhope Burn Valley and has developed along the Allenheads to Eastgate road. It developed as a mining village, initially mining iron in the time of Bishop Pudsey and later lead and fluorspar. All mining activities have now been abandoned apart from the fluorspar mine about 1 mile west of the village on the Allenheads road. Rookhope consists of a mixture of stone built miners' terraces, traditional dales cottages and modern housing. It has a range of facilities which includes a primary school, a community hall, post office/shop.

The current population of Rookhope is 233 (1991 census).

### Strategy

The Local Plan aims at maintaining the character of Rookhope by limiting new development to small scale and infill schemes within the existing village framework. The scale of such development reflects the basic range of facilities present in the village.

### Opportunities

There are opportunities for limited small scale housing developments within the village. A site exists to the rear of Boltsburn Crescent for housing development. All developments in the village will require careful design and layout to ensure they are in keeping with Rookhope and the dales setting. A suburban layout will not be in keeping with the village.

### Constraints

The linear form of the village and its siting in the Rookhope Burn valley limits the opportunity for the village to accommodate development which does not encroach on the open countryside.

### Policies

<b>GD1</b>	<b>General Development Criteria</b>
<b>ENV 2</b>	<b>North Pennines Area Of Outstanding Natural Beauty</b>
<b>H3</b>	<b>Distribution of Development</b>
<b>H16</b>	<b>Exceptions Policy</b>
<b>TM3</b>	<b>New Tourist Facilities</b>

### General

ENV1, 12-14  
 H4,16-21, 23-26  
 I11  
 TM1, 2, 6, 7  
 S10, 11, 13, 15  
 RL2-5  
 T15, 16  
 MW3, 6, 7

## INSET 30 - Westgate

### Character

Westgate is a loose-knit dale village in upper Weardale. It sits on the banks of the River Wear and has developed along the A689. Its loose-knit form is interspersed with open paddocks which stretches the village north up the side of the dale. It is predominantly a farming village which consists of farmhouses, dale cottages and stone terraces. It contains a small post-war cul-de-sac at the entrance of the village from the east and a caravan park between the A689 and the River Wear to the west.

The present population of Westgate is 243 (1991 census).

### Strategy

The Local Plan aims to maintain the quality and attractiveness of Westgate whilst providing small scale housing development to accommodate for local housing needs. The Plan aims at ensuring that the proposed allocations are at a scale that can be adequately served by the range of facilities. Westgate has a basic range of facilities including a pub, church, post office/shop and garage.

### Opportunity

Weardale Caravan Site allows the opportunity for small scale redevelopment for housing. Careful design and layout will be required to ensure development is in keeping with, and sympathetic to the village and the AONB. There is an opportunity to create a visitor car park at Westgate Bridge to help accommodate visitor pressure in the village and encourage visitors to use local facilities.

### Constraints

The loose-knit nature of Westgate and the linear pattern along the A689 does not allow the opportunity for development other than the small scale allocated sites. Westgate's prominent location within the AONB and its rural setting constrains development to sites which are within the existing village framework. Backland development which encroaches onto the setting of the River Wear will be restricted.

### Policies

<b>GD1</b>	<b>General Development Criteria</b>
<b>ENV 2</b>	<b>North Pennines Area Of Outstanding Natural Beauty</b>
<b>BE5</b>	<b>Conservation Areas</b>
<b>BE14</b>	<b>Open Spaces within Built Up Areas</b>
<b>BE15, 18</b>	<b>Scheduled Ancient Monuments</b>
<b>H3</b>	<b>Distribution of Development</b>
<b>H7</b>	<b>Housing Allocations</b>
	- Weardale Caravan Site, Westgate
<b>H16</b>	<b>Exceptions Policy</b>
<b>RL14</b>	<b>Coast to Coast Recreational Route</b>
<b>T9</b>	<b>New Car Park Provision</b>

### General

ENV1, 8, 10, 12-15  
 BE1-4, 6-11, 12-13, 23  
 H4, 16-21, 23-26  
 I11  
 TM1, 2, 5, 7, 8  
 S10, 11, 13, 15  
 RL2-5  
 T15, 16  
 MW3, 6, 7

## INSET 31 - Cowshill

### Character

Cowshill is the most westerly village in the District and is set in moorland deep in the North Pennines AONB. It is a loose-knit dale village which has developed at the confluence of Killhope Burn and Sedling Burn and forms a crossing point for the A689 at Cowshill Bridge. Cowshill is made up of traditional stone built dale cottages and farms. It has limited facilities including a church, hotel and play area.

The present population of Cowshill is 264 (1991 census).

### Strategy

The Local Plan aims to maintain the quality and attractiveness of Cowshill by limiting new development to appropriate and sensitive infilling within the existing village framework and the reuse of existing building. Its range of facilities makes it unsuitable to accommodate other development.

### Opportunities

There is opportunity to create a formal visitor parking area at Cowshill Bridge on an existing hard standing area. The scheme will require adequate landscaping and screening to incorporate it into the landscape. To help maintain its dale character a conservation area has been designated.

### Constraints

The loose-knit form of Cowshill and its small size only allows for limited infill development to be accommodated within the hamlet. Cowshill's location within the District and AONB makes it unsuitable for additional housing allocations.

### Policies

<b>GD1</b>	<b>General Development Criteria</b>
<b>ENV2</b>	<b>North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty</b>
<b>BE5</b>	<b>Conservation Areas</b>
<b>BE14</b>	<b>Open Spaces within Built-up Areas</b>
<b>H3</b>	<b>Distribution of Development</b>
<b>H16</b>	<b>Exceptions Policy</b>
<b>RL12</b>	<b>Public Rights of Way</b>
<b>T9</b>	<b>New Car Park Provision</b>

### General

ENV1, 12-14  
 BE1-4, 6-11, 23  
 H4, 16-21, 23-26  
 I11  
 TM1, 2, 5-7  
 S10, 11, 13, 15  
 RL1  
 T15, 16  
 MW6, 7

## INSET 32 - Wearhead

### Character

Wearhead is a small dale village at the source of the River Wear. It is an attractive village tightly grouped on the banks of Killhope Burn and the River Wear and is a crossing point for the A689 via Wearhead Bridge. The area north of the river has been designated as a conservation area. The village is made up of traditional stone built dale cottages and has a range of good facilities for its size, including a primary school, shops, churches and a garage. The village has spread south of the River Wear, along the A689 and includes the garage and a small post war cul-de-sac.

The present population of Wearhead is 141 (1991 census).

### Strategy

The Local Plan aims to maintain the quality and attractiveness of Wearhead and where possible to help provide for the local housing needs of the area. This will be achieved by limiting new development to appropriate infill, redevelopment and small scale schemes.

### Opportunities

There may be opportunity from residential development through re-use of properties and infilling within the existing village framework.

### Constraints

To the north of the river the village is tightly constrained by the steeply rising land and Killhope Burn. South of the river there is a danger of the village extending along the A689, ribbon development will be resisted.

### Policies

<b>GD1</b>	<b>General Development Criteria</b>
<b>ENV2</b>	<b>North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty</b>
<b>BE5</b>	<b>Conservation Areas</b>
<b>H3</b>	<b>Distribution of Development</b>
<b>H16</b>	<b>Exceptions Policy</b>
<b>RL12</b>	<b>Public Rights of Way</b>
<b>T9</b>	<b>New Car Park Provision</b>

### General

ENV1, 12-14  
 BE1-4, 6-11, 23  
 H4, 16-21, 23-26  
 I11  
 TM1, 2, 5-7  
 S10, 11, 13, 15  
 RL1  
 T15, 16  
 MW3, 6, 7

# Further Plan Guidance



# HIGHWAY DESIGN STANDARDS FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT

1 The following information is intended to give a general indication of highway requirements for new development. For full details developers should refer to the current "Guide to Design and Construction of Estate Roads" published by the County Council. This document may be subject to periodic revisions.

## 1. RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

2 For new housing, developers will normally be required to enter a legal agreement with the Highway Authority for the adoption of the highway elements. Currently this is covered by Section 38 of the Highways Act 1980. The agreement ensures that the roads are built to approved standards of construction and geometry and on completion they become maintainable at public expense.

3 Similar legal arrangements are required by the Water Authority in respect of sewers.

### Non-Adoptable Access

4 No more than 3 properties are to be served from a private shared drive. A minimum width of 4.1 metres is required over the shared length, and total length should not exceed 25 metres.

### Adoptable Access

- a) In order to provide for vehicular movement the widths and alignments of carriageways should be designed to take into account:
- i) the expected volumes, size and speeds of vehicular traffic;
  - ii) the frequency with which various types of vehicles need to pass each other;
  - iii) the provision made for off-street and on-street parking; and
  - iv) the availability of alternative means of access to dwellings to prevent blockage of access.

A major access road can serve up to 300 dwellings and should preferably be in the form of a loop with two access points. A minimum carriageway width of 5.5 metres is required unless provision is required to be made for a future bus route when this should be increased to 6.0 metres where no direct access is permitted, or 6.75 metres with direct access. Provision of footways will normally be required.

A minor access road can serve up to 100 dwellings with a carriageway width of 4.8 metres and can be a loop or a cul-de-sac with footways.

Shared surface roads, i.e. without segregated footways, should not exceed 100 metres in length and will normally be cul-de-sacs. The minimum width of hard surface should be 4.5 metres, with the provision of service margins. Such roads will not normally be expected to provide through routes for pedestrians.

b) Developers will be required to incorporate traffic calming measures where appropriate in

order to provide safe conditions for all road users and to minimise the severity and number of accidents in built-up areas.

Measures can include chicanes, road narrowing, raised tables, humps etc as well as the use of short cul-de-sacs and changes in horizontal alignment by the use of junctions.

Where road humps are used as a traffic calming device the form of the hump, signing and spacing must conform to the regulations laid down in the appropriate Statutory Instrument, currently, 1990 No 1703.

As a general guide-line to achieve the following target speeds, a traffic calming device should be incorporated into the roads at the following spacings:

- i) less than 20 mph, unrestricted road length less than 40 metres;
  - ii) about 20 mph, unrestricted road length less than 60 metres; and
  - iii) under 30 mph, unrestricted road length less than 80-120 metres.
- c) Within the development road gradients should not normally be steeper than 1 in 15 with side road gradients at junctions and turning heads no steeper than 1 in 25 for a distance of twice the junction radii. Segregated footpaths should not be steeper than 1 in 12 in order to cater for the disabled.
- d) The spacing and layout of junctions should be designed to take into account the types and numbers of vehicles likely to use the junction, the directions of movement at the junction and the extent to which delays may be caused by conflicting vehicular movements at junction with distributor roads.

Typically, junctions on the same side of the road will be spaced between 30-100 metres and on opposite sides of the road between 15-50 metres, where the higher figures relate to the higher status roads. Stagers should be of a right-left configuration and junctions should be set out to form 90 degree intersections.

Junction radii will normally range from 6-20 metres depending on road status, but 4.5 metres may be permitted for traffic calming purposes or alternatively where the footway is suitably protected.

- e) The spacing and layout of turning spaces should be designed to take into account the sizes of vehicles expected to use them and the need to avoid vehicles having to reverse over long distances.
- f) Visibility at bends and summits should be sufficient to enable drivers to stop if necessary to avoid a collision. Visibility at junctions should be sufficient to enable drivers entering the priority road to do so safely and to be seen by other motorists approaching the junction. Developers will be required to comply with the standards set out in the current Planning



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Policy Guidance Note.

- g) Centre line radii will relate to the hierarchy of the road structure and the minimum can range from 10 metres to 90 metres. Widening may be required on bends curving through more than 10 degrees.
- h) Provision for emergency access may be required where a cul-de-sac serves a significant number of dwellings.
- i) Bus access will normally be required where dwellings are more than 400 metres walking distance from the nearest bus stop or 200 metres in town centres.
- j) Where estates abut busy, major roads, bus lay-bys may be required on these roads.
- k) Developers may be required to finance modifications to the existing highway to permit safe access to be achieved. Works in the highway will be subject to an appropriate legal agreement with the Highway Authority.
- l) Development will be required to connect with adjacent urban areas by appropriate footpaths.
- m) Developers will be required to make provision for cycle routes where appropriate.
- n) There will be a general requirement that all roads and footpaths should be lit.
- o) Provision will be required to cater for the blind, partially sighted and disabled in the form of tactile crossings and dropped kerbs to comply with current standards.

## **2. NON-RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT**

Service roads to non-residential development or private establishments such as nursing homes, for instances, will not normally be considered for adoption.

Nevertheless, developers will be required to comply with access spacing, visibility splay requirements and other details considered relevant by the Highway Authority to secure a safe development.

Developers will be required to comply with current parking standards for operational and non-operational activities. The development should make adequate provision to accommodate emergency vehicles with emergency access where appropriate and incorporate a suitable turning area.

## COUNTY HIGHWAY PARKING STANDARDS

1 The car parking standards were previously prepared by Durham County Council in 1981. These standards were revised in 1994 and have been adopted, with modifications, by this Council to provide guidance on determining the amount of parking required for new development. Since the adoption of these standards, Planning Policy Guidance Note 13 - Transport has been published which aims to reduce reliance on the private car. Since the availability of car parking has a major influence on the choice of means of transport, these Parking Standards may be reviewed by the Highway Authority especially in relation to locations which have good access to means of travel other than the private car.

2 Twenty three categories of development are listed in the following schedule of car parking standards. The appropriate standard is normally applied to each application for planning permission for new development with the objective of securing adequate off-street parking space for the maximum number of vehicles likely to be generated at any one time during the life of the new development. In assessing the parking requirements, it is intended that the standards are applied with a degree of flexibility so as to take account of the particular circumstances of the development. For example, the size of the development and its relationship with other development, the availability of other parking space and special environmental considerations such as development affecting listed buildings or in conservation areas, are important factors that need to be balanced against other planning objectives. In this respect the likelihood of change in these circumstances bringing about different traffic generation and parking demands in the future needs to be borne in mind.

3 There are likely to be some less frequently occurring land uses not included in the standards. The absence of an appropriate category does not mean that parking provision is not required. Instead, individual assessment will be necessary for each particular case.

4 The standards make a distinction between operational and non-operation parking space in order to conform with the parking policies in the County Structure Plan and other policies in this District Local Plan. This is also in accord with Government advice and is of particular importance in connection with development within the central areas of major centres. A full explanation of the use of these terms is contained in the following notes:-

1. Residential.
2. Special Residential.
3. Hotels, Motels and Guest Houses.
4. Restaurants, Cafes, Public Houses, Licensed Clubs and Hotel Bars Open to Non-residents.
5. Fast food and Hot food take-away shops.
6. Retail.
7. Cash and Carry Warehouses.
8. Storage and Distribution Warehouses.
9. Industrial Buildings.

10. Offices.
11. Car Sales.
12. Garages, Service Stations and Car Repair Workshops.
13. Education.
14. Places of Worship.
15. Places of Entertainment.
16. Community Centres and Other Public Halls.
17. Art Galleries, Museums and Exhibition Halls.
18. Hospitals.
19. Clinics, Health Centres and Surgeries.
20. Libraries.
21. Sports Facilities.
22. Touring Caravan and Camping Sites.
23. Self Catering Holiday Accommodation.

### NOTES ON THE USE OF THE COUNTY STANDARDS

- 5 (i) The levels of parking which the standards seek to achieve are the minimum requirements normally to be met by new development. The standards are expressed as ratios per minimum unit measurement (e.g. floorspace, employees, seating etc.) and normally the nearest multiple thereof will be applied in order to calculate the number of parking spaces required. With small developments it may be necessary to "round up" to the minimum unit measurement.
- 6 (ii) The County Council's parking standards have been amended slightly to take account of the particular circumstances of this District and other policies contained in this plan. In the residential standards, a distinction has been made between parking provision for plot conversions and bedsitters. The same non-operational requirements have been specified for DIY stores and non-food retail warehouses since permission is not required for a change of use between the two. The non-operational requirements for garages/service stations, etc relating to spares/sales department have been retained from the previous standards. The non-operational requirement for colleges of further education has been changed from 1 space per 5 full-time students and/or 3 part-time students at the busiest time. Specific standards covering car parking provision for the disabled are included in this appendix.

### Operational and Non-operational Parking Space

7 The standards are divided into operational and non-operational parking space. This helps avoid unnecessary conflict between different users, e.g. if loading/unloading space is wrongly used by employees, shoppers etc.

8 **Operational Parking Space** is the space required for cars and other vehicles regularly and necessarily involved in the operation of the business of a particular building. It includes space for delivering or collecting goods at premises but not for storing or servicing vehicles except where

this is necessary as part of the business carried on at the premises. Residential parking, being essential and directly related to car ownership, is classified as operational parking space.

- 9 **Non-operational Parking Space** is the space required for the vehicles which do not need to park or wait within the curtilage of the building, including cars belonging to employees (mainly long-stay parking), shoppers, business callers and visitors (mainly short-stay parking).
- 10 In the town centres of Bishop Auckland and Crook as defined on the Proposals Map operational space will normally be required to be provided within the curtilage of new development. If non-operational parking space is provided, it should be freely available to the public or else the developers will be required to contribute to centrally provided parking space through a planning agreement. In all other parts of the District, developers will normally be required to provide, within the curtilage of new development, both operational and non-operational space.
- 11 Because of the number of factors affecting the use of the car for journeys to central areas and the complex interaction between central area land uses, caution must be exercised if using the non-operational standard to calculate the parking generated by development in such areas. In such cases a particular assessment may be required of the overall demand for and supply of parking space in the central area as well as the impact of the new development.
- 12 Although the parking space should normally be provided within the curtilage of the particular new development, it would be possible for the required parking space to be provided on other land, perhaps as a grouped provision, on condition that the land is satisfactorily related to the development and is under the control of the applicant.
- 13 Because the standards anticipate future car ownership levels it would appear both sensible and desirable to phase the provision of parking space up to the required future level. However, this is not likely to be practicable with most forms of development as it would require some form of agreement, subsequently enforceable, to be reached at the time of granting planning permission for the new development. In the case of development by Local Authorities and certain other public bodies phased provision can be easily negotiated provided that the development is designed with the necessary flexibility. Housing layouts with grouped off-street parking areas are a good example of this.

### Mixed Land Uses and Dual Use of Parking Space

- 14 Certain developments may incorporate more than one independent land use in which case the standards for the appropriate category of development will be applied simultaneously. This would be the case with comprehensive developments involving say, shops, offices and a theatre on the same site.
- 15 Where, however, it can be shown that the parking

demands are likely to arise at different times of the day, for example from shoppers and theatre-goers, or on different days of the week, dual use of car parking space can be achieved. In such cases the highest relevant parking standard will apply.

- 16 The case for the collective provision of parking space is strong as it can save on resources and, for example, provide the opportunity for achieving improved development layouts. Indeed it is the full realisation of this principle, coupled with traffic generation considerations and the need for equitable parking control, which forms the basis of the policy on non-operational parking as applied to the central areas of major centres.
- 17 Many of the standards anticipate, and provide for, ancillary residential use usually associated with the main category of development. However, in assessing the parking demand associated with a particular land use it may be necessary, depending on the component parts of that use, to refer to the parking standard of more than one category of development. For example, a sports centre might have a public bar (incidental land use), or ancillary offices might be attached to industrial development. The extent to which the separate assessment of ancillary and incidental use is necessary and can reasonably be undertaken depends on the circumstances of each case. Again the possibility of dual use of parking space also needs to be borne in mind.

### Car Park Layout

- 18 Car parking areas should be laid out so that there is sufficient space for vehicles to manoeuvre within the site and enter and leave the site in a forward direction. This requirement does not apply to private residential drives on housing estate roads. Recommended car park dimensions are shown at the end of this appendix.

### Facilities for the Disabled

- 19 Space will normally be required for mobility handicapped persons to park their vehicles at any development which is likely to attract their custom. These spaces should be as close as possible to the destination and should be large enough to allow wheelchair access. Parking provision for the disabled will be required in accordance with the guidelines of the Institute of Highways and Transportation in "Revised Guidelines for Reducing Mobility Handicaps" (1991).
- 20 The recommended numbers of reserved spaces vary in accordance with the type and capacity of car parks, as follows:-
- (a) **For car parks associated with employment premises and provided for employees and visitors:**
    - *Up to 200 spaces : 5% of capacity, subject to a minimum of 2 spaces; and*
    - *Over 200 spaces : 2% plus 6 places.*
  - (b) **For car parks associated with shopping areas, leisure or recreational facilities, and places open to the general public:**
    - *Up to 200 spaces : 6% of capacity subject to*

*a minimum of 3 spaces to be reserved; and*

- *Over 200 spaces : 4% plus 4 spaces.*

## Car Parking Standards for Development Control

Land Use	Operational Requirement	Non-Operational Requirement
----------	-------------------------	-----------------------------

### 1 Residential

- |                                      |          |  |
|--------------------------------------|----------|--|
| (a) Dwelling with 5 or more bedrooms | 4 spaces |  |
| (b) Dwelling with 4 bedrooms         | 3 spaces |  |
| (c) Dwelling with 3 or less bedrooms | 2 spaces |  |

In situations where housing development will be of a high density, such as housing association or local authority development, starter homes, terraced housing or flats, a minimum provision of 1 car space per dwelling must be provided adjacent to each dwelling or group of dwellings. In addition, visitor parking of 0.5 car spaces per dwelling should be provided on a shared communal basis. No more than 10 spaces should normally be grouped together.

Parking provision should be well located so that on-street parking is minimised. If communal spaces are provided for casual parking then the distance from dwelling curtilage to the nearest parking space should not normally exceed 25m. Provision of communal parking spaces within the highway shall be limited to minor access roads. Communal parking areas are not permitted on shared access ways.

In situations where house extensions involve the creation of additional bedrooms the car parking provision should be increased in compliance with the above standards.

- |  |                     |  |
|--|---------------------|--|
| (d) Flat conversions                             | 1 space per flat    |  |
| (e) Bedsitters and Houses in Multiple occupation | 1 space per bedroom |  |

This requirement may be relaxed where residents are unlikely to be car owners. The assessment should take notice of the traffic and parking conditions of the roads adjacent to the development.

### 2 Special Residential

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| (a) Elderly/Nursing Home   | Staff - 1 space per resident member of staff | Staff 1 space per 2 non resident staff employed at the busiest time. Visitors - 1 space per 4 residents.            |
| (b) Sheltered Accommodation (restricted to elderly 60/65+ and restricted to 1 bedroom units) | Staff - 1 space per resident member of staff | 1 space per 2 non-resident staff -employed at the busiest time. Residents/Visitors - 1 space per 2 units.           |
| (c) Semi-retirement accommodation (where individual units are self contained)                |  | Staff - 1 space per 2 non-resident staff employed at the busiest time. Residents/Visitors - 1 space per 3 students. |
| (d) Purpose Built Student Accommodation  | Staff - 1 space per resident member of staff | Students/Visitors - 1 space per 3 students.   |

### 3 Hotels/Motels/Guest Houses

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
|  | Minimum of 50 sq m for servicing purposes.   | Guest - 1 space per bedroom  |
|  | Staff - 1 space per resident member of staff | Staff - 1 space per 2 non-resident staff employed at the busiest time. Where restaurants and bars are open to non-residents category 4 should also be applied. |

### 4 Restaurants/Cafes/Public Houses /Licensed Clubs/Hotel bars open to non-residents

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
|  | Minimum of 50 sq m for servicing purposes.<br>Staff - 1 space per resident member of staff | 1 space per 2 non-resident staff employed at the busiest time.<br>Customers : urban areas - 1 space per 4 sq m of public area; rural areas - 1 space per 2.5 sq m of public area |
|--|--|--|

### 5 Fast food/Hot food take-away shops

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
|  | Each application will be assessed on individual circumstances |  |
|--|---|--|

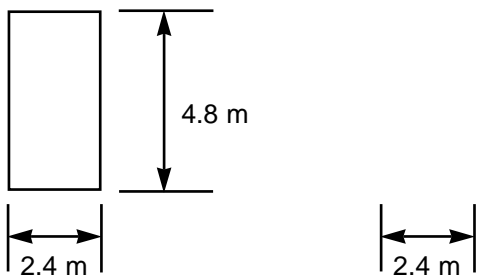
### 6 Retail

- |                                      |   |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| (a) General retailing                | 50 sq m per 500 sq m gross floor area (GFA) | Staff - 1 space per 100 sq m GFA<br>Customers - 1 space per 25 sq m GFA |
| (b) Supermarkets under 4000 sq m GFA | 50 sq m per 500 sq m gross floor area (GFA) | Staff - 1 space per 100 sq m GFA<br>Customers - 1 space per 20 sq m GFA |

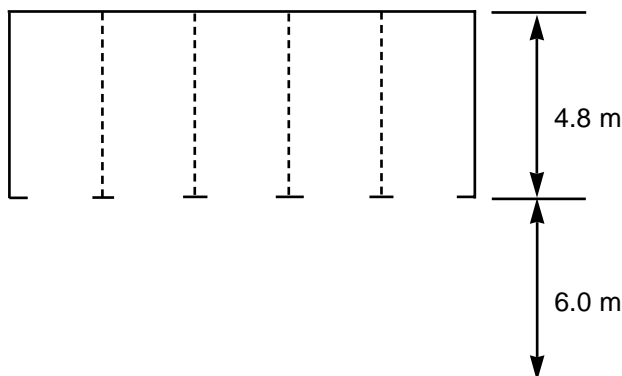
Land Use	Operational Requirement	Non-Operational Requirement
(c) Superstores/Hypermarkets over 4000 sq m GFA	50 sq m per 1000 sq m gross floor area (GFA)	Staff - 1 space per 100 sq m GFA Customers - 1 space per 10 sq m GFA
(d) Non-food retail warehouses	50 sq m per 1000 sq.m gross floor area (GFA)	Staff - 1 sapace per 100 sq.m GFA Customers - 1 space per 15 sq. m GFA
(e) DIY Stores	50 sq m per 1000 sq.m gross floor area (GFA)	Staff - 1 space per 100 sq m GFA Customers - 1 space per 15 sq m GFA
(f) Garden centres	50 sq m per 1000 sq m gross display area (GDA)	Staff - 1 space per 100 sq m GDA Customers - 1 space per 25 sq m GDA
<b>7 Cash and Carry Warehouses</b>	50 sq m per 500 sq m gross floor area (GFA)	Staff - 1 space per 100 sq m GFA Customers - 1 space per 25 sq m GFA
<b>8 Storage and Distribution Warehouses</b>	50 sq m space per 500 sq m gross floor area (GFA)	Staff - 1 space per 200 sq m GFA
<b>9 Industrial Buildings</b>	50 sq m per 100 sq m gross floor area (GFA) up to 300 sq m GFA and then 50 sq m per additional 500 sq m GFA	Staff/Visitors - 1 space per 50 sq m GFA
<b>10 Offices</b>	50 sq m per 500 sq m gross floor area (GFA)	Staff/Visitors - 1 space per 30 sq m GFA
<b>11 Car Sales</b>	1 Space for delivery vehicle	Staff/Visitors - 1 space per 50 sq m gross display area (GDA)
<b>12 Garages/Service Stations/ Car Repair Workshops</b>	1 space for each breakdown vehicle 4 spaces for reach service/repair bay Where a car wash is provided, sufficient space for 5 cars to wait will be provided on site.	Staff/Visitors - 1 space per 20 sq m of gross floor area. Where a service station has a spares/sales department, 1 car space per 25 sq m of floorspace of the department open to customers will be required.
<b>13 Education</b>		
(a) Nursery/Primary/Secondary Schools	50 sq m for servicing Space should be provided within the site, preferably as part of a one-way system, for contract buses and parents vehicles to set down or pick up children.	Staff - 1 space per full time member of staff. Visitors - 1 space per 6 full time members of staff Students - 1 space per 10 students over the age of 17. The hard surfaced play areas should be capable of accommodating car parking at special events.
(b) Colleges of Further Education e.g University, Teacher Training and Technical Colleges	50 sq m for servicing Where the development is likely to generate the provision of contract buses, special measures may need to be taken to accommodate waiting buses on off-street sites.	Staff - 1 space per full time member of staff Students/Visitors - 1 space per 5 full time students and 1 space per 3 part time students at the busiest time (depending on the use of the facilities at different times of the day).
<b>14 Places of Worship</b>	1 space per resident member of staff. Minimum of 50 sq m for servicing	Staff - 1 space per non-resident member of staff Worshippers - 1 space per 10 seats
<b>15 Places of Entertainment Cinemas, Theatres, Bingo Halls, Concert Halls (including halls with fixed seating)</b>	Minimum of 50 sq m for	Staff - 1 space per 2 members of servicing staff employed at the busiest time Customers - 1 space per 5 seats

Land Use	Operational Requirement	Non-Operational Requirement
16 Community Centres and Other Public Halls (including public halls without fixed seating)	Minimum of 50 sq m for servicing	Staff - 1 space per 2 members of staff employed at the busiest time Customers - 1 space per 10 sq m of public floorspace.
17 Art Galleries, Museums and Exhibition Halls	Minimum of 50 sq m for servicing	Staff - 1 space per 2 members of staff employed at the busiest time Visitors - 1 space per 30 sq m of public floorspace.
18 Hospitals	50 sq m per 250 sq m gross floor area 1 space per resident member of staff	1 space per 2 members of staff employed at the busiest time Outpatients - 3 spaces per consulting room Visitors - 1 space per 2 beds.
19 Clinics, Health Centres, Doctors, Dentists, Veterinary Surgeons	1 space per practitioner present during consulting period.	Staff - 1 space per 2 members of staff, other than practitioners, employed at the busiest time Patients - 3 spaces per consulting room
20 Libraries	Minimum of 50 sq m for servicing. If the library serves as a base for a mobile library, a further space will be provided for this vehicle.	Staff - 1 space per 2 members of staff employed at the busiest time. Visitors - 1 space per 50 sq m of GFA.
21 Sports Facilities	Minimum of 50 sq m for servicing	Staff - 1 space per member of staff employed at the busiest time. Patrons/Visitors - 1 space per 2 adult patrons able to use the facilities at any one time. Where facilities for substantial numbers of spectators are to be provided, special consideration should be given to the need to increase parking provision.
22 Touring Caravan and Camping Sites	1 space per caravan or tent pitch	Staff - 1 space per 2 members of staff Visitors - 1 space per 10 pitches
23 Self catering holiday accommodation	1 space per 4 bed spaces	Staff - 1 space per 2 members of staff Visitors - 1 space per 10 units.

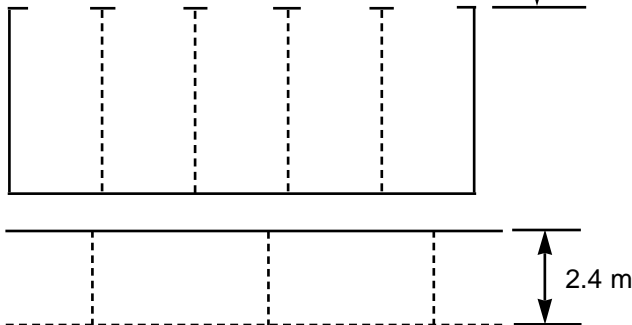
**Recommended Car Park Dimensions**



**Figure 1**  
Single Car Parking Bay  
Dimensions

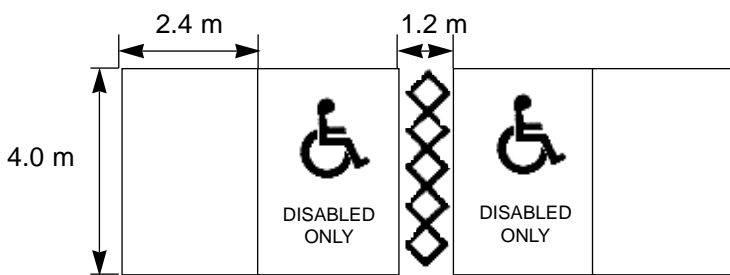


**Figure 2**  
Grouped Parking Bays 90  
Degree Formation

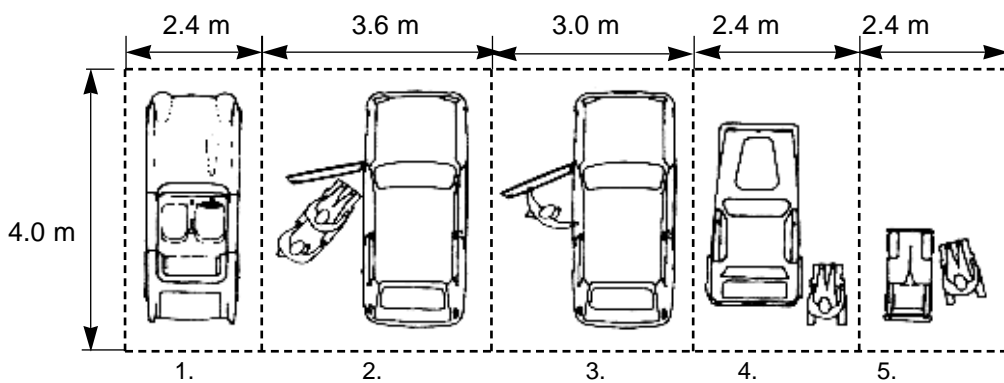


**Figure 3**  
Grouped Parking Bays  
Parallel Formation

**Facilities for the Disabled**



Car Park marking and dimensions



Car Park marking and dimensions for several types of vehicles

1. Standard Bay and Car
2. Wheelchair user and Car
3. Ambulant disabled and Car
4. Standard bay with tricycle and wheelchair
5. Standard bay with battery powered car and wheelchair



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## CONSERVATION AREA DESCRIPTIONS

- 1 The conservation areas in the District range from urban Market Places and Greens to loose knit dale villages. The statutory definition of conservation area (Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation) Act 1990 gives recognition to “areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which is desirable to preserve or enhance”.
- 2 The Council has defined conservation areas which recognises the group value and importance of specific buildings including trees, open spaces and village greens, street and village pattern and features of historic and archaeological interest. Although many of the conservation areas include listed buildings, some do not, and it is not a requirement for conservation area designation.
- 3 There are twenty conservation areas at:
  - A. Bishop Auckland
  - B. Cockton Hill
  - C. Cowshill
  - D. Wearhead
  - E. East Blackdene
  - F. St Johns Chapel
  - G. Eastgate
  - H. Crook
  - I. Edmondbyers
  - J. Hunstanworth
  - K. Frosterley
  - L. Hunwick
  - M. Stanhope
  - N. Thornley
  - O. West Blackdene
  - P. Ireshopeburn/Newhouse
  - Q. Witton le Wear
  - R. West Auckland
  - S. Westgate
  - T. Wolsingham
- 4 Within all conservation areas the following general principles of design will apply. Traditional building styles, designs and materials will be encouraged within the conservation areas, such as, natural slate roofs, painted sliding sash windows, traditional painted shop fronts and fascias, retention of traditional roof lines and roof lines such as chimney stacks and maintaining a strong vertical emphasis within the proportions of the building. Traditional field boundaries, hedgerows and dry stone walls, are an intrinsic part of the character of the majority of the rural conservation areas. The Council will seek to encourage the retention of these features within and around conservation areas. Particular notable features within individual conservation areas, such as sandstone slab roofing, will be brought out in the following descriptions.
- 5 The boundaries of the conservation areas are shown on the Proposals Map and included within this Appendix.

**The essential qualities and characteristics of the conservation areas**

**A. Bishop Auckland**

- 6 The conservation area in Bishop Auckland covers the northern part of the town, standing in an elevated position above the River Wear. The conservation area is centred upon the impressive Grade I listed Bishops Palace and grounds which has been the residence of the Bishops of Durham since the 12th century. The conservation area contains a wide range of architecturally and historically important townscape features including the 14th century Grade I listed Newton Cap Bridge, the Newton Cap Viaduct, the Market Place, King James I School and grounds, the commercial core of the town and the residential area along Etherley Lane.
- 7 The District Council will protect those elements which contribute towards the character and intrinsic quality of the area. In the Etherley Lane area the traditional Victorian and stone built terraces and mature roadside trees. North Bondgate contains a terrace of attractive period town houses. The line of trees along North Bondgate forms an important townscape feature leading to the Market Place and will be maintained.
- 8 The Market Place is dominated by the impressive Grade I Gothic style Town Hall built in 1869. Along the southern side of the Market Place there is a row of eighteenth and nineteenth century brick, stone and rendered buildings. These buildings are all listed and contain important architectural features which contribute, both individually and collectively, to the historic character of the Market Place. These features include painted sliding stone quoins sash windows, (8 to 16 paned) period multi-paned fan lights and bow windows. New development and redevelopment within the Market Place will require to take full account of the architectural style of the existing buildings.
- 9 The conservation area extends down Newgate Street to South Church Road, taking in more of the commercial core of the town centre. Fore Bondgate and Newgate Street, although containing few listed buildings, have an attractive range and variety of building styles and periods.
- 10 The commercial core of the town is collectively an important feature within the townscape of the town centre. Although the buildings have been extensively altered at ground floor level, the majority of shops have remained unaltered at first, second and third floor levels. Conservation area designation will continue to protect these features and will encourage the sympathetic and traditional treatment of shop fronts at ground floor level.
- 11 The area to the north of the town centre forms an important landscape feature and contributes to the setting of the conservation area and the Bishops Palace. It is vital that this area is maintained as an undeveloped wooded bank bordering onto the River Wear.
- 12 A Town Scheme of grants for Bishop Auckland has been set up between the Council, Durham County Council and English Heritage to give financial aid

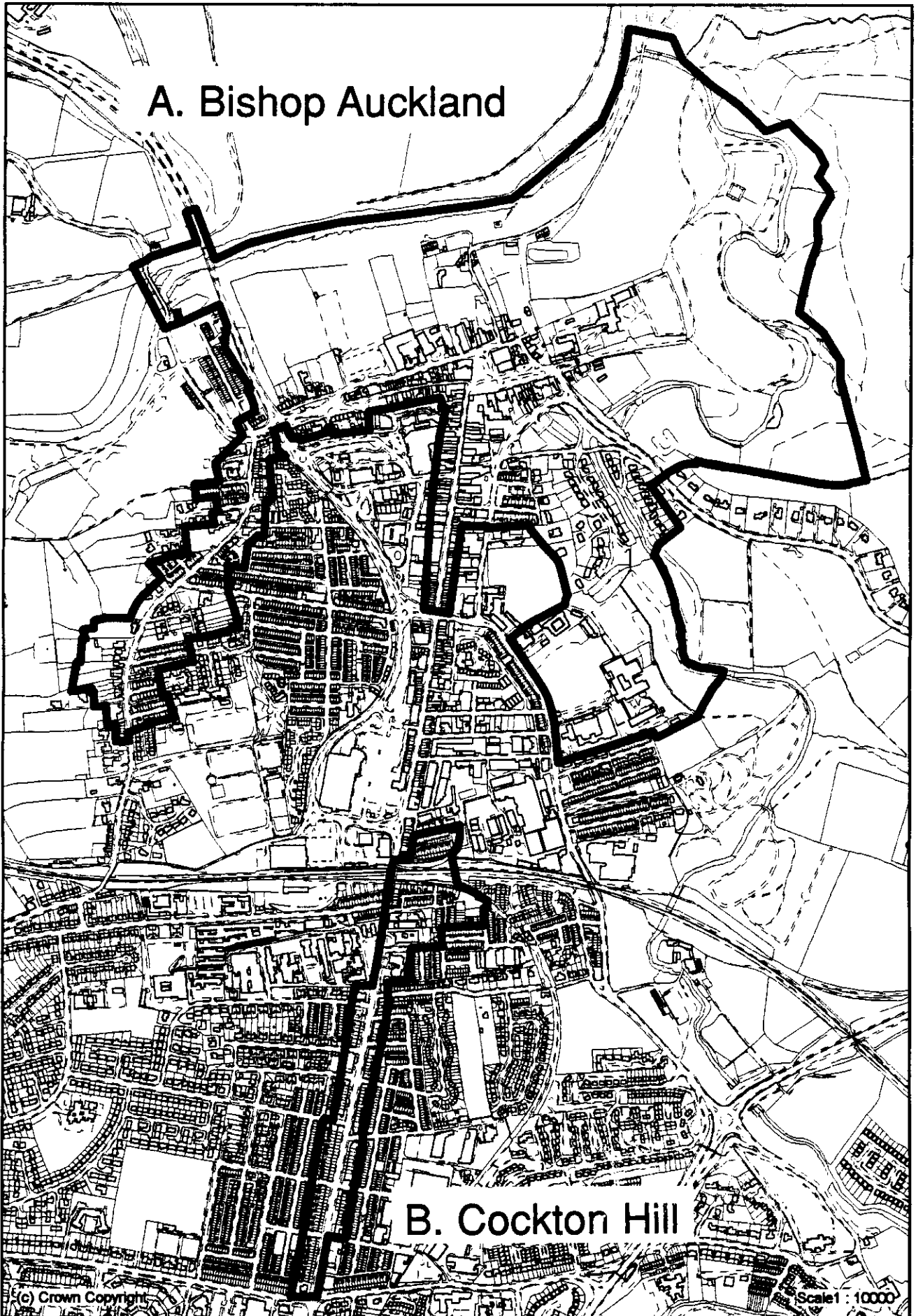
for the maintenance of Bishop Auckland's buildings.

**B. Cockton Hill, Bishop Auckland**

- 13 The conservation area extends south along Cockton Hill Road from the railway line to Woodhouse Lane and includes the traditional terraced houses adjoining the railway line of Albert Terrace. This road dates from the middle of the 19th Century and provides a good example of two storey properties with curved bow windows to the ground floor. The houses are not listed and in order to protect the existing features they are covered by an Article 4 direction (see page 23). The Cockton Hill conservation area is characterised by its traditional stone built town houses set back from the road. Although there are no listed buildings, it is important in terms of townscape quality, traditional architectural character and group value within Bishop Auckland.

A. Bishop Auckland

B. Cockton Hill



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Scale 1 : 10000

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**C. Cowshill**

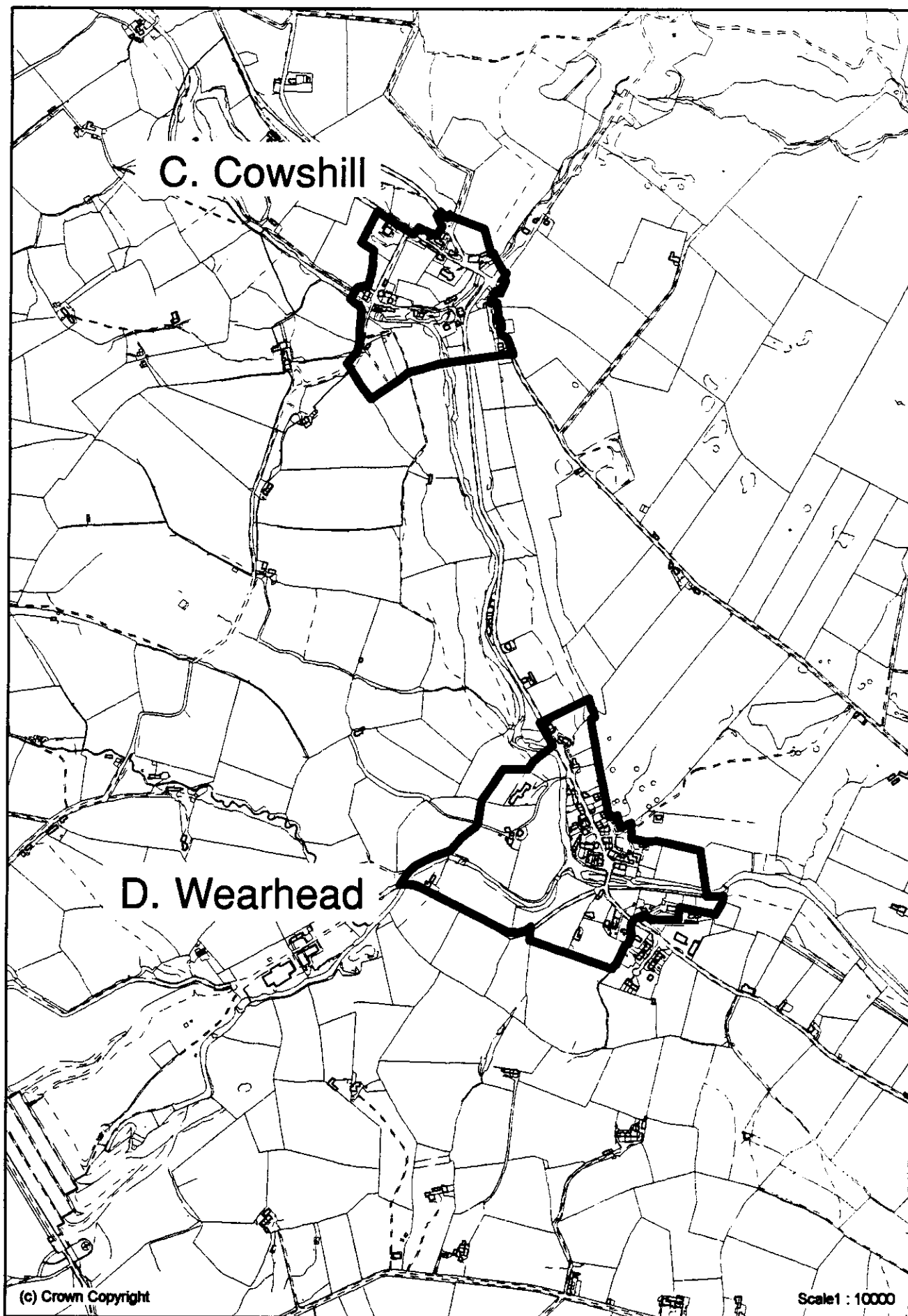
<sup>14</sup> Cowshill is a small dale village north of Wearhead. It has developed at the confluence of the Killhope and Sedling Burns and forms a bridging point for Sedling Burn. The village has the characteristic loose-knit dale form which has created an attractive sloping field area to the south of St. Thomas' Church. Cowshill contains two listed buildings, the 17th Century Burtree Ford House and barn built in coursed sandstone rubble, stone quoins and stone-flagged roof, and East and West Houses, Longhorn Ends built around 1850. The tree lined burns and church yard are important features in contributing to the character of Cowshill. Conservation area designation gives recognition to the group value of Cowshill and the Council will aim to maintain those features which contribute to the inherent quality of the village, such as stone-flagged roofs, stone walls, loose-knit open character, traditional building style and design.

**D. Wearhead**

<sup>15</sup> Wearhead is a traditional Dale village located at the source of the River Wear. The village has grown north of the river on a piecemeal and ad hoc basis producing groups of two and three buildings tightly packed between the river and the rising land to the north east.

<sup>16</sup> Although Wearhead does not contain any listed buildings, its intrinsic character and quality as a traditional Dale village, and its setting at the confluence of Killhope Burn and Burnhope Burn warrants its recognition as a conservation area.

<sup>17</sup> Through conservation area designation the District Council will preserve those elements of the village which contributes toward the character and quality of Wearhead. These elements include the villages' irregular and small scale built form and the traditional building style in particular. The line of trees along the banks of the River Wear contribute to the setting of the village to the south and the open paddock between Killhope Burn and Burnhope Burn reinforces the villages riverside setting.



C. Cowshill

D. Wearhead

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Scale 1 : 10000

**E. East Blackdene**

18 East Blackdene is a small, tightly knit dale hamlet overlooking the River Wear within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It consists of a number of traditional dale cottages built out of random coursed sandstone, stone-flagged and natural slate roofs. There are three listed buildings both dating from the seventeenth century, Heather Lea having been renovated and probably raised in the early mid nineteenth century. The hamlet has an important group value and built form. The conservation area also includes several stands of trees to the south of East Blackdene which are important for its setting. The Council will seek to protect the hamlet's character and quality through the retention of traditional architectural features and traditional dale style.

**F. St. John's Chapel**

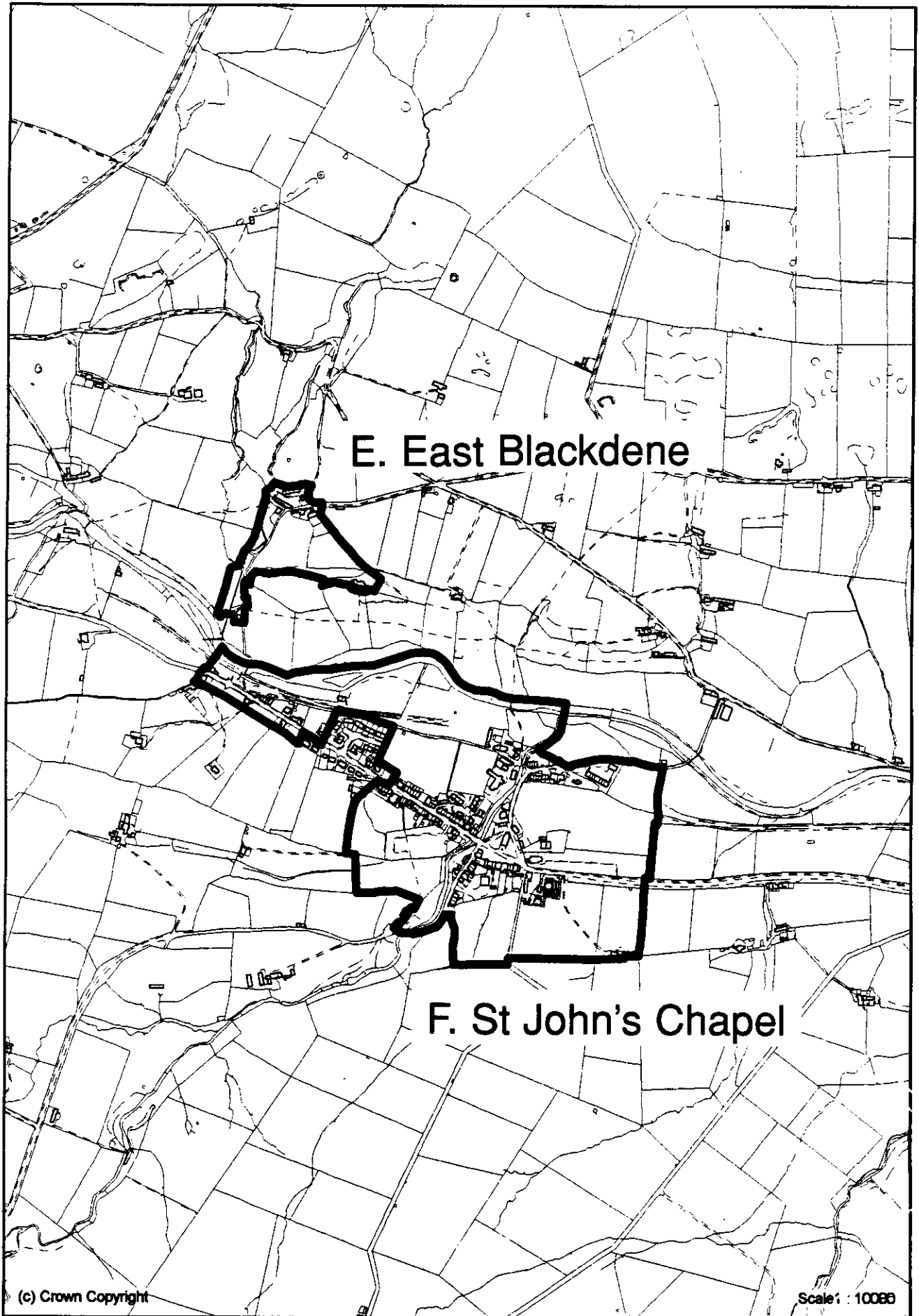
19 The village lies south of the River Wear along the main road through Weardale. The settlement has developed around the village green and extended to the west along the A689 giving it its linear form. The conservation area is centred on the village green and aims to main those elements which make up the intrinsic quality of St. John's Chapel. The village green is triangular with a built-up frontage to the north set back from the road giving the area an open feel. This group of buildings are not listed but have a group quality that contribute towards the setting of the green. They vary in design and scale and are all of traditional Dale design and built of local materials, they form an interesting and important part of the villages' townscape.

20 The Church of St. John the Baptist is listed and faces onto the green. Dating from the mid eighteenth century it is built on the site of the original medieval chapel, the cemetery contains a number of listed tombs. Together with the cemetery it forms an important historic and architectural feature of the village. The wooded cemetery creates an important landscape approach to the village from the east.

21 To the east of the green the proposed conservation area includes Hood Street. This area does not contain any listed buildings, however, its traditional style and continuous built-up frontage contributes to the character and quality of the townscape of the village.

22 The conservation area takes in the Harthope Burn which contains an important line of trees and extends up to the listed seventeenth century Bonny Moor Farmhouse which overlooks the Burn.

23 All work which takes place in the conservation area will need to incorporate the traditional building styles and materials of the area to maintaining the intrinsic quality of this Dale market village. Particular features include sandstone slab roofing.



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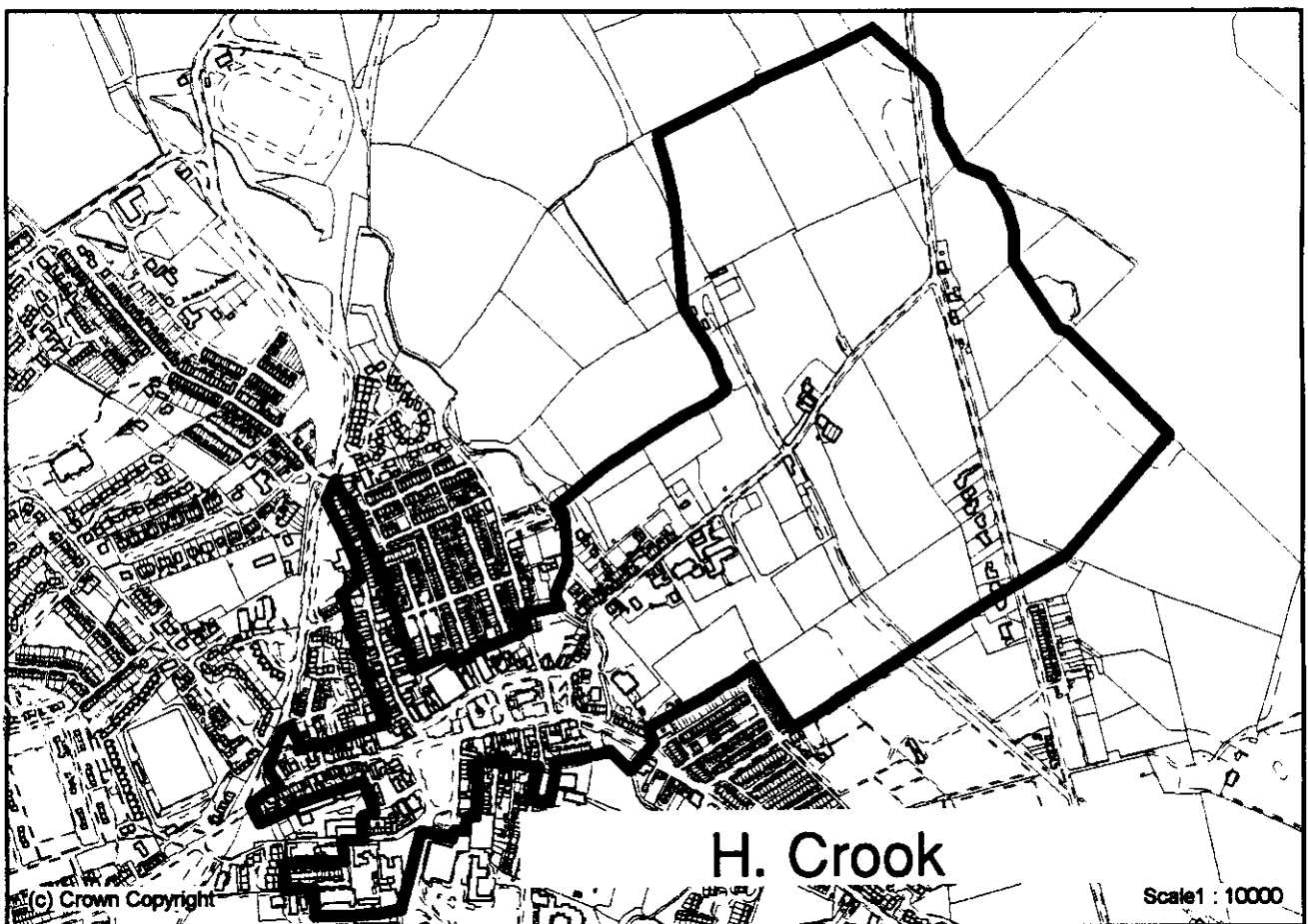
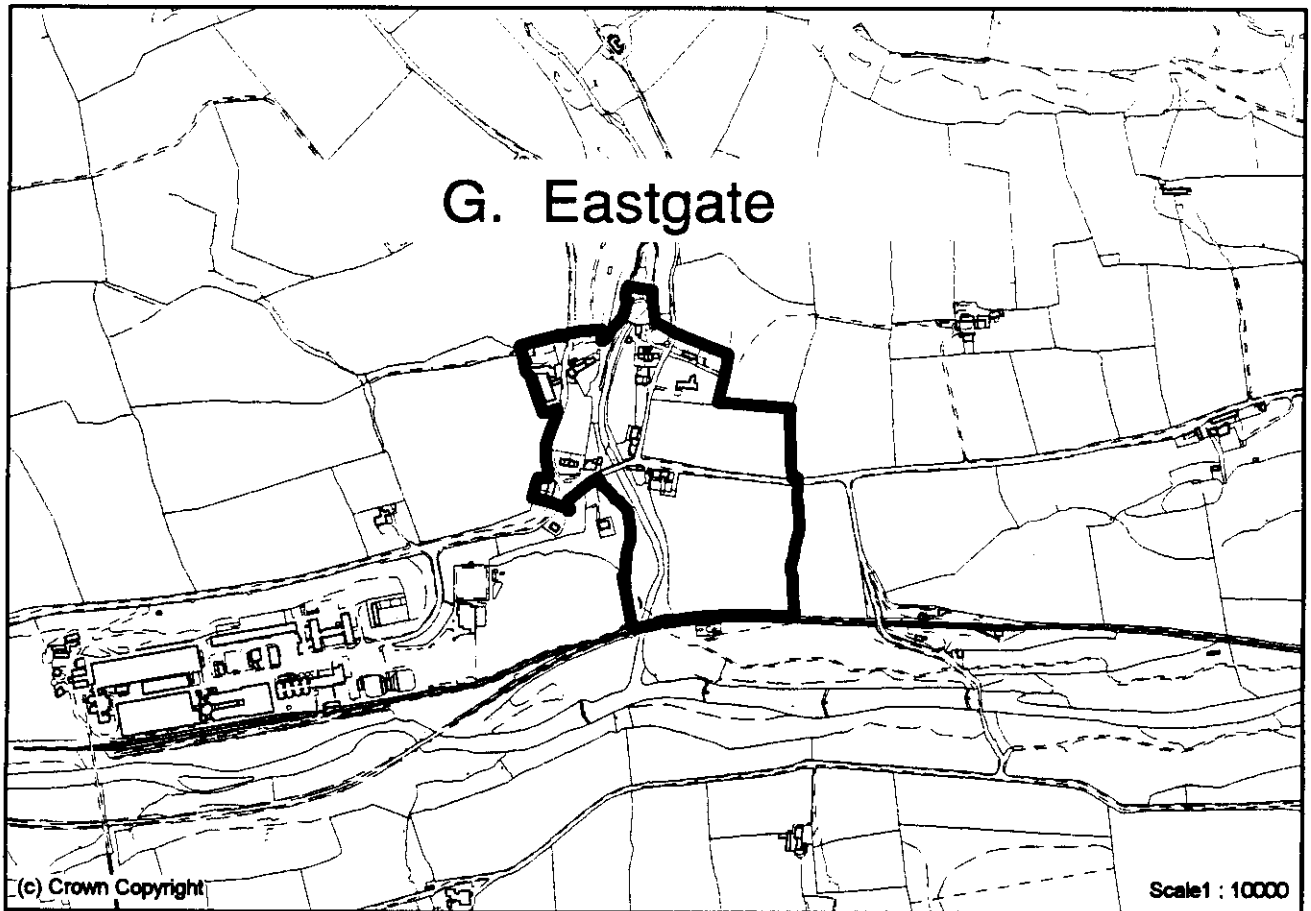
**G. Eastgate**

- <sup>24</sup> Eastgate straddles the boundary of the Area of Landscape Value with the majority of the village being within the designation. It is characteristically a loose-knit Dale village overlooking Rookhope Burn, containing a number of listed buildings and the nineteenth century listed bridge. Its loose-knit form, traditional dale building style and riverside setting gives its intrinsic quality. The traditional dale building style of rough coursed sandstone rubble, ashlar dressing, stone-flagged roofs has been maintained. The Council would seek to encourage the use of these traditional styles and materials in future building work within the village. Strong stone boundary walls are characteristic of the village and the open paddock adjoining Rookhope Burn is a vital element in helping to create the loose-knit feel to the village. There are a number of important lines of trees around the church and along the burn which help to contribute to the rural setting and character of Eastgate. The Council will seek to maintain these features of the village in order to conserve its character and quality.

**H. Crook**

- <sup>25</sup> Crook is one of the two major centres in the District and lies at the entrance of Weardale. The conservation area covers the commercial centre of Crook, including the Market Place and the Civic gardens and stretches north east to include the Church of Our Lady Immaculate and Saint Cuthbert and its setting. The Council will protect those elements which contribute to the character and quality of the Crook conservation area. The commercial centre has an intrinsic group value characterised by small individual shops. The variety of building styles and the open Civic gardens off Church Street are important features which contribute to the character of the town centre and which the Council will seek to protect.
- <sup>26</sup> The conservation area extends from the town centre up Jobs Hill including the Grade II listed Church of Our Lady, a Parish Church built in the mid nineteenth century with an impressive Tudor Gothic Tower. The hill side to the rear of the church has been included in the Conservation Area to help preserve the rural setting and undeveloped back drop to the Church. The hill side contains a number of trees which are important features to the setting of the church and the town and the Council would wish to protect these trees.



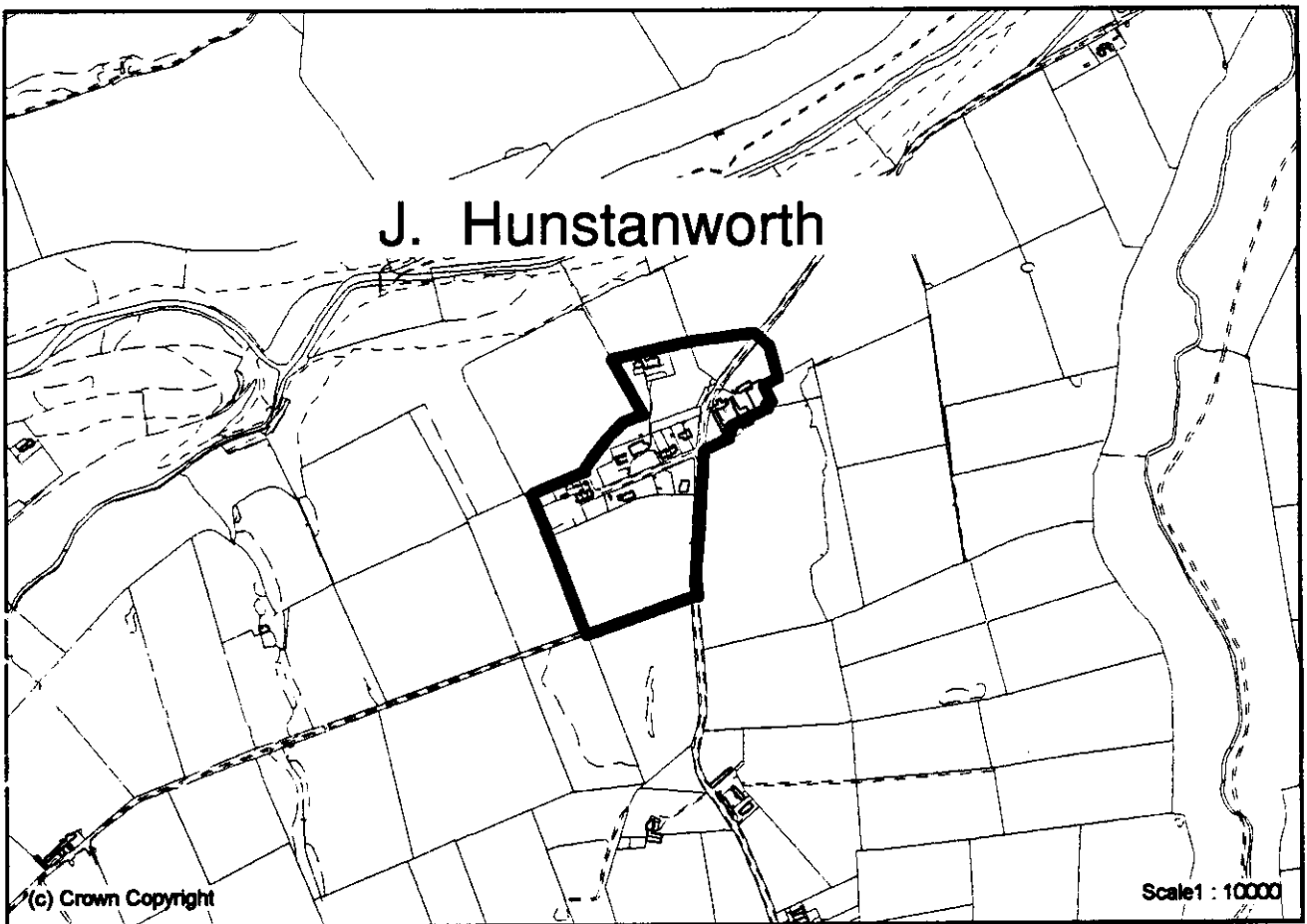
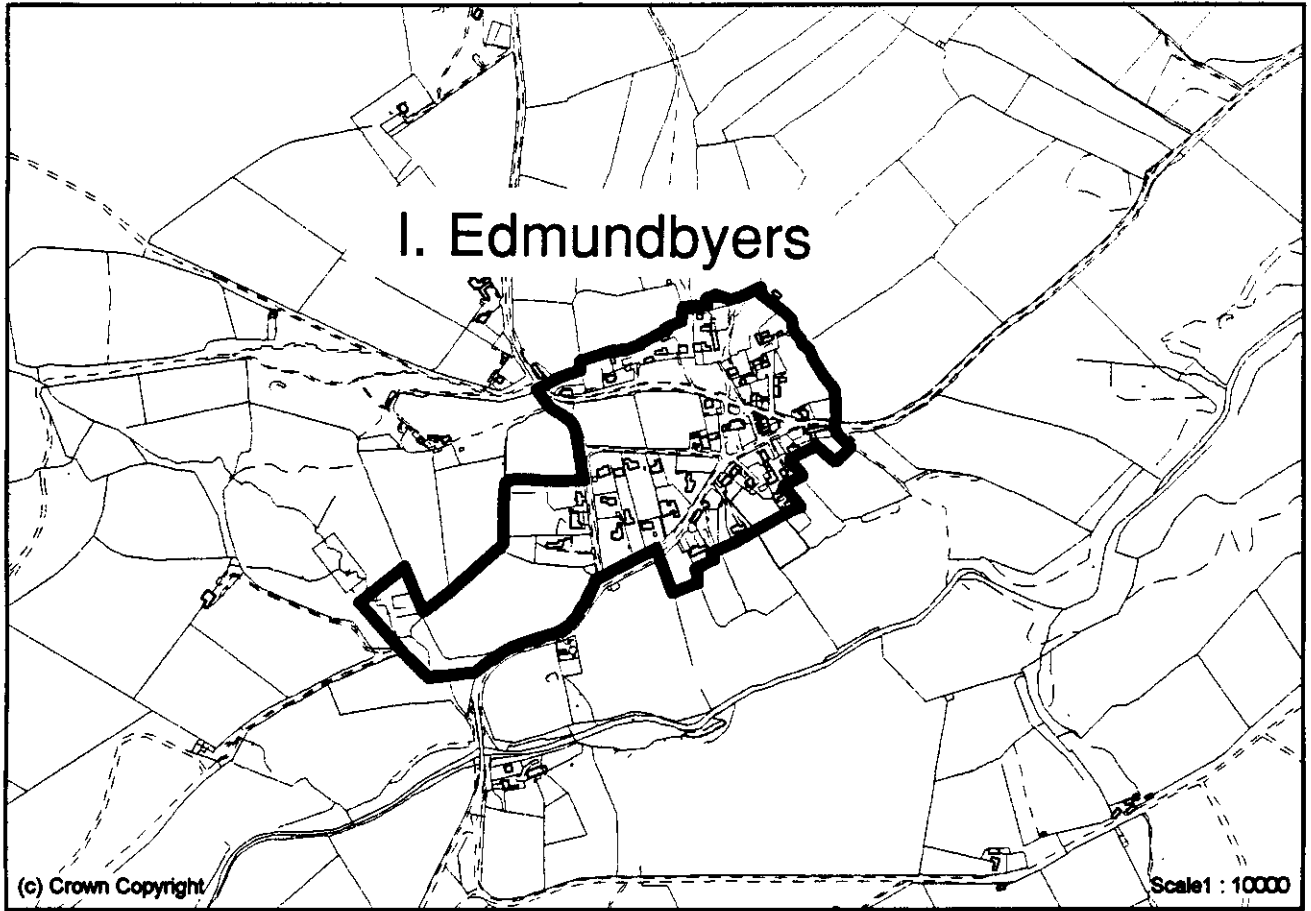


**I. Edmundbyers**

- 27 Edmundbyers is a small village located high in Edmundbyers Common on the northern boundary of the District, overlooking Burnhope Burn. It is a loose knit village containing a village green to the north and a focal point around the Punch Bowl Inn where the roads converge in the village.
- 28 Conservation area designation aims to maintain and protect these elements which contribute towards the character of the village. These elements include the loose-knit form of Edmundbyers, the use of traditional materials and styles in building and the stone boundary walls which are a feature of the village. An important feature of the setting of Edmundbyers is the strong tree line along the southern approach road leading to the church and the individual tress along the southern boundary of the village.
- 29 The conservation area includes a triangle of modern bungalows and houses containing several important trees. Although these buildings are of modern design, the majority are built of stone and natural slate and have strong traditional stone boundary walls which are an important feature of the village. Designation will help to maintain these features which help to contribute toward the character of the village.

**J. Hunstanworth**

- 30 Hunstanworth is a small hamlet located on the northern edge of the District in open Dale countryside. The hamlet is built around the Parish church and has a formal pattern. Hunstanworth was built and designed by S.S. Teulon for the Reverend Daniel Copper in 1862-3 which included the rebuilding of the 1781 church. This single building style and period has created both a historic and architecturally important development which is unique in the District. The hamlet consists of the Vicarage and stable block, school and school house and a mix of terrace, semi and detached houses. The buildings are all listed and constructed of coursed squared sandstone rubble and snecked sandstone with an ashlar dressing, natural slates and traditional windows. An important feature of the hamlet is the small woodland of mature trees to the north of the church which forms a wooded back drop to the village. The conservation area will protect this line of trees and to maintain the unique character and quality of the hamlet.

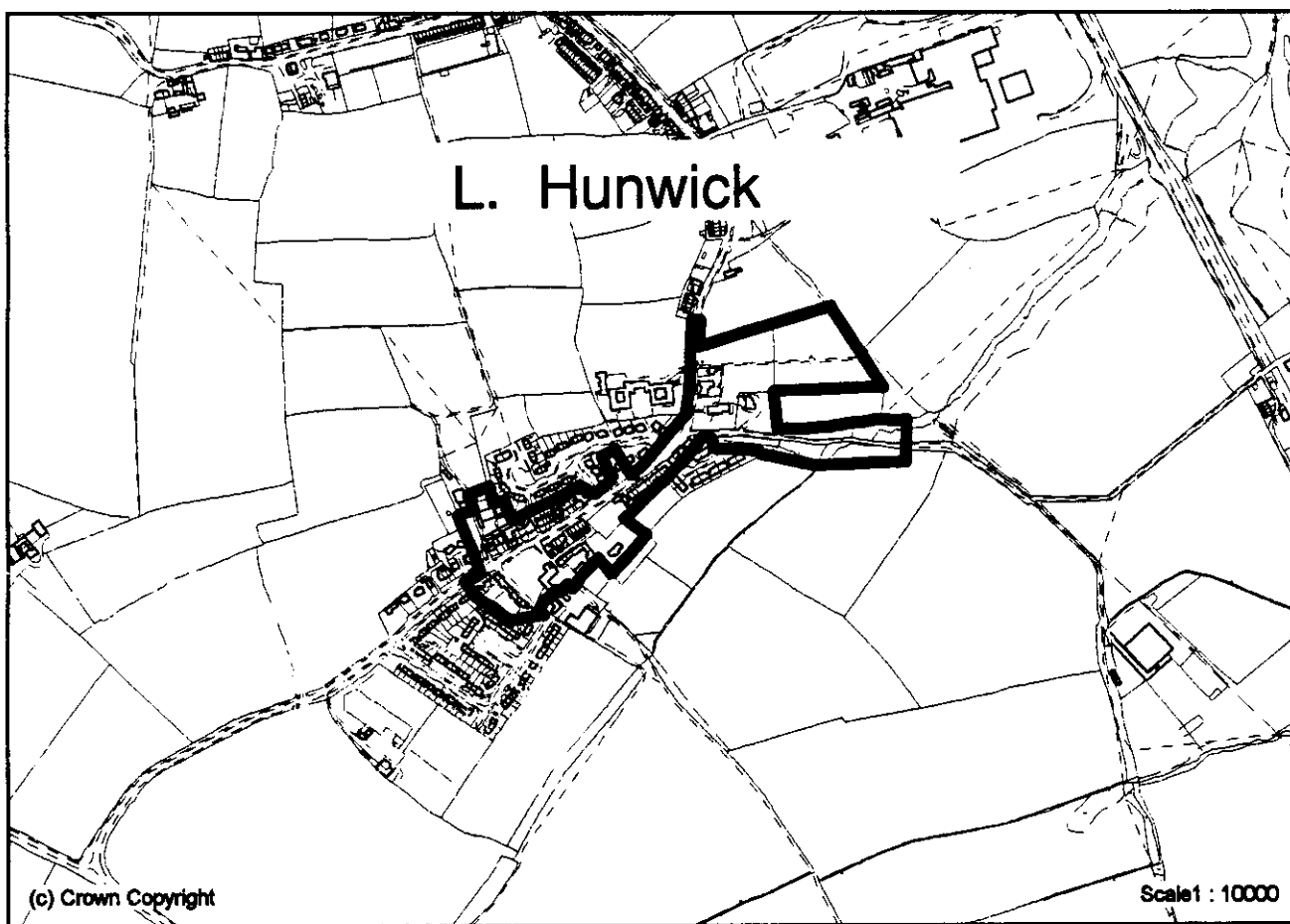
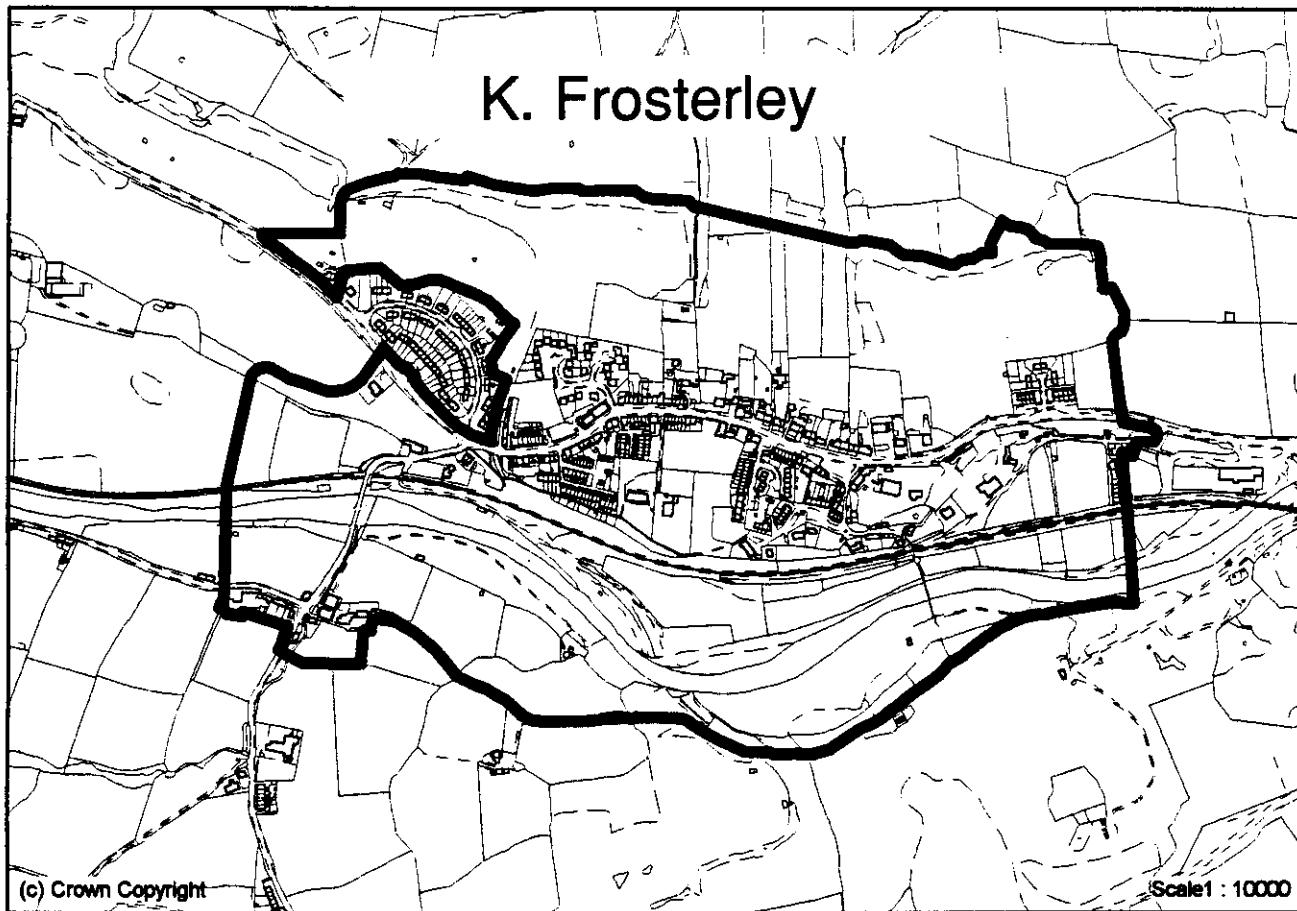


**K. Frosterley**

- 31 Frosterley is a Dale village on the north banks of the River Wear. It is a ribbon/linear settlement which has developed between the A689 and the railway line. Post-war housing has been developed at both entrances of the village with the larger development being on the western side.
- 32 Conservation area designation aims to maintain those elements which make up the quality and character of Frosterley. The Green in the village is an attractive small tree lined open space which is overlooked by The Frosterley Inn, a mid eighteenth century listed pub. The avenue of trees are an important feature for the eastern approach to the village. The central area of the village has an open recreation ground and a paddock adjacent to the vicarage which contains several important trees around its boundary. This open area is a feature of the ribbon settlement creating an important space within an otherwise built-up village. Surrounding this area there are a number of listed buildings of significant architectural and historic merit, the Church of St. Michael and All Angels, the Parish Hall and Frosterley House. The rows of terraces facing onto Front Street are an attractive grouping of small Dale terrace, two of which are listed. To the rear of the short terrace to the west of the car park there is the site of the Chapel of St. Botolph, a scheduled ancient monument and an associated burial ground. The earthworks date from the fourteenth century and are a rare example of this type of site.
- 33 Also within the conservation area are the Station House, the former Railway Station and Frosterley Bridge which dates from the early 19th Century.
- 34 The conservation area takes in the wooded areas and fields on both sides of the River Wear and the hillside fields, hedgerows and trees immediately north of the village. These features help to create the rural setting of the village whilst the inclusion of the disused Rogerley and New Frosterley Quarries give an indication of the historical land uses in the area.
- 35 To maintain the quality of Frosterley future work should incorporate traditional style and materials of the area, particular features include sandstone slab roofing.

**L. Hunwick**

- 36 Hunwick is a small village located between Crook and Bishop Auckland. The conservation area covers the centre of the village and follows Church Lane to the Church including the cemetery and Hunwick Gill. Designation seeks to maintain the group quality of the village centre, which includes traditional stone built houses facing onto the main road. These buildings, although not listed, have a group value which, together with the village green, in front of the pub, contribute towards the built form and character of Hunwick.
- 37 Hunwick Hall and Farmhouse are set back from the main road and are of architectural significance. The Farmhouse, formerly the Manor House and the Hall date back to the late medieval period and have undergone alterations during seventeenth century. The building constructed of coursed sandstone rubble with ashlar dressing and Welsh slate, the Hall having been re-roofed in 1990. Both farmhouse and Hall have a Grade II\* listing. The District Council will seek to protect and improve the Farm complex.
- 38 There are a number of important trees along Hunwick Gill, some of which are protected by Tree Preservation Orders, the remaining will be protected through conservation area status.



**M. Stanhope**

39 Stanhope is one of the largest Dale villages and is sited on the north banks of the River Wear. It has been prevented from spreading north by the rising river valley which has been extensively quarried in the past. It is a linear settlement following the route of the A689. Stanhope has traditionally acted as a market town for the surrounding area.

40 The conservation area is centred around Stanhope Castle and the Market Place. Stanhope Castle was built for Cuthbert Rippon in the eighteenth century and commands a prominent location overlooking both the Market Place and the River Wear. The adjoining Castle Park forms an important landscape feature of the village containing a strong tree line to the north of the park adjacent to Front Street and an open park area running down to the river. The avenue of trees on the southern bank of the river is protected by Tree Preservation Orders.

41 East of the Market Place Front Street contains an attractive range of buildings varying in period and styles built of traditional materials. A feature of Front Street is the line of trees which helps to break up the urban aspect of the street. To the south of the trees and behind a strong boundary wall are the Old Rectory and Rectory, both listed and dating from 1821. This mixture of large individual houses and smaller scale terrace development give additional interest to the townscape of Stanhope. To the west of the village Stanhope Hall, a Grade II\* sixteenth century Hall, stands back from the road and forms an impressive entrance to Stanhope. Its grounds contain a number of important trees which help to form the setting of the Hall and the entrance to the settlement.

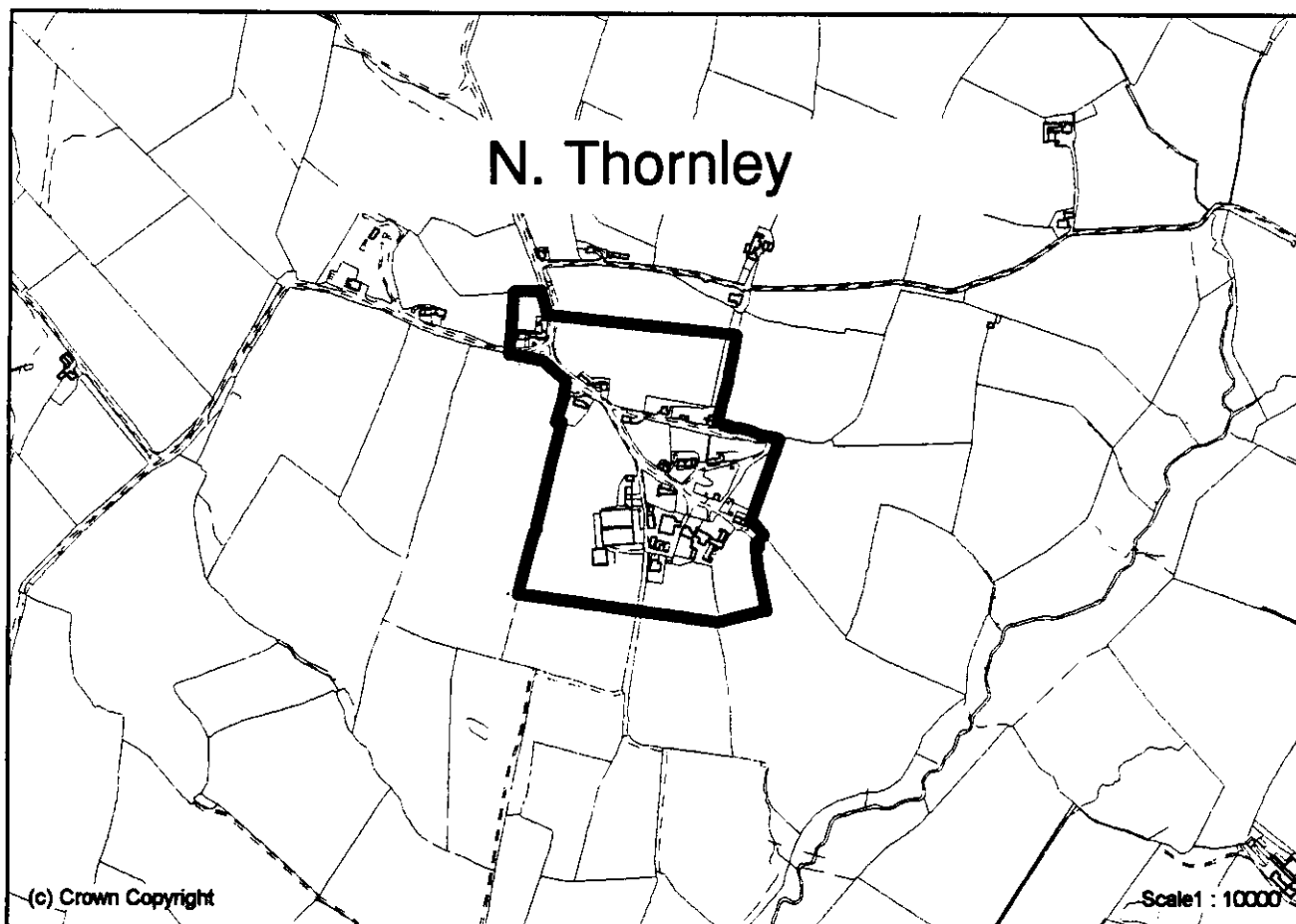
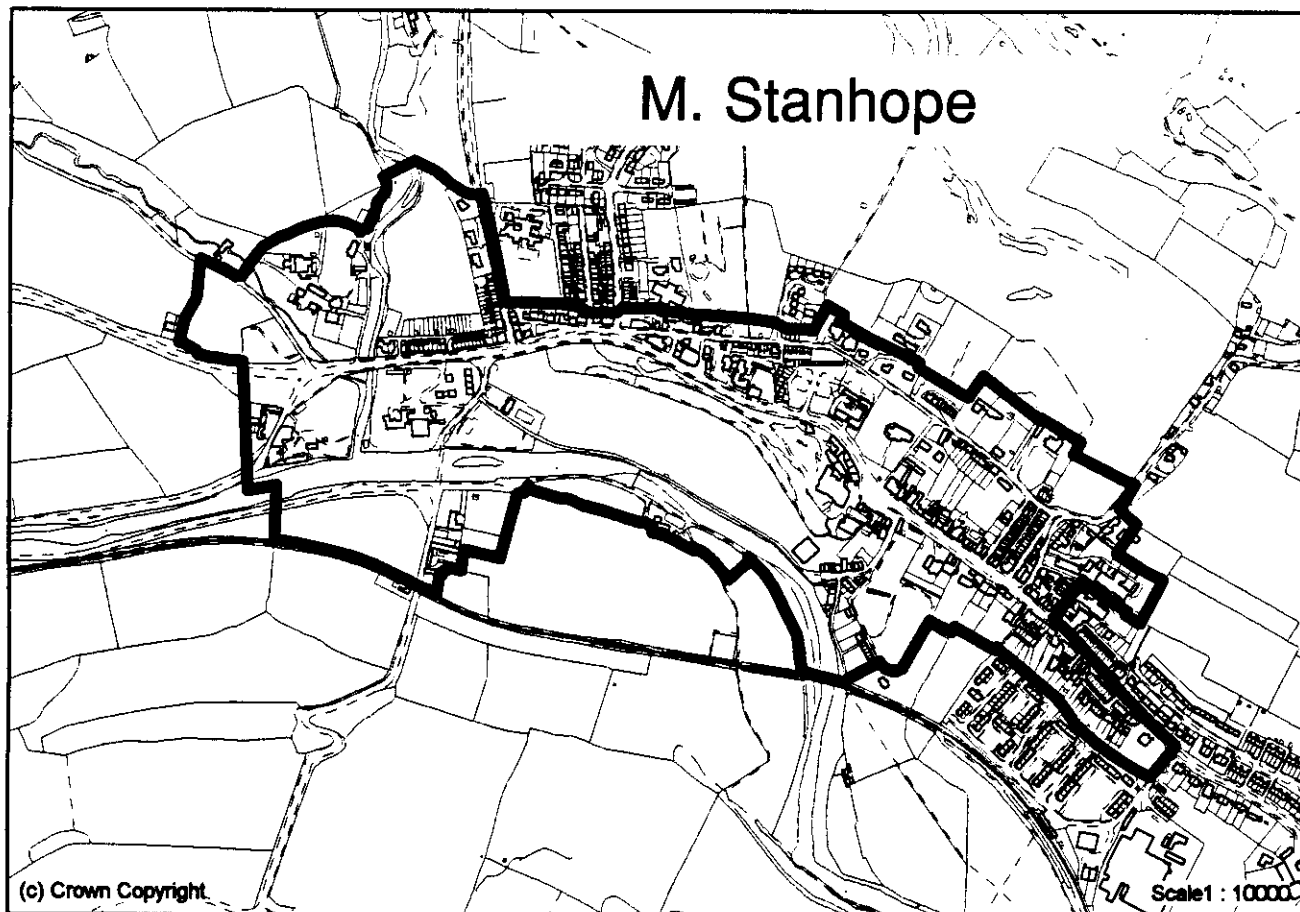
42 All works which take place in the conservation area will need to incorporate the traditional building styles and materials of the area. These are the use of coursed sandstone, stone slab and natural slate roofs and flush pointing. Alterations and extensions to building should reflect architectural style of the existing building.

43 A Town Scheme of grants for Stanhope has been set up between the Council, Durham County Council and English Heritage to give financial aid for the maintenance of Stanhope's buildings.

**N. Thornley**

44 Thornley is a small rural hamlet located between Crook and Tow Law. It is an attractive loose knit hamlet centre around the church consisting of traditional stone built cottages. The majority of buildings, although not architecturally significant in themselves, have retained their traditional features and collectively have an important group value. The church and cemetery are an important focus of the hamlet and contain a number of mature trees which help add to the character of hamlet. These trees will be protected.

45 An important aspect of Thornley is its loose knit form and open spaces between the buildings. The inherent quality and character of Thornley is a combination of the traditional building style and the open loose knit nature of hamlet. The small open paddocks are an important feature within Thornley, conservation area designation will seek to maintain and protect these important open spaces.



**O. West Blackdene**

<sup>46</sup> West Blackdene is a small Dale hamlet on the banks of the River Wear within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The conservation area is centred on the village pound (listed) which forms an important open area with the hamlet's form. Unlike many other dale settlements West Blackdene is a tightly formed hamlet, initially developing along the banks of the river and later expanding to form a contained courtyard. Although containing only one listed building, the hamlet has an important group value and interesting built-form which warrants its recognition as a conservation area. The Council will seek to maintain and protect the form of the hamlet and ensure that future building work is in sympathy with the form, design and materials of West Blackdene. The Council will encourage the retention of strong stone boundary walls and the important treeline along the River Wear.

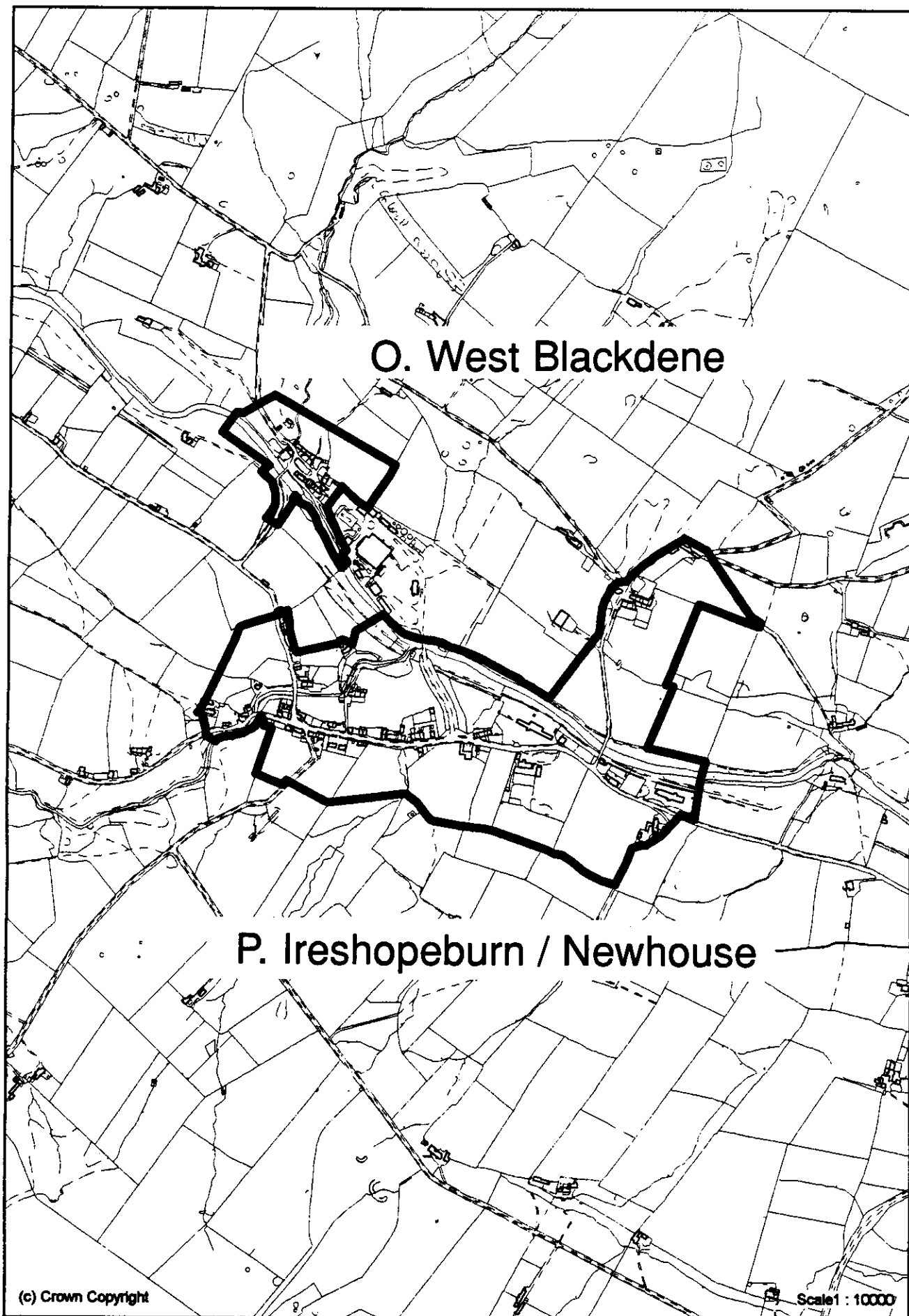
**P. Ireshopeburn/Newhouse**

<sup>47</sup> The conservation area includes land to the south of Ireshopeburn, its setting down to the river and the hillside above Coronation Bridge to include Newhouse. Ireshopeburn is a small traditional dale village which has developed along the A698. This area contains a number of small paddocks which contribute towards the loose-knit character of Ireshopeburn. The village includes three listed buildings, the 17th Century Ivy Cottage and barn, the 18th Century former Smithy, and High House Chapel and former Minister's House. Coronation Bridge built in 1840 is also listed. There are a number of important lines of trees which contribute towards the character and quality of Ireshopeburn, in particular along the eastern approach to the village, to rear of Weardale House and on the banks of Ireshopeburn. Conservation Area designation will help to ensure the retention of these and other important features which contribute to the attractiveness, character and quality of Ireshopeburn.

<sup>48</sup> Newhouse is centred around an attractive group of listed buildings dating back to the 17th Century. Newhouse itself is an impressive three storey Grade II\* listed building and was the home of successive agents of the Beaumont leadmine owning family of the area.

<sup>49</sup> Conservation area designation will help to ensure the retention of these and other important features which contribute to the attractiveness, character and quality of Ireshopeburn and Newhouse.





**Q. Witton-le-Wear**

50 Witton-le-Wear is an attractive village sited on a ledge above the River Wear. The conservation area is centred upon the open village green area, which, although sloping is an important central feature to the village and contain a number of mature trees which contribute to the character of the village. Fronting onto the green area and the main road there are a mixture of terraced and detached stone built houses which range in style, period and architectural interest, collectively they contribute to the attractive character of the village. The majority of buildings have retained many of their original features and the District Council will encourage the retention of these features together with maintaining the small scale, intimate nature of the village. The conservation area stretches out to the south to include the river's flood plain. These agricultural fields and heavily wooded river terraces are an important aspect of the village's setting. The Council will maintain and protect this undeveloped area.

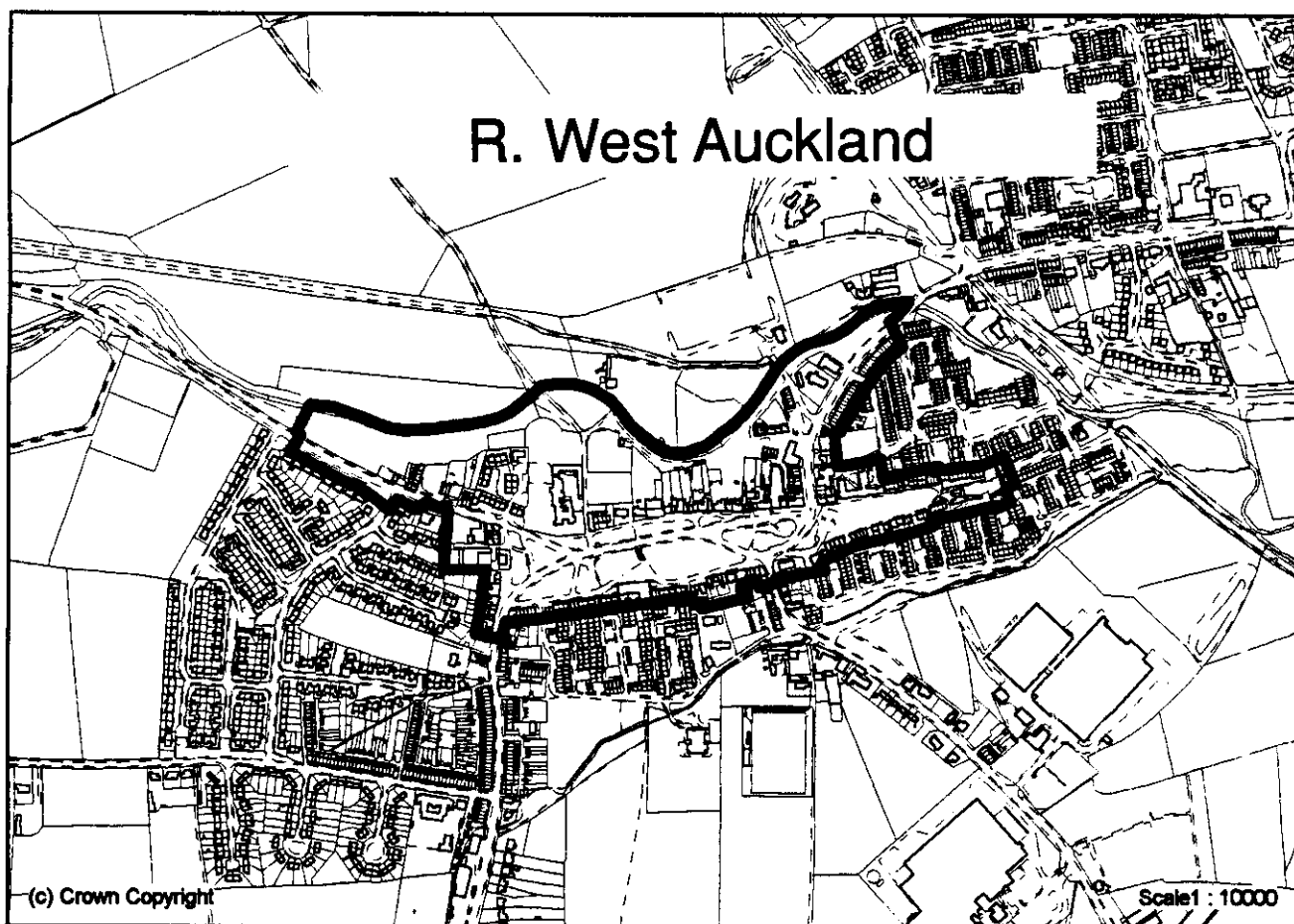
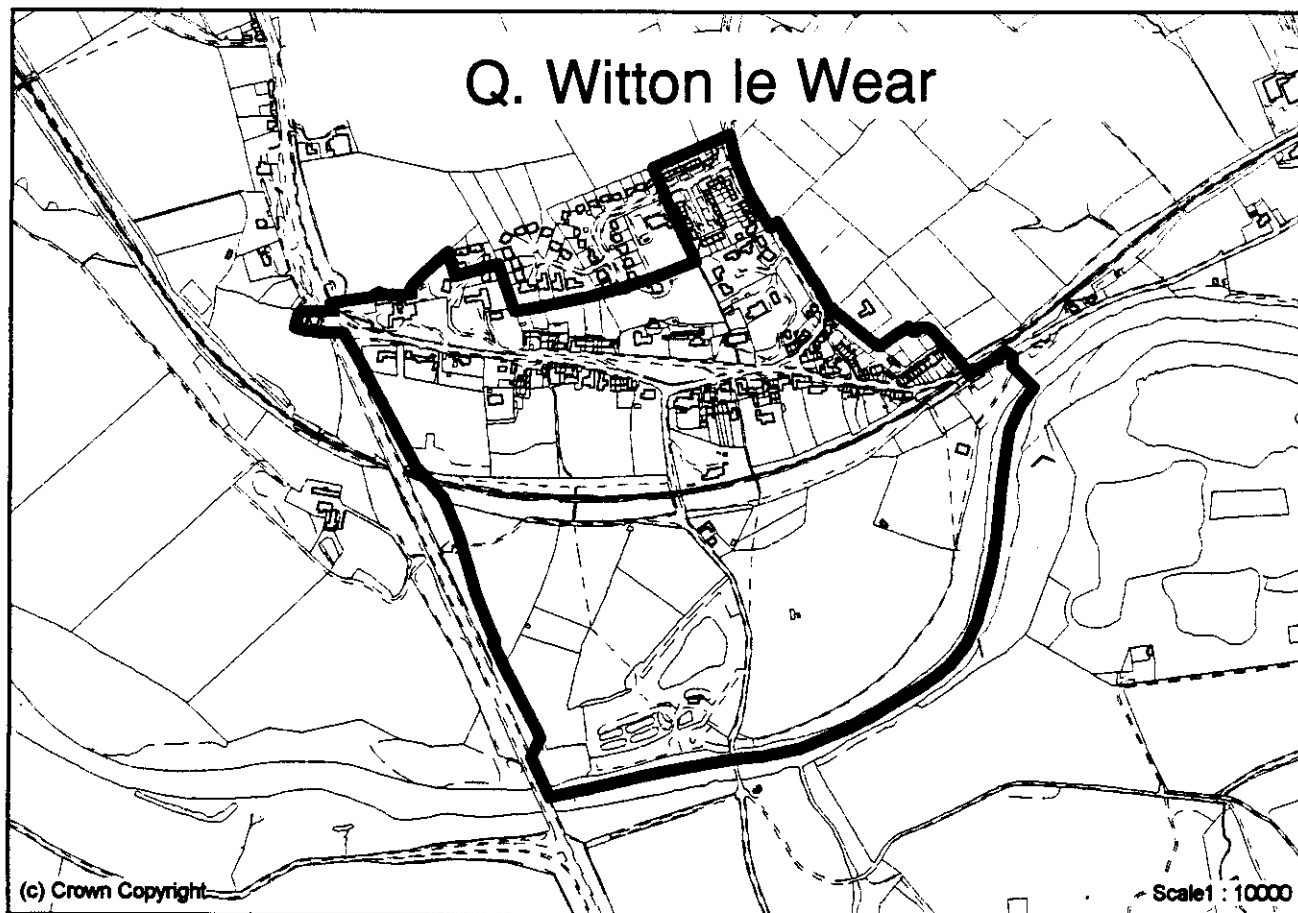
**R. West Auckland**

51 West Auckland has developed around its village Green and although it has grown in recent years to the west and east it has retained its attractive historic centre. Designation of the conservation area aims to protect and enhance this important village centre. The conservation area is based around the village green taking in the historic core of the village fronting onto the Green. The Green contains a number of listed buildings in a range of styles and periods including two Grade 1 listed buildings, The Old Manor House and The Old Hall. To the north of the Green, set back from the main road, Front Street forms an attractive frontage to the green containing a row of two and three storey listed buildings dating from the eighteenth and nineteenth century. This row is an interesting mixture of architectural styles ranging from three-storey stone rubble houses to frontages of roughcast and stucco. Front Street (north) has both individual building of architectural interest and a strong group quality which forms an important townscape for the Green from southern approaches.

52 To the west of the Green is another row of listed buildings which form an attractive group of buildings facing onto the Green. The row is predominantly made up of eighteenth century stone built cottages with pantiled roofs and sliding sash windows.

53 To the south of the Green there are fewer buildings of architectural merit, with the exception of The Old Hall, including two rows of modern terraces. This boundary does, however, form a continuous built-up frontage enclosing the Green and helps create an enclosed village green area. The Old Hall stands in the middle of this built-up frontage and is a superb example of an early seventeenth century Hall, listed Grade 1. It is built of stone rubble with flagged and pantiled roofs and stone mullioned windows. It contains a number of important trees to the front which add to the landscape quality of the Green.

54 The Manor House faces onto the Green from the north and is also a Grade 1 listed building. Its foundations are said to date from the twelfth century although the present house dates from the seventeenth and eighteenth century. It is built of stone rubble with steeply flagged roofs and a tower to the rear. The Manor House is an impressive building with a line of important trees fronting onto the Green. It forms an integral part of the architectural and historic character of West Auckland.



**S. Westgate**

55 Westgate is a small dale village located on the A698 north of the River Wear. The conservation area is widely drawn to include the loose-knit form of the village which includes important open fields within the village. It is the informal ad hoc development up the dale side to the north and its wooded riverside setting to the south which gives Westgate its inherent character, quality and group importance. Many of the traditional stone built cottages have retained their features and the village contains two listed buildings, the 18th Century Fell Cottage and the Primitive Methodist Chapel part built in 1824 and 1871, Haswick 19th Century bridge is also listed. Conservation area designation gives recognition to the group value of Westgate and the Council will aim to maintain those features which contribute to the inherent quality of the village, such as stone-flagged roofs, stone walls, loose-knit open character, traditional building style and design.

**T. Wolsingham**

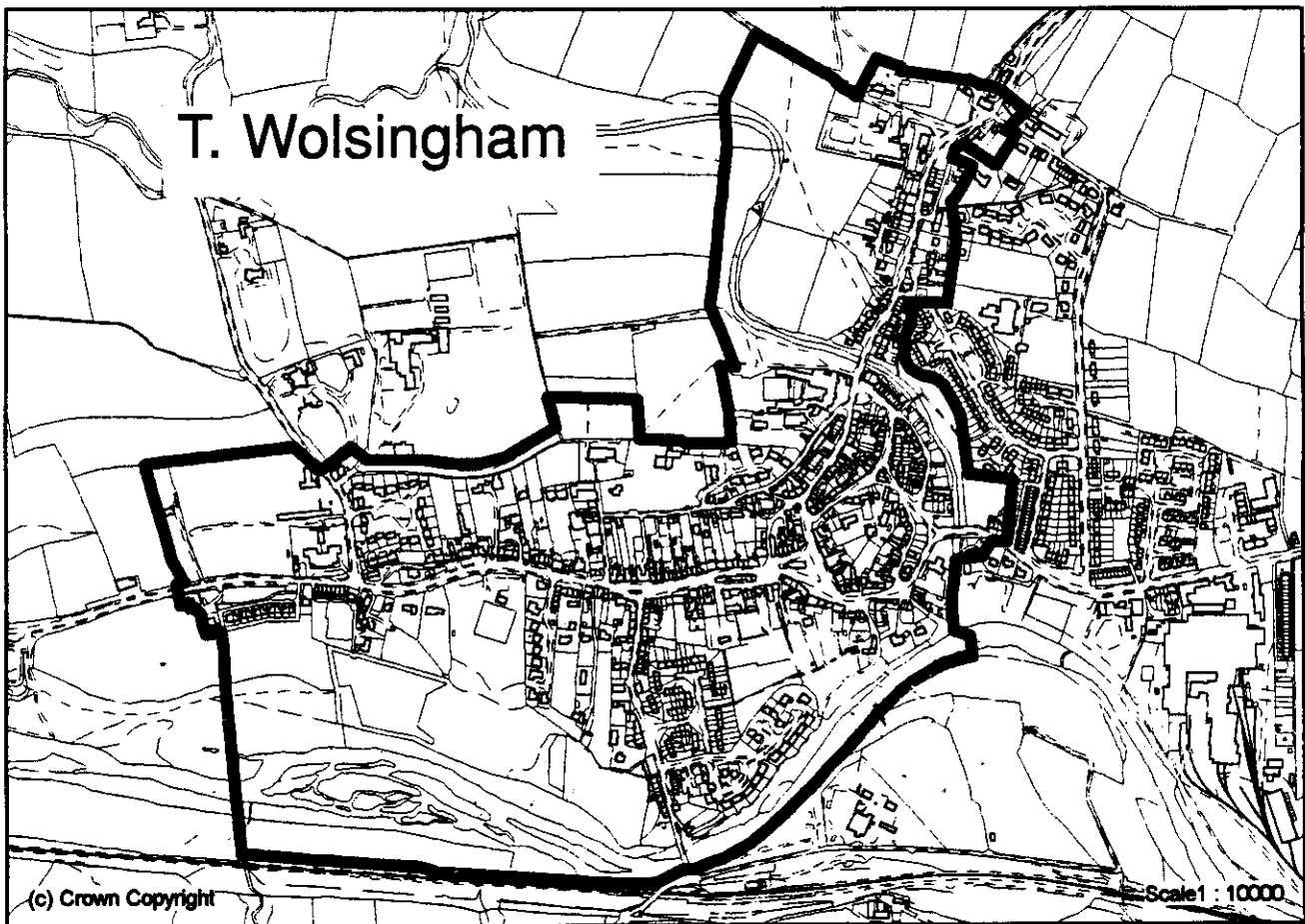
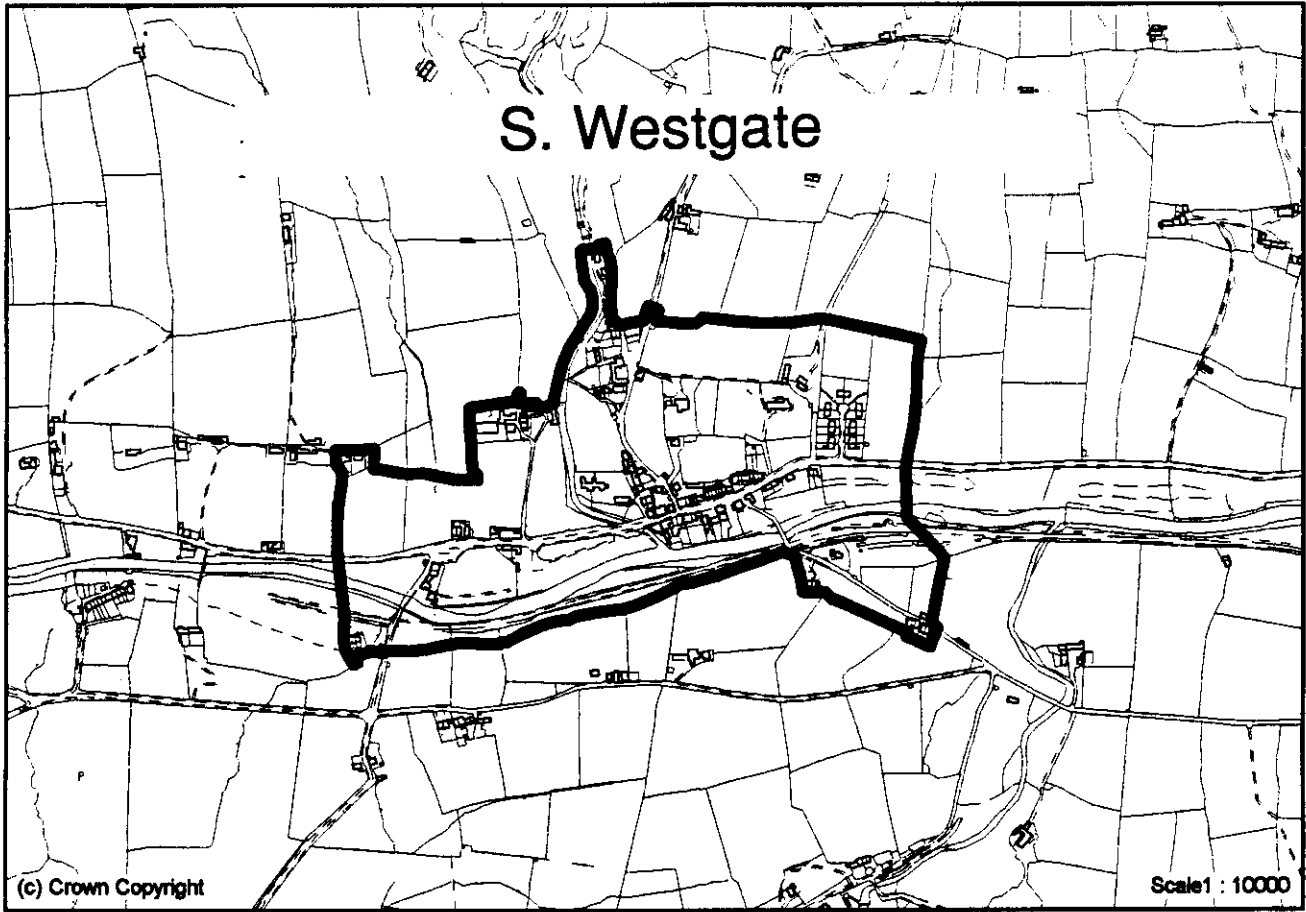
56 Wolsingham is the first village up the Dale and is sited on the north bank of the River Wear. It has developed around the Market Place and has an interesting pentagonal street pattern in the centre of the village. It has spread south to the river and followed the main road to the west and the Tow Law road to the north. Recent growth has taken place on the east and south side of the village.

57 The triangular Market Place acts as an important open space within the townscape of Wolsingham. The variety of building styles and designs has created an interesting and important townscape quality to the Market Place. Front Street continues this variety in architectural styles including the imposing listed Georgian Whitfield House and the tudor Whitfield Cottages alongside traditional Dale architecture. The broken roof line punctuated with stone built chimney stacks and the mix of stone fronted and painted render combines to produce a pleasant frontage to Front Street.

58 The playing fields and formal open space to the west of the village contains a number of important groups of trees which contribute to the setting of the conservation area. The wooded riverside area to the south of the playing fields create an important landscape setting for village.

59 To maintain the quality and character of the Wolsingham conservation area future work should be in keeping with the area by using traditional styles and materials. Particular feature include the use of coursed sandstone, stone slab roofs and flush pointing.

60 A Town Scheme of grants for Wolsingham has been set up between the Council, Durham County Council and English Heritage to give financial aid for the maintenance of Wolsingham's buildings.



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## ADVERTISEMENT GUIDELINES

Proposals should be in accordance with Policies BE11 and 12 and be in line with following guidelines:

**Fascia Signs** will normally be permitted provided they fulfil the following:-

- (a) Within keeping of character of building and surrounding area in terms of scale, colour, design, materials.
- (b) Do not cover, obstruct or detract from the architectural features of the building.
- (c) Do not fill the gap between the top of the shop front and window sill level at the first floor.

**Projecting Signs** will normally be permitted if they fulfil the following:-

- (a) It should be in keeping with the character and appearance of the building and surrounding area in terms of scale, colour, design and materials.
- (b) Projecting signs will usually be limited to one per shop.
- (c) Require a clearance of 2.4 metres from the bottom of the sign to the pavement but should not be higher than the sill level of the first floor.
- (d) Should not obscure or damage architectural detailing of the building.

**Internally Illuminated Signs** will normally be permitted provided they fulfil the following:-

- (a) Individually illuminated letters are preferred to the illumination of whole facias.
- (b) Should not be intermittently lit.

### Signs in Conservation Areas

- (a) Should be in keeping with the character and appearance of the building and its surrounding area in terms of scale, colour, design and materials.
- (b) Internally illuminated boxed signs and boxed fascia signs will be out of character within conservation areas.
- (c) Should be traditional hand painted facia timber signs.
- (d) Projecting and hanging signs will normally be permitted provided they are in keeping with the building and the surrounding area.

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## ALTERATION AND EXTENSIONS GUIDELINES

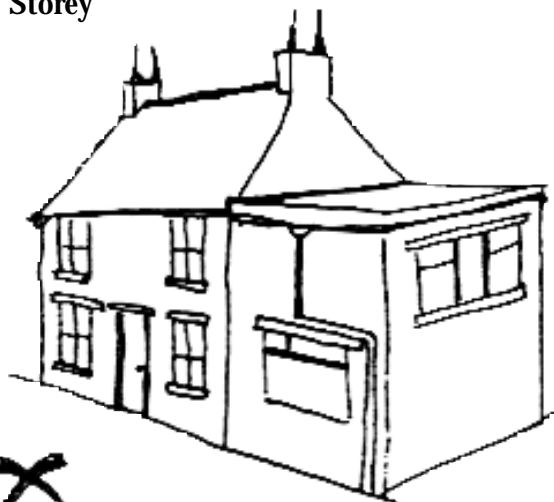
- 1 House extensions and dormer windows have a significant impact, both singularly and cumulative, on the street scene and character of the towns and village of the District. The range and variety of house extensions and dormer windows means that there is no single design solution to ensure the extension is complimentary to the character of the area. There are, However, a number of guidelines which will help the householder produce an extension which contributes positively to the street scene and character of the area.
- 2 The extension:
  - should be subordinate to the existing building;
  - should not have an adverse affect on adjoining properties, in terms of bulk, daylight, privacy, scale;
  - should not have an overbearing appearance within the street scene;
  - should be in keeping with the design and materials of the original and adjoining buildings, such as pitched roofs, natural slate, stone, brick, windows;
  - should not be in front of the building line; and
  - should maintain garden depth of 10 metres to the rear of the property, or in the case of a terrace, not more than 50% of the rear yard is used.
- 3 Additional Windows
  - Flush fitting roof lights are normally preferably to dormer windows because they are less obtrusive and do not interfere with the line of the roof slope.
  - Dormer windows on the front elevation of a house should be avoided.
  - Dormer windows to the rear of properties should be sympathetic in design and be in proportion to the building. Dormer windows can give the impression of being bulky and out of proportion, this should be avoided.
  - All new openings should be in keeping with the design, scale and character of the building and sympathetically relate to the existing windows.
  - New windows which overlook adjoining properties should be avoided to maintain the privacy of neighbours.
  - Avoid flank windows, unless bathrooms, wc's, halls, landings or stairways.
- 4 To achieve the most desirable results, the householder is strongly advised to seek the services of a registered architect, the local planning officer will also be pleased to advise in the preliminary stages. It should be noted that approval of building regulations does not necessarily mean that planning permission has been granted.

The following sketches illustrate these guidelines.

### House Extensions

- Should : be subordinate to the existing building
- : be in keeping with the existing design of the house
- : use similar/matching material to existing
- : not extend beyond the front of the house
- : not overlook adjoining properties

#### Two Storey

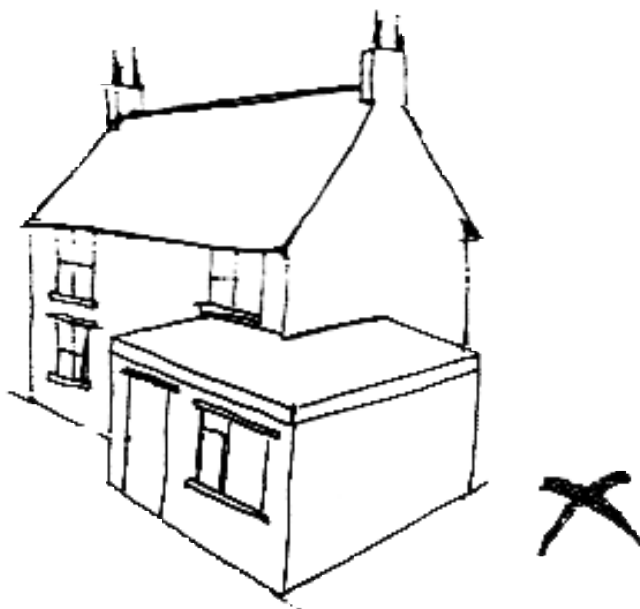


#### Unacceptable :

- extension dominates the house, it is not subordinate
- flat roof design is not in keeping with existing house
- features such as windows and guttering do not match existing building

#### Acceptable :

- extension is subordinate to existing house
- design matches existing house design
- use of matching features, such as, windows, quoins (corner stones), guttering, materials
- extension set back from front of house



#### Unacceptable :

- avoid “wrap around” extensions, does not relate well to existing form of house
- flat roofs and the windows are not in keeping with existing house



## Single Storey



### Acceptable :

- extensions should be subordinate and be in keeping with design, form, layout and materials to the existing house
- where possible single storey extensions should be set back from the front of the building.

## Rear Extensions

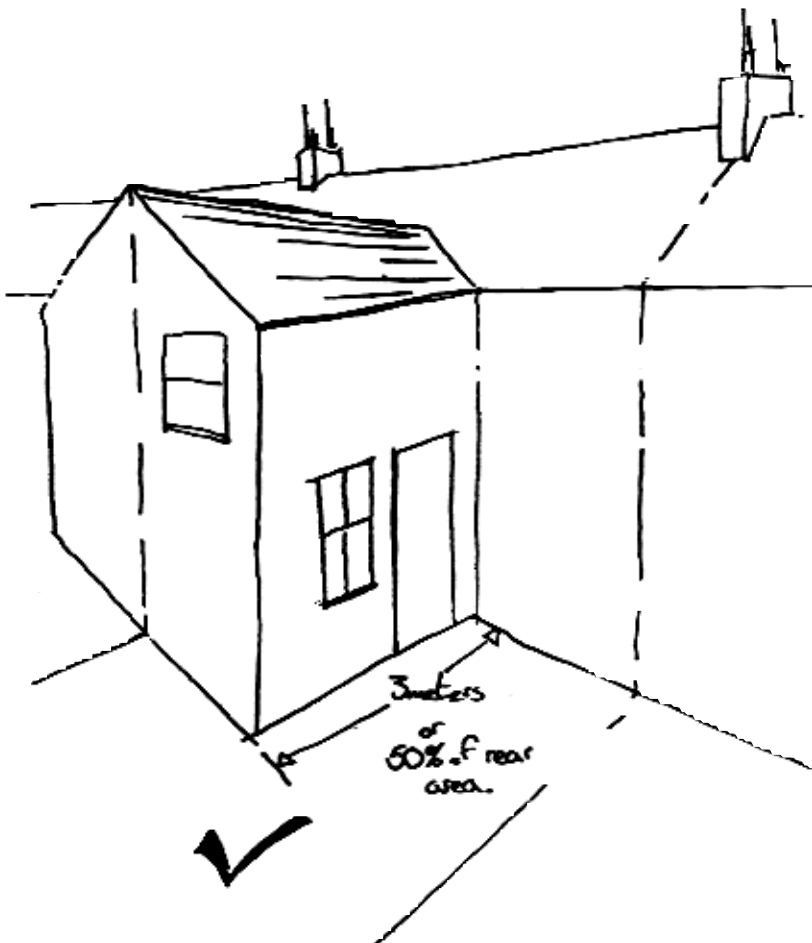
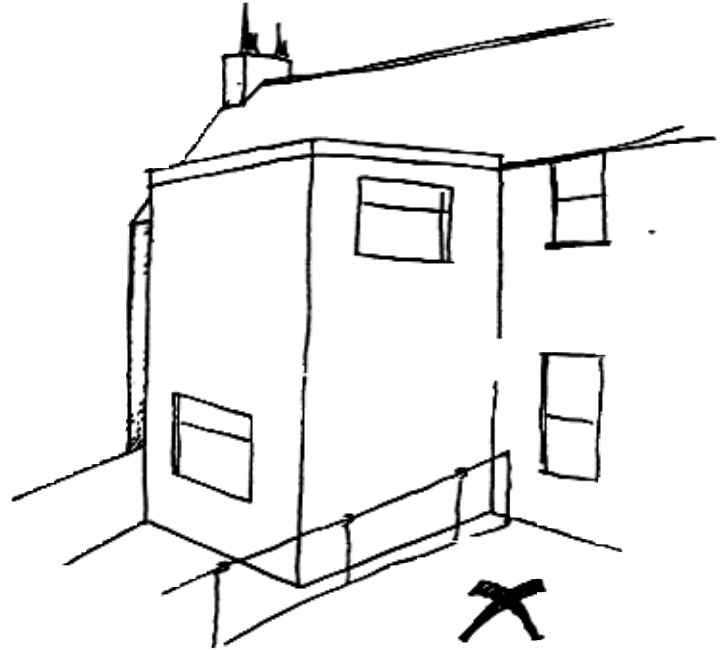


### Acceptable :

- matches design and features of existing building, such as roof pitch, windows
- does not overlook adjoining properties
- retains sufficient back garden/yard

### Unacceptable :

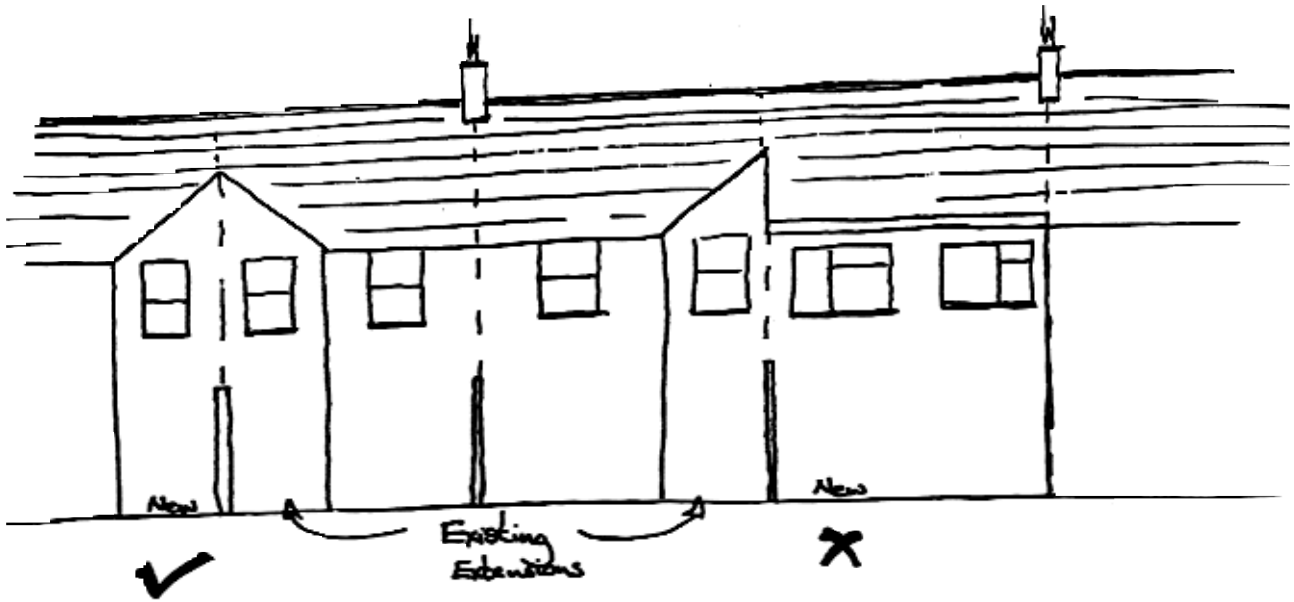
- overshadows neighbouring properties
- windows in flank wall overlooks adjoining garden
- inadequate garden space remaining
- design does not match existing house
- extension begins to dominate house
- full width two storey extensions leads to: overhanging gutters, valley gutters, and prevents neighbours from extending their property.



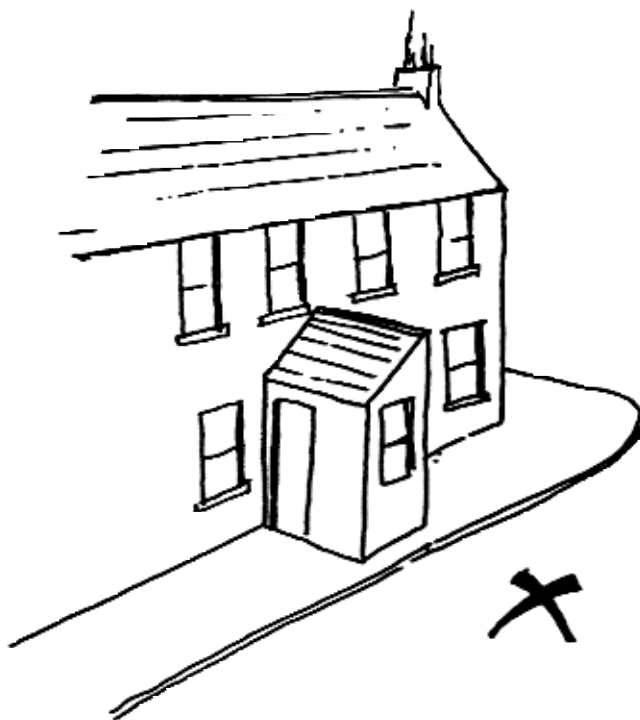
### Acceptable :

- extension does not exceed 3 metres in length or cover 50% of the rear area.
- does not take up the whole width of the house.
- matches up with neighbouring extension.
- first floor window kept to gable so not to overlook neighbouring property.

In the case of terraces, extensions should not take up more than 50% of the yard and should match up with neighbouring extensions.



Extensions which take up the full width of the property often present problems of overhanging gutters and valley guttering which lead to maintenance problems. They can also compromise the potential for neighbouring properties to extend.

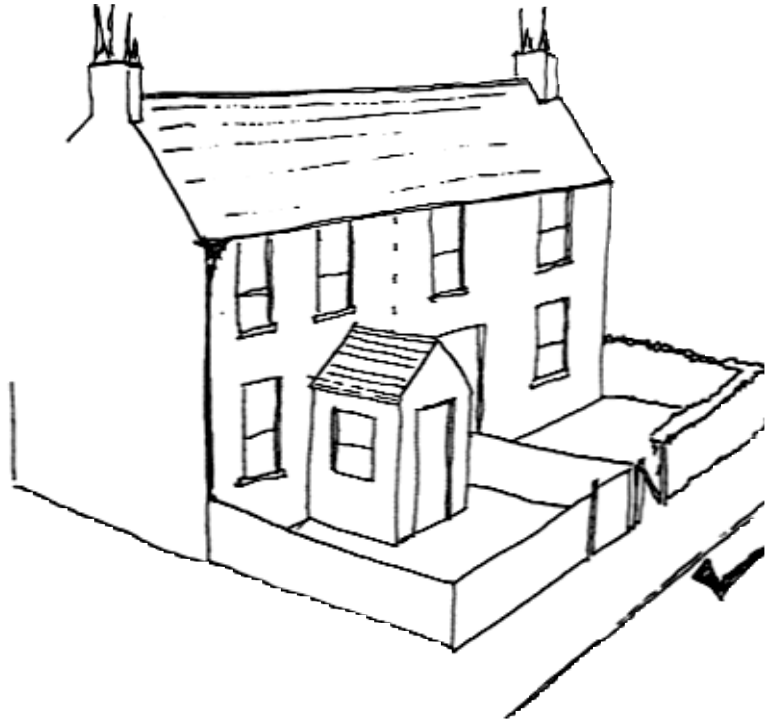


**Unacceptable :**

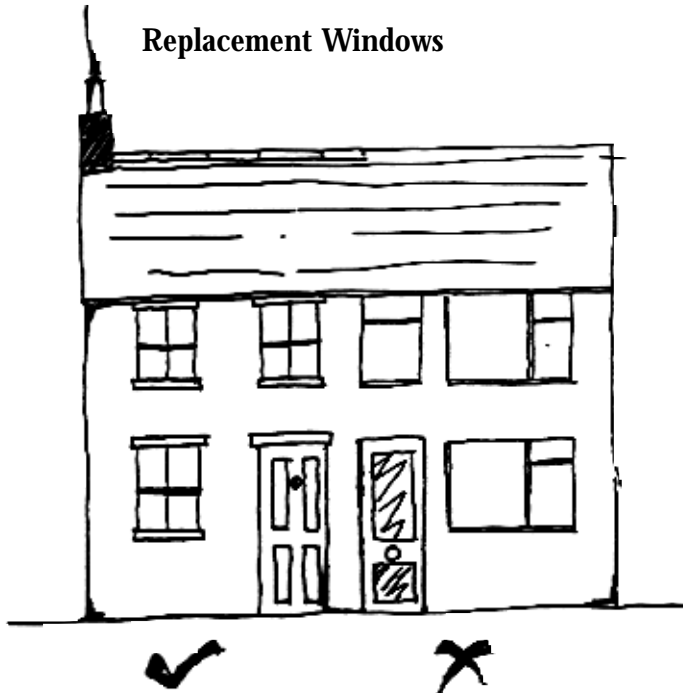
- extension extends out into the street

### Acceptable :

- extension is contained within its own curtilage
- extension is in keeping with design and form of existing house



### Replacement Windows



If doors and windows require replacing, choose an alternative which is similar to the original. Enlargement of existing window openings detracts from the building's appearance and makes the front of the property unbalanced.

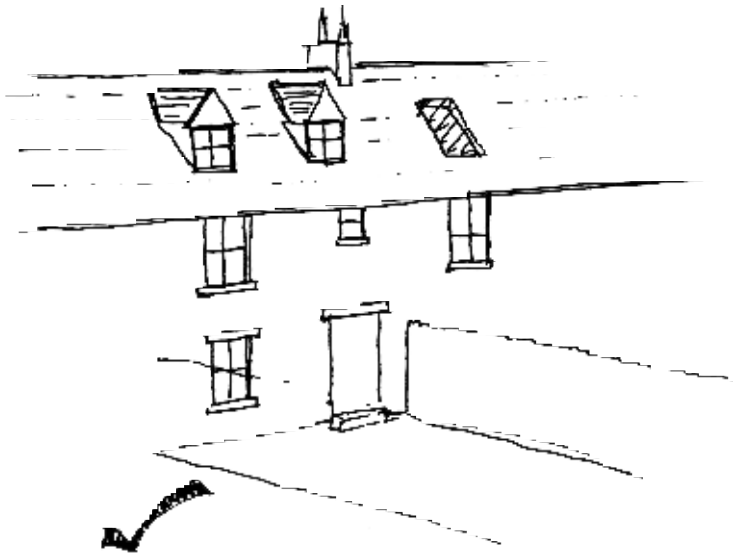
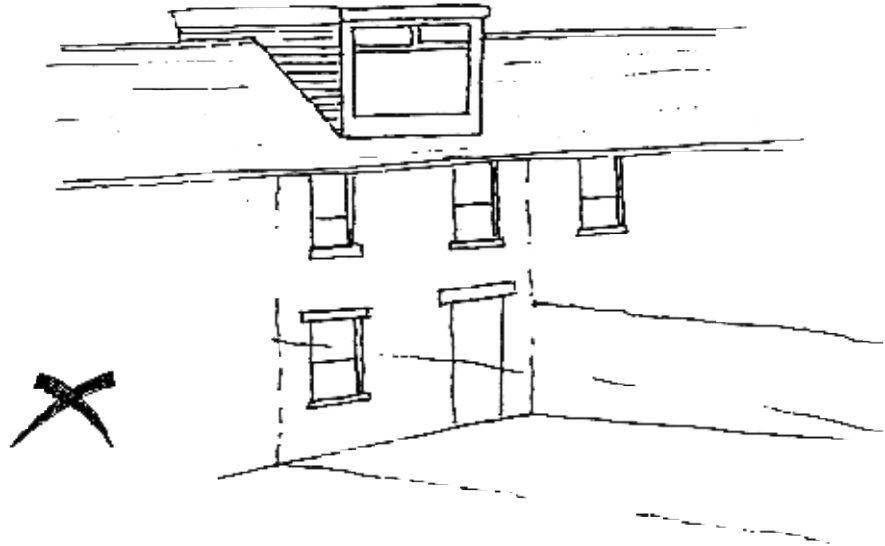
Features of the building should be retained such as chimney stacks, lintels, brick detailing and door surround details.

### Dormers and Rooflights

- Rooflights are preferred to dormers
- Dormers should be kept to the rear of the property
- Dormers should be sympathetic to the design of the building
- The ridgeline of a house should not be broken by the dormer
- Dormers should not overlook adjoining properties

### Unacceptable :

- dormer is out of proportion with house, and dominates building
- dormer rises above the roof creating the effect of another storey being added
- windows are out of keeping with the original house



### Acceptable :

- rooflights and dormers kept to rear of house
- rooflights have less of an impact than dormers
- dormers in keeping with design, scale of existing building
- dormers relate well to existing openings

### Garages

Garages should follow the same guidelines as extensions.

- It should :
- : be subordinate to the house
  - : be in keeping with the design of the house
  - : use similar/matching materials to the house
  - : where possible be set back from the front of the house.

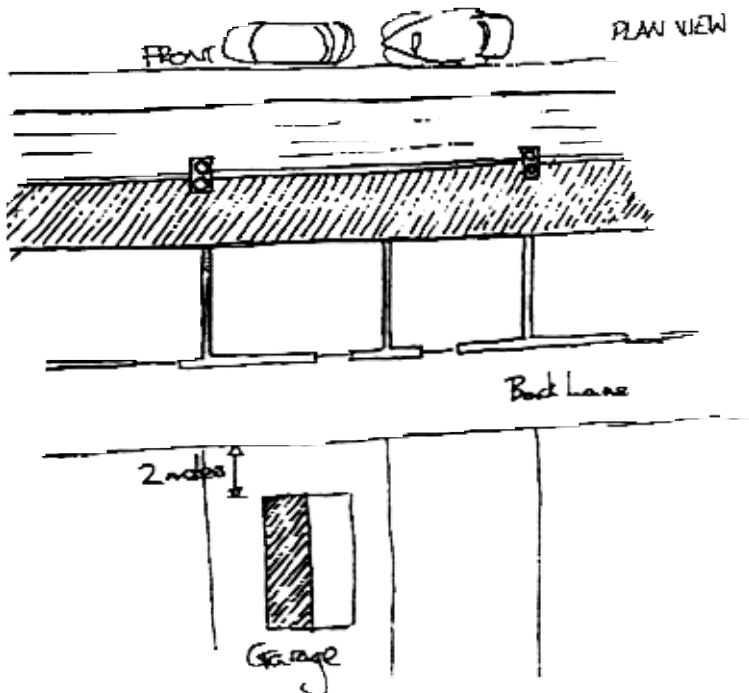
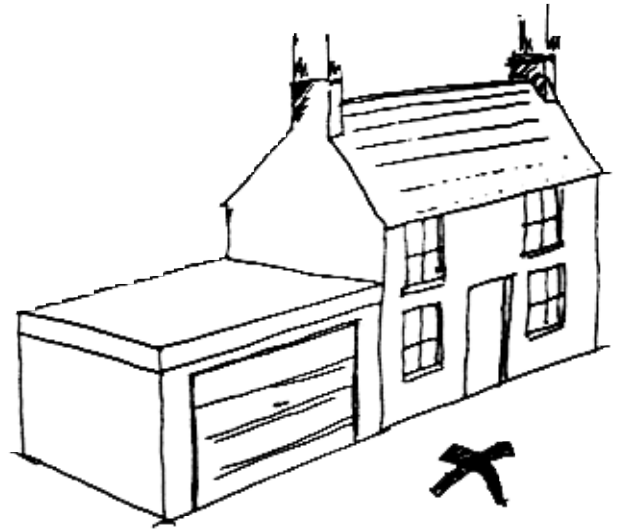


**Acceptable :**

- pitched roof
- matching material
- subordinate to house
- set back from front of house

**Unacceptable :**

- too large, not subordinate
- material not matching
- flat roof
- in front of building line



Where garages are required on gardens, detached by a rear lane, the garage should be set back a minimum of 2 metres from the front of the lane. This is to enable the garage to be opened without the doors swinging out over the lane.

Where a full retractable door is to be used, this criteria will not be required.

## Satellite Dishes

Satellite dishes can have a significant impact on the street scene and character of an area. However sensitive siting and locations of dishes can help to blend them into the street scene. The majority of dishes do not require planning permission.

### A dish will require permission if:

- it is higher than highest part of roof or on a chimney stack
- it is larger than 90 cm in diameter
- it is on a wall or roof fronting the highway or in a conservation area or AONB
- it is on a listed building (Listed Building Consent).

### Location of satellite dishes should :

- be kept off the front of houses
- be located to the rear of properties, where possible
- avoid prominent locations
- if possible be coloured to blend into its surroundings.

## Infilling

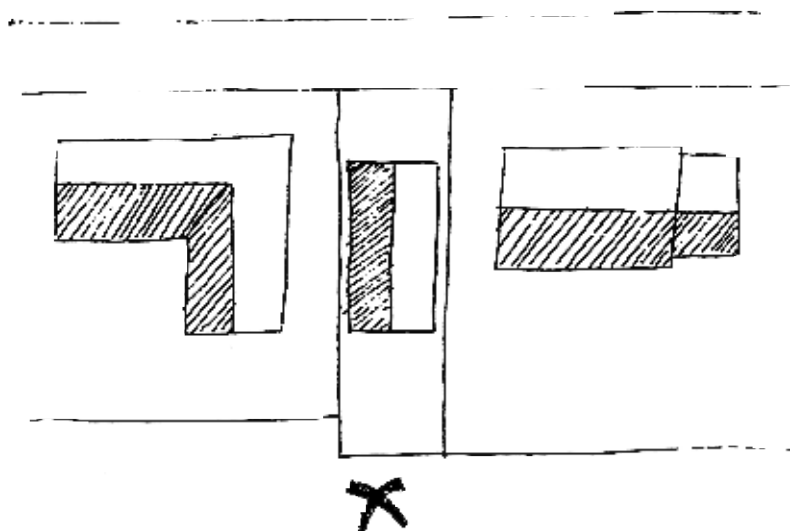
Infilling can help to consolidate villages and groups of houses and contribute to the street scene.

### Infill development should :

- contribute to the street scene
- be in keeping with the built form
- not attempt to fill all gaps within villages.

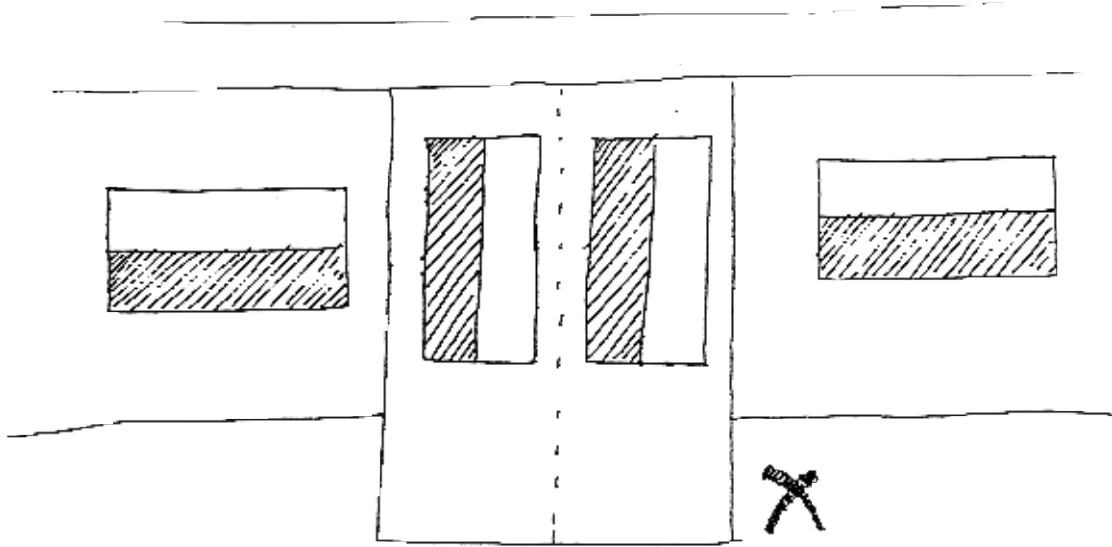
### Unacceptable :

site is too narrow to accommodate a house which would be in keeping with adjoining houses.



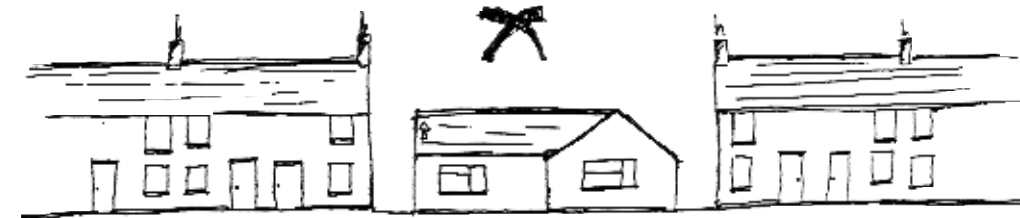
**Unacceptable :**

- houses have wrong orientation, gable ends facing forwards. Out of keeping with street scene.



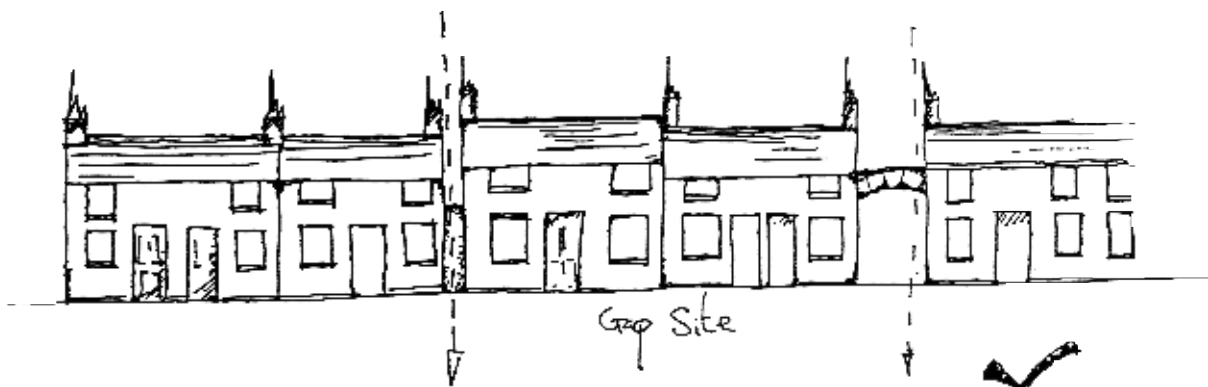
**Unacceptable :**

- generally infilling should copy the type of houses adjoining, one storey/two storey
- single storey bungalow out of place adjoining 2 storey terraces



**Acceptable :**

- continue existing built form





And finally, please don't go and turn ...



this .... into .... this!!

### Don't :

- replace traditional windows with modern replacements requiring the widening of the window openings
- render, clad or dash walls. It detracts from the character of the house and can lead to more problems than it cures
- add garages, extensions or porches which are out of keeping with the existing building  
add dormers or roof lights to the front of the house
- remove architectural features such as chimney stacks, lintels, decorative brickwork etc
- add external clutter within the curtilage, such as satellite dishes, aerials, gas tanks etc. These items can be accommodated in well screened locations or to the rear of the property
- use inappropriate boundary treatments which are out of keeping with the building and the area.

## MINERALS

### Criteria to Assess Minerals Proposals

**When consulted by the Minerals Authority applications for the extraction and processing of minerals will be assessed by the Council using the following criteria:**

- i) proximity to towns and villages and the environmental impact the proposal will have on local communities, including the impact of heavy traffic to and from the site, noise, dust, vibration, visual intrusion;**
- ii) impact the proposal will have on the landscape quality of the District. The Council will normally object to proposals within identified landscape areas, in particular, the AONB and ALV and on high quality agricultural land;**
- iii) impact upon designated and proposed nature conservation sites including RAMSAR designations, Special Protection Areas, SSSI's and SNCI's, trees, hedgerows and other habitats;**
- iv) impact on the local economy and existing employment generating uses including neighbouring agricultural units;**
- v) benefits achieved through improvements to the landscape quality of the area, such as former despoiled areas and old mineral workings;**
- vi) adequate access can be achieved to the site. Objections will be made to proposals which produce traffic flows in excess of the local road capacity;**
- vii) full use of the local rail network, where possible, to limit the number of heavy goods vehicles on the District's roads;**
- viii) adequate and appropriate landscaping is proposed to help mitigate the impact of the scheme and a full reclamation programme to, where appropriate, include the creation of public and recreational facilities for use by the local community or the creation of wildlife habitats;**
- ix) proposed after uses should be compatible with the surrounding area; and**
- x) effect on groundwater and the quality of adjacent water courses including artificial land drainage systems, in particular where restoration involves landfilling.**

Justifications:

- 6.1 Durham County Council are the determining authority for all minerals applications. The Council is consulted on all mineral applications within the District.
- 6.2 The Council accepts the need, both locally and nationally, for the winning of minerals however, this should not be to the detriment of the residents and landscape inhabitants of Wear Valley. The Council will object to proposals which are unacceptable in terms of location close to towns and villages and which effect the AONB, ALV and SSSI's.
- 6.3 The Council is aware of the impact on the local area of traffic to and from mineral workings. The movement of Heavy Goods Vehicles will be reduced by the use of the local rail network. Where there is no rail system movement should be restricted to the identified lorry routes (Policy T5)

and the A class road network.

- 6.4 All proposals will need to satisfy the Council that a full landscaping and reclamation programme is planned and each proposal where appropriate, is accompanied by an Environmental Impact Statement.

### Impact on Groundwater Levels

**When consulted by the Minerals Authority, the District Council will object to proposals for new mineral workings whose impact on surrounding groundwater levels is likely to have a detrimental impact on existing water abstraction, river flow or nature habitats.**

Justification

- 6.5 Unless appropriately designed, the extraction of minerals can have significant effects on groundwater levels surrounding a site. This may have implications for existing water abstraction, river flows, and on natural habitats. The views of the NRA will be sought in such cases.

## WASTE

### Criteria to Assess Waste Disposal Proposals

When consulted by the Waste Authority, the District Council will assess proposals for new waste disposal sites using the following criteria:

- i) proximity to towns and villages and the environmental impact the proposal will have on local communities, including the impact of heavy traffic to and from the site, noise, dust, vibration, visual intrusion;
- ii) impact the proposal will have on the landscape quality of the District. The Council will object to proposals within identified landscape areas, in particular, the AONB and ALV;
- iii) impact upon designated nature conservation sites, trees, hedgerows and other habitats;
- iv) the possible contamination of watercourses and groundwater and the production and migration of methane gas;
- v) the benefits achieved through improvements to the landscape quality of the area, such as, former despoiled areas and old mineral workings;
- vi) adequate access can be achieved to the site. Objections will be made to proposals which produce traffic flows in excess of the local road capacity or which detract from the environment of towns and villages;
- vii) adequate and appropriate landscaping, to mitigate the impact of the proposal and a full reclamation programme; and
- ix) proposed after uses should be compatible with the surrounding area.

In addition, the District Council will object to proposals which involve the importation of waste in bulk, by road into Weardale.

Justification :

- 6.6 Durham County Council are the determining authority for all waste disposal applications. The Council is consulted on all waste disposal applications within the District.
- 6.7 Existing disposal sites do not have an indefinite life. New sites will be required through the plan period. Proposals will be required to satisfy the Council that the development would not have a harmful effect upon the local residents and the landscape quality of the District. Proposals should contain measures to prevent the contamination of nearby water courses by site run-off. The views of the Environment Agency will be sought in such cases.
- 6.8 Durham County Council in its Waste Disposal Local Plan has identified the disused quarries in Weardale (see Appendix 5) as having potential for tipping. If these quarries are to be used full use will be made of the existing rail network to minimise the additional lorry journeys along the A689. The line has been used to transport cement from the Blue Circle cement works at Eastgate and has had a significant effect on reducing the number of journeys by heavy goods vehicles along the A689. Similar use of the rail network by the Waste Authority will help to protect

the environment of the Dales

- 6.9 The use of disused quarries, although being ideal landfill site, can lead to the 'loss' of naturally regenerated habitats. Sites with special nature conservation interest should be conserved.

### Disposal of Waste in Floodplains

**Disposal of waste within river floodplains should be restricted to inert waste only. elsewhere, the Council, when consulted by the Waste Authority, will object to the disposal of waste where it is likely to cause a risk to water quality.**

Justification :

- 6.10 The disposal of waste, particularly within floodplains, raises issues of pollution and flooding. The tipping of some forms of waste increases the risk of pollution for surrounding groundwater and surface water quality. The risk is greatest within the floodplain where disposal should be limited to inert waste only. Elsewhere, the disposal of waste which is likely to cause risk to water quality will be opposed. The views of the Environment Agency will be sought in such cases.

# Appendices

## PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS

- 1 Permitted development rights allow a range of minor developments to take place without the need for a full planning permission requiring a planning application.
- 2 The following permitted development rights apply to all areas within the District which are outside the SSSI's, AONB and conservation areas. Permitted development rights within these areas are in this Appendix.
- 3 The following is only a guide to what is allowed by the regulations; **you are advised to confirm with the local planning authority** that permission is not needed for your particular proposal, even if it complies with all the rules set out below.

### Residential Extensions

- 4 a) Detached and semi-detached houses : The extension must not exceed 70 cubic metres or 15% of the volume of the original house,
- b) Terraced houses : The extension must not exceed 50 cubic metres or 10% of the volume of the original house, whichever is the greater.
- 5 In either of the above cases the extension must not exceed 115 cubic metres, however large your house.
- a) No part of the extension may project beyond any part of a house that faces a highway unless the highway would be at least 20 metres from the extension.
- b) No part of the extension that is within 2 metres of a boundary may be more than 4 metres high. Extension that are more than 2 metres from any boundary must not exceed the height of the highest part of the floor of the original house.
- c) The extension must not cover more than half the original garden area. (Original in this sense means that garden area as it was when the house was built and includes the front garden.

### Industrial Extensions

- 6 a) The extension must not exceed the height of the original building.
- b) The extension must not exceed 25% of the original building.
- c) The floor space of the original building must not be exceeded by 1000m<sup>2</sup>.
- d) No part of the extension should be within 5 metres of the curtilage boundary.

### Garages, Sheds etc

- 7 The height of the building must not exceed 4 metres if it has a ridged roof and 3 metres if it has any other sort of roof.
- a) The building must not cover more than half the original curtilage.
- b) If the building faces on to a highway it must not be nearer to the highway than the house, unless the highway would be more than 20 metres away from the completed building.

- c) If the building is within 5 metres of the hose and is more than 10 cubic metres it counts as an extension.

### Porches

- 8 a) The area of the porch (measured externally) must not exceed 3 square metres.
- b) The height of the porch must not exceed 3 metres.
- c) The porch must be at least 2 metres from any boundary that faces a highway.

### Dormer Windows

- 9 a) The dormer must not exceed the height of the highest part of the existing roof.
- b) Dormers are not allowed on any part of a roof facing a highway.
- c) The area taken up by the dormer extension (this does not include the original loft/attic space), must not exceed 40 cubic metres for a terraced house or 50 cubic metres for any other house. These additions count towards the total space allowed for extensions.

### Gates, Walls and Fences

- 10 - These must not exceed 1 metre in height with out planning permission, if they adjoin a vehicular highway, and 2 metres in any other case.

### Hard-Standings and Patios

- 11 - These are allowed for domestic purposes

### Satellite Dishes

- 12 - One satellite dish is allowed on a house or within its boundary, provided that it is no bigger than 90cm in any dimension and it is not placed higher than the highest part of the roof.

### Other Works

- 13 Internal alterations and repairs to the house do not require planning permission provided that these works do not result in the conversion of the house to flats, maisonettes or bedsits. External painting does not require planning permission.

### Permitted Development Rights within the AONB and Conservation Areas

- 14 Permitted development rights allow a range of minor developments to take place without the need for a full planning permission requiring a planning permission.
- 15 In AONB's and conservation areas some permitted development rights are reduced, others withdrawn entirely so that some types of normally minor development remain subject of scrutiny by the planning system.
- 16 Development within the AONB or a conservation area will require planning permission if:
- a) an extension of a house is more than 50

- cubic metres or 10% of the original building.
- b) it involves the cladding of any part of exterior of the building with stone, artificial stone, timber, plastic or tiles.
  - c) it involves the construction of a building or enclosure (including swimming pool) within the curtilage of the house that is larger than 10 cubic metres.
  - d) the work involves alterations or extensions to the house roof.
  - e) extensions to industrial buildings or warehouses are greater than 10% of the original building.
  - f) extensions to industrial buildings or warehouses exceed the original floor space by 500m<sup>2</sup>.
  - g) it involves the installation of a satellite dish on chimney stacks or on walls or roof slopes fronting a highway as well as on buildings over 15 metres in height.
  - h) it involves the installation or alteration of microwave antennas by a "code systems operator" licensed under the Telecommunications Act 1984. Operators must also give the local planning authority prior notification of their intention to install apparatus.

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## SITES OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST

The following are sites of special scientific interest designated by English Nature and protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 :-

- a) Slit Wood - ancient, semi natural woodland and important grasslands.
- b) Westernhope Burn Wood - semi natural woodland.
- c) Fairy Holes Cave - geological importance.
- d) Old Moss Lead Vein - outcrop mineral vein.
- e) West Rigg Open Cutting - geological importance
- f) Witton-le-Wear nature reserve - important water area. and related habitats.
- g) Burnhope Burn - poorly drained soils providing a habitat for associated flora and fauna.
- h) Pow Hill Bog - a complex system of dry and wet habitats.
- i) Backstone Bank and Baal Hill Woods - large expanses of semi natural woodland.
- j) Cornriggs Meadows - important plant communities.
- k) Rogerley Quarry - geological importance.
- l) Greenfoot Quarry - geological importance.
- m) West Newlandside Meadows - important plant communities.
- n) Far High House Meadows - important plant communities.
- o) Moorhouse & Cross Fell - blanket bog and limestone outcrops.
- p) Upper Teesdale SSSI - rare upland habitats with associated flora and fauna.

## SITES OF NATURE CONSERVATION IMPORTANCE

The following sites have been identified as being of ecological or geological importance in the District and have been designated Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI's). SNCI's is the generic designation which includes County Wildlife Sites, County Geological Sites and Regionally Important Geological Sites.

### County Wildlife Sites

Garden House Plantation  
 Blackdene Mine Railway  
 Bridgend Railway, St John's Chapel  
 Meadow, West Green Head  
 Sunderland Cleugh  
 Sparganium Pool  
 Listera Moorland  
 Fine Burn  
 Sedling Plain Meadow  
 Pedam's Oak  
 Derwent Reservoir  
 Nookton Wood  
 Harehope Quarry  
 Killhope Wheel  
 Stanley Moss  
 Wiserley Hall  
 Ayhope Shield  
 Wolsingham River Gravels  
 Willow Green Gill Wood  
 Ireshopeburn  
 Houselop Beck Wood  
 Thornhope Beck Wood  
 Swinhope Moor  
 Knitsley Fell  
 Fendrith Hill  
 Ambling Gate Bank  
 Tunstall Reservoir  
 Baal Hill Wood  
 Stanhope Dene  
 River Wear Harperley  
 Horsley Burn Wood  
 Shittlehope Burn Wood  
 Bollihope Bog  
 Page Bank Pond  
 Bollihope Burn  
 "Fylands", River Gaunless  
 Harehope Burn Wood  
 Beldon Burn  
 McNeil Bottoms  
 Parson Byers Quarries  
 Witton Bottoms Woodland  
 Witton Park Wetland  
 Cobey's Carr  
 Puddingthorn Quarries  
 Stanley Beck Meadows

### County Geological Sites

Binchester Craggs  
 Black Cleugh, Burnhope  
 Bollihope and Snowhope Carrs  
 Boltsburn Mine & Rookhope Borehole  
 Cement Works Quarry, Eastgate  
 Chestergarth Quarry, Rookhope  
 Fine Burn, Bollihope  
 Gaunless River, East Bank  
 Greenfield Quarry Cowshill  
 Greenlaws East Mine  
 Groverake Mine and Opencast  
 Harehope Quarry, Frosterley  
 Harthope Head Ganister Quarries  
 Killhope Burn, Cophill Quarry and River Wear at  
     Burtree Ford Bridge  
 Killhope Lead Mining Centre  
 Middlehope Burn  
 Noah's Ark Quarry, Stanhope  
 Roundhill Quarry, Stanhope  
 St Johns Chapel Drumlins  
 Sedling Burn, Cowshill  
 Stanhope Burn

(Regionally Important Geological Sites to be included when identified)



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**HOUSING LAND: COMMITMENTS AND NEW ALLOCATIONS**
**POLICY H5 SETTLEMENTS**

Site	Status	Remaining Area (Hectares)	Estimated Dwellings
<b>Bishop Auckland</b>			
Etherley Lane	DPP	4.2	87
Beechwood Drive	DPP	1.3	23
East Parade	DPP	0.0	10
Rose Hill	DPP	0.8	2
Chapel Street	DPP	0.51	6
Kings Lodge	OPP	0.11	10
Wilkinson's Yard	DPP	0.2	47
Braithwaite Street	DPP	0.1	5
Musgrave Street	DPP	0.02	9
The Elms	DPP	0.2	21
Dell Bank South	DPP	1.37	6
St Wilfreds School	DPP	0.6	6
The Copse	DPP	0.94	7
Milford Meadows	OPP	1.0	20
West of Grange Avenue	OPP	2.0	76
St Andrews Terrace	OPP	0.5	13
Darlington Road	WVDLP	3.0	64
Bracks Farm	WVDLP	6.0	100
Leazes Lane Industrial Site	WVDLP	3.2	100
Oakley Street	WVDLP	0.8	15
Etherley Dene Farm	WVDLP	5.7	150
<b>Total</b>		<b>32.55</b>	<b>777</b>
<b>Crook</b>			
Former Community Hall	OPP	0.09	7
Former Eclipse Site	DPP	2.9	53
Hendersons	DPP	0.95	9
Beechburn Park	DPP	6.62	19
Adjacent Cemetery, Wheatbottom	OPP	0.77	14
Eclipse Works Dev Site	WVDLP	2.5	58
New Road	WVDLP	1.8	43
Thistleflat Road	WVDLP	3.9	72
Tennyson Terrace	WVDLP/RES	2.4	60
South End Villas	WVDLP/RES	2.3	30
<b>Total</b>		<b>24.23</b>	<b>365</b>
<b>Willington</b>			
West of Industrial Estate Phase 1	OPP	1.8	43
West of Industrial Estate Phase 2	OPP	1.2	96
Denewood Close	DPP	0.28	11
Rectory Gardens	DPP	3.2	65
Lydia Street	DPP	0.07	6
Springfield House	OPP	0.15	7
Church View	DPP	0.3	4
Taylor Court	DPP	0.12	2
<b>Total</b>		<b>7.12</b>	<b>234</b>
<b>Coundon</b>			
Victoria Avenue	DPP	0.7	20
Wilson Avenue	DPP	0.36	9
Leeholme Road	OPP	0.52	15
Grey Gardens	WVDLP	3.9	94
Hillside Road Development Site	WVDLP	3.0	72
Addison Road	WVDLP	1.2	25
Westerton View	WVDLP	0.3	8
Pembroke Street	WVDLP/RES	1.6	38
Sussex Street	WVDLP/RES	0.8	19
<b>Total</b>		<b>12.38</b>	<b>300</b>

**POLICY H6 SETTLEMENTS**

Site	Status	Remaining Area (Hectares)	Total	Estimated Dwellings
<b>Bishop Auckland Sub Area</b>				
<b>Witton Park</b>				
Low Queen Street	WVDLP	3.3		50
High Queen Street	WVDLP	1.0		24
<b>Total</b>		<b>4.3</b>		<b>74</b>
<b>Dene Valley</b>				
Brook Street	DPP	0.06		6
Brockwell Court	DPP	1.62		9
Bridge Farm Phase 1	WVDLP	0.5		20
Bridge Farm Phase 2	WVDLP	2.9		40
Close House Allotments	WVDLP	0.5		30
Close House	WVDLP	1.7		30
<b>Total</b>		<b>7.28</b>		<b>135</b>
<b>Crook and Willington Sub Area</b>				
<b>Stanley/Mount Pleasant</b>				
Allotment Site	WVDLP	1.3		20
South of Football Ground	WVDLP	1.7		40
<b>Total</b>		<b>3.0</b>		<b>60</b>

**POLICY H7 SETTLEMENTS**

<b>Bishop Auckland Sub Area</b>				
<b>Escomb</b>				
Vicarage Farm	DPP	0.82		9
<b>Total</b>		<b>0.82</b>		<b>9</b>
<b>Newfield</b>				
New Park (Former School Site)	DPP	0.7		17
<b>Total</b>		<b>0.7</b>		<b>17</b>
<b>Crook and Willington Sub Area</b>				
<b>Billy Row</b>				
Dunelm House	DPP	0.18		6
Well Bank	WVDLP	0.4		6
<b>Total</b>		<b>0.58</b>		<b>12</b>
<b>Fir Tree</b>				
Hazel Grove Terrace	DPP	0.57		7
<b>Total</b>		<b>0.57</b>		<b>7</b>
<b>Howden le Wear</b>				
Vicarage Close	DPP	0.35		6
Park Terrace	WVDLP	1.8		42
Rear of High Street	WVDLP	1.8		45
<b>Total</b>		<b>3.95</b>		<b>93</b>
<b>Hunwick</b>				
Rough Lea Farm	DPP	0.0		7
Quarry Burn Lane	DPP	1.4		85
Lane Ends	WVDLP	0.2		10
West End	WVDLP	0.8		20
<b>Total</b>		<b>2.4</b>		<b>122</b>

Site	Status	Remaining Area (Hectares)	Total	Estimated Dwellings
<b>North Bitchburn</b>				
Rear of Red Lion	DPP	0.46		8
<b>Total</b>		<b>0.46</b>		<b>8</b>
<b>Oakenshaw</b>				
Acorn Drive	DPP	1.77		8
<b>Total</b>		<b>1.77</b>		<b>8</b>
<b>Sunniside</b>				
Front Street	WVDLP	0.6		14
<b>Total</b>		<b>0.6</b>		<b>14</b>
<b>Witton le Wear</b>				
Witton Tower	DPP	0.0		6
<b>Total</b>		<b>0.0</b>		<b>6</b>
<b>Tow Law/Weardale Sub Area</b>				
<b>Edmundbyers</b>				
Home Farm	DPP	0.46		8
<b>Total</b>		<b>0.46</b>		<b>8</b>
<b>Frosterley</b>				
Dam Hill	DPP	0.32		8
Kirk Rise	DPP	1.42		17
<b>Total</b>		<b>1.74</b>		<b>25</b>
<b>Stanhope</b>				
Ashcroft	DPP	0.6		14
Stanhope Castle	DPP	0.07		6
Stanhope Hall Farm	OPP/DPP	0.02		8
Bondisle Allotments	WVDLP	0.4		10
Chapel Street	WVDLP	0.5		12
<b>Total</b>		<b>1.59</b>		<b>50</b>
<b>St Johns Chapel</b>				
Broken Way	WVDLP	1.3		30
<b>Total</b>		<b>1.3</b>		<b>30</b>
<b>Tow Law</b>				
Naismith Close	OPP	0.05		16
<b>Total</b>		<b>0.05</b>		<b>16</b>
<b>Westgate</b>				
Vicarage Site	DPP	0.6		14
Weardale Caravan Site	WVDLP	0.7		16
Brittan Hall	WVDLP	0.6		10
<b>Total</b>		<b>1.9</b>		<b>40</b>
<b>Wolsingham</b>				
Hollywood Hall	OPP/DPP	7.6		22
Glebe Paddock	OPP	0.7		10
Saw Mill Site Durham Road	WVDLP	2.6		55
North of Riverdale	WVDLP	0.8		20
<b>Total</b>		<b>11.7</b>		<b>107</b>
<b>Status Explanation</b>				
OPP	Outline Planning Permission			
DPP	Detailed Planning Permission			
RES	Council Resolution to Dispose for Housing			
WVDLP	Wear Valley District Local Plan			

## WASTE DISPOSAL SITES IN WEARDALE

Extract taken from County Durham Waste Disposal Local Plan 1984 listing waste disposal sites within the Weardale sub-area (amended).

Site	Acceptable After Use	Comments
Existing Approved Sites		
Brown Houses Quarry	Agriculture	
Sandy Carr Quarry	Agriculture	
Redmires Quarry	Agriculture	
Eastgate Quarry	Agriculture/Woodland	
Proposed Sites		
Cat Crag Quarry	Agriculture/Woodland	Tipping to assist in reclamation of disused quarries. Inert waste only.
Low Puddingthorn Quarry	Agriculture/Woodland	
North Bishopley Quarries	Agriculture/Woodland	
Wearhead Quarry	Agriculture/Woodland	
Newlandside West & East	Agriculture/Woodland	Newlandside West only to be used to meet need which cannot be satisfied elsewhere.
Parson Byers and Woodcroft Quarries	Recreation	Possibility to access sites via rail link at Parson Byers. County Wildlife Sites.

## USE CLASSES ORDER DEFINITIONS

Set out in this Appendix is a guide to the definitions of Use Classes referred to in this Plan. The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 is a statutory order of land use defining separate classes of development.

1. The following is a summary of the use classes defined in the order:

Class A1: **SHOPS** of all types including superstores and retail warehouses; also includes hairdressers, laundrettes, sandwich bars, travel agents, showrooms, except car showrooms.

Class A2: **FINANCIAL AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES** to visiting members of the public, including banks, buildings societies, estate agents, betting offices.

Class A3: **FOOD AND DRINK** including restaurants, pubs, wine bars and hot food takeaways.

Class B1 **BUSINESS USE**

a) offices (other than those falling in Class A2)

b) research and development

c) any industrial process

provided the use could be carried out in any residential area without detriment to amenity by reason of noise, vibration, smell, fumes, smoke, soot, ash, dust or grit.

Class B2 **GENERAL INDUSTRIAL**

Class B8 **STORAGE AND DISTRIBUTION** warehouses including wholesale cash and carry.

Class C1 **RESIDENTIAL INSTITUTIONS** including hospitals, nursing homes, residential schools and colleges.

Class C3 **DWELLING HOUSES** occupied by a single person or family or by not more than 6 persons living together as a single household.

Class D1 **NON-RESIDENTIAL INSTITUTIONS** including religious buildings, public halls, museums, medical services and educational establishments.

Class D2 **ASSEMBLY AND LEISURE** including cinemas, bingo halls, casinos and indoor sports.

Sui Generis Many uses do not fall within any Class, and are therefore described as Sui generis - a class of their own. For example theatres, laundrettes, amusement centres, car showrooms, petrol filling stations and car hire offices are among uses which are specifically excluded from any of the defined Classes.

2. The following is a summary of the changes of use allowed by the General Development Order 1988 without the need for planning permission:

Class A A3, or use for the sale, or display for sale,

of motor vehicles to A1

A3 to A2

A2 to A1

Class B A2 to A1

B8to B1 ) provided that the change of use

B1 to B8 ) relates to not more than 235 square metres of floorspace in the building.

NOTE:

These definitions and use changes are summaries only and detailed reference should be made to both the orders. In determining whether planning permission is required advice should be sought from the Local planning Authority.

Use Classes Reference Guide

Class A1 Shops

Class A2 Financial and Professional Services

Class A3 Food and Drink

Class B1 Business use

a) Offices

b) Research and Development

c) Any Industrial Process

Class B2 General Industrial

Class B8 Storage and Distribution

Class C1 Hotels and Hostels

Class C2 Residential Institutions

Class C3 Dwelling Houses

Class D1 Non-Residential Institutions

Class D2 Assembly and Leisure

Sui Generis: Uses which do not fall within any Class

This Use Class Order is subject to amendment and all use classes should be checked with the Planning Authority.

## LANDSCAPE ACTION AREAS

### WITTON PARK

#### AREA A

##### Beechburn Farm

- 1 Area of sand and gravel extraction. Permission requires land to be restored back to agriculture through infilling with material from Etherley Tip (Area D). The minerals operators have entered into a legal agreement to reclaim the Etherley Tip (Area D). Restoration Scheme for minerals working and Etherley Tip to be submitted by 1998 by operator. Further investigations will continue during the plan period on the feasibility of such a proposal.
- 2 Depending upon the future mineral extraction of the site, the full restoration of Etherley Tip and the requirement by MAFF for land to be returned to agriculture, there may be potential for the creation of a water based recreation facility on the site.

#### AREA C

##### Etherley Tip Ponds

- 3 Part of the former tip has begun to regenerate and has created a number of wildlife habitats including wetlands, woodlands and semi-natural grasslands accordingly it has been designated a County Wildlife habitat. There is potential to develop and improve these habitats in and around the ponds and river side. These habitats could be linked with reclamation of Etherley Tip and the footpaths along the river banks. The advice of Durham Wildlife Trust will be sought for the creation and improvements of wildlife habitats.

#### AREA E

##### Former Railway Siding

- 4 Former British Rail railway sidings forms part of the tip area and has been included as part of the area from which material will be taken from the reclamation of Witton Park Quarry (Area B). Potential exists to use the sidings (Area E) for railway associated development, to assist in the development of future uses of the Weardale line. The sidings are heavily contaminated and any development of the site will need to deal with all site contaminants.

#### AREA B

##### Witton Park Quarry

- 5 Area of opencast extraction of sand, gravel, coal and fire clay. Extraction will be completed by 1994-95 with the reclamation scheme to be completed in 1995. The reclamation scheme will restore the majority of the area to agriculture with the creation of a landscaped lake to the east of the site. This shallow lake will form a wetland wildlife habitat as well as a landscape feature. The scheme will provide access to the lake for the general public. There is potential to link access to the lake with the Weardale Way which runs to the south of the quarry area. The reclamation of the quarry voids will be filled by material taken from Etherley Tip and sidings (Area D and E) which will assist in reducing the bulk of the tip and its eventual reclamation by the Beechburn Farm Minerals operators.

#### AREA D

##### Etherley Tip

- 6 There is a former British Rail tip and is part of the Witton Park Railway Sidings. The reclamation of

tip is linked through a legal agreement with the sand and gravel extractions in Area A.

- 7 Material from the tip will be used to fill the voids left by extraction in both Area A and Area B. Part of the tip also forms part of the County Wildlife Site. The tip will be regraded, capped, planted and seeded with the potential of creating further planted area and wildlife habitats to be linked with the County Wildlife Site in collaboration with the Durham Wildlife Trust.

### NEWFIELD

#### AREA A

##### Cobey Carr Ponds

- 8 Area currently in use for agricultural grazing and has been designated a County Wildlife Site. There is potential to improve the wetland, woodland and pasture and scrub habitats of the site and to develop links with the Weardale Way and Willington Lido for informal recreation. This site forms a significant component of a much larger suite of wetlands in Wear Valley, for which detailed surveys are currently being undertaken by members of the Durham Wildlife Trust with a view to a publication being produced on the subject.

#### AREA B

##### Scoby Scaur Waste Tip

- 9 Area to be tipped until 1994, to be followed by a reclamation scheme to be completed by 1995. Area to be graded and restored to agriculture and woodland. Boundaries of site to be planted up with hedgerows and trees, site to be divided into fields by hedgerows. Native woodland to be planted, tree types to be specified.

#### AREA C

##### Cobey Carr Quarry

- 10 Site of former quarry, restoration of quarry is through infilling with waste of void, regrading of land with end use of woodland and agriculture.
- 11 Expected period of tipping to last till 2007, after which land will be restored to woodland and agriculture. Restoration to be completed by 2008. Area to be restored as tipping is completed, working from west to east.
- 12 Woodland area to be planted with Sycamore, Alder, Ash, Larch, Oak and Rowan hedgerows to be planted to divide agricultural area into fields.

#### AREA D

- 13 Existing agriculture land. It is classed as being semi-improved pasture, having limited improvement via fertilisers in the past. This has allowed a range of interesting flora and fauna to colonise the area.

#### AREA E

##### The Challies

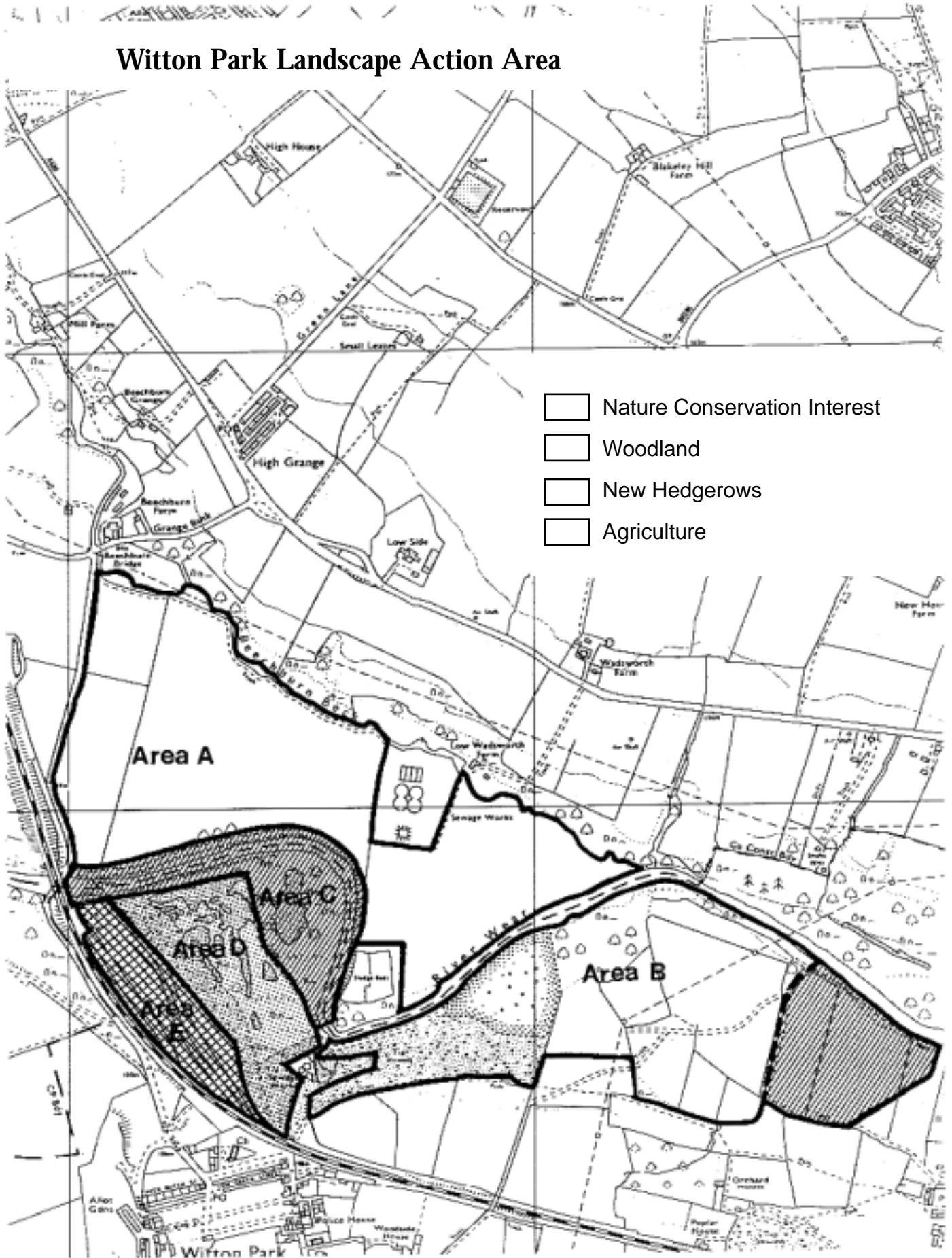
Existing agriculture land, river valley meadows.

#### AREA F

##### Newfield Brickworks

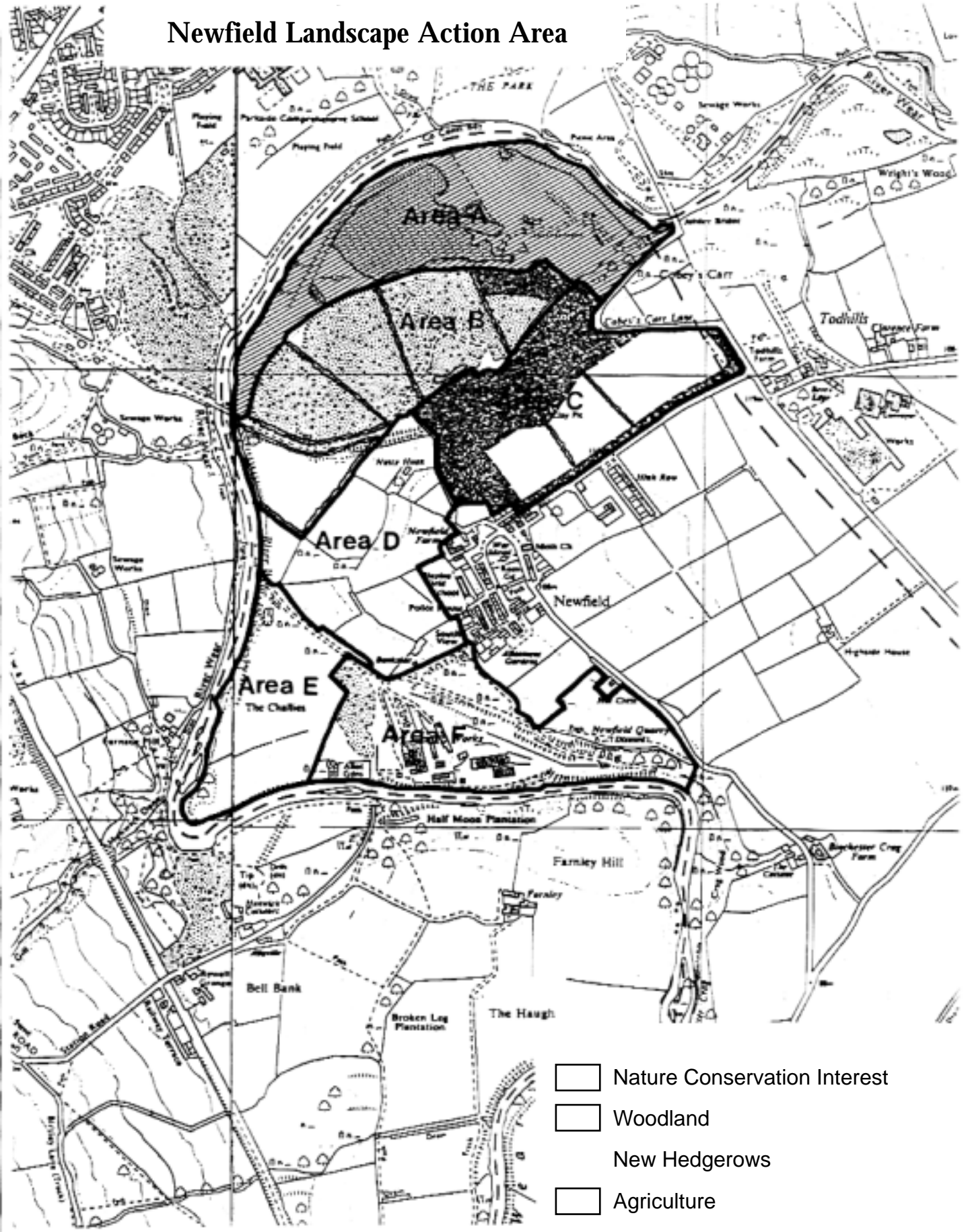
Presently being used for industrial uses.

# Witton Park Landscape Action Area



-  Nature Conservation Interest
-  Woodland
-  New Hedgerows
-  Agriculture

# Newfield Landscape Action Area





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## CRITERIA FOR LIMITS TO DEVELOPMENT

On 19th February 1992 the District Council agreed the following criteria to maintain consistency in defining the development limits/policy boundary for each settlement.

(a) Lines of Communication

The boundaries should normally be on the side of the built up area so excluding roads, paths, railways and other lines of communication.

(b) Physical Features:

Wherever possible the boundaries should follow physical features, field boundaries or curtilages, although this may not always be practical.

(c) Land with Planning Permission

The boundaries should include all land with planning permission, whether developed or not together with allocated land which has not yet obtained permission, unless there are sound planning reasons to justify a change from previous circumstances.

(d) Areas of Open Land on the Edge of Built-up Areas:

A "25 metre rule" should be applied, whereby the maximum garden length for planning policy purposes is normally 25 metres. If the curtilage is just beyond 25 metres this should normally be used instead. Where a row of gardens are different lengths, the mean length or approximately 25 metres should be used.

This "rule" will prevent unwanted backland development occurring in large/long gardens on the edge of settlements.

(f) Large Institutional Buildings and Associated Grounds:

Such as schools, hospitals, health centres, community centres, village halls, etc. The boundary should be drawn tightly round existing buildings excluding all sports pitches, playing fields and associated hardstanding areas unless they are enclosed by the built-up area).

(g) Farm Buildings

All farm buildings on the periphery of the settlement should be excluded from the built-up area unless they are seen to have development potential in association with their proximity to the urban area. There will be a separate farm buildings policy.

(h) Caravan Sites:

Sites on the edge of settlements will be excluded from the built-up area, unless there is a specific intention to allow development for residential or other purposes.

(i) Industrial Land:

Whilst development limits have traditionally been used in relation to residential development, they equally apply to industrial and other commercial land uses. Such uses where physically part of the settlement will be included within the development limits. Free standing uses will be covered by a policy relating to industry in the countryside.

<b>Affordable housing</b>	- provision of homes for those who cannot afford to buy or rent in the open market, similar concept to that of social housing.	<b>Environmental Assessment</b>	- required by proposals which are likely to have a significant effect on the environment by virtue of size, nature or location. Assessment includes a full investigation on the impact of such proposals on the surrounding area.
<b>ALV</b>	- Area of Landscape Value, countywide designation giving recognition to the landscape quality of River Wear.	<b>ESAs</b>	- Environmentally Sensitive Areas - voluntary management scheme, entered into by farmer with MAFF. Traditional farming methods used to maintain and enhance conservation interests.
<b>AONB</b>	- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, national recognition of landscape quality. Affords planning authority tighter controls on development. North Pennines AONB covers majority of Weardale.	<b>Field Evaluation</b>	- normally a rapid and inexpensive operation involving ground survey and small-scale trial trenching. The evaluation should be carried out by a professionally qualified archaeologist.
<b>Archaeological Assessment</b>	- archaeological matters are a material consideration in determining planning applications. Assessment involves an investigation of proposals to demonstrate that the archaeological interest of the site can be incorporated within the scheme or any impacts on it are otherwise mitigated.	<b>Footprint of a building</b>	- the size and shape which the building takes up on the ground.
<b>Article 4 Direction</b>	- A Direction, made under the Town and Country Planning General Development Order, 1988, which enables the withdrawal of permitted development rights (see below) in exceptional circumstances where there is a real and specific threat to an interest of acknowledged importance.	<b>Form</b>	- the mass, shape, scale and height of a building.
<b>Community Forests</b>	- new woodland providing improved landscape quality and recreational facilities for the local community.	<b>Housing Association</b>	- a non-profit making organisation which provides housing to rent (and may also be a charity), and/or shared ownership (and may be registered with the Housing Corporation).
<b>Conservation Areas</b>	- areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. Designation is aimed at protecting the group value of a collection of buildings, buildings do not need to be listed.	<b>Infrastructure</b>	- includes roads, drains, sewers and services to facilitate development.
<b>CWS</b>	- County Wildlife Sites, designated by Durham County Council of important ecological sites which require protection from development. Included in plans as SNCI (see Appendix 3).	<b>LAA</b>	- Landscape Action Area : two landscape blackspots within ALV. Plan identifies how both areas will be restored after existing tipping/extraction has been completed. Designation highlights areas of potential to be investigated through the plan period (see Appendix 7).
<b>CGS</b>	- County Geological Sites, designated by Durham County Council of important geological sites which require protection from development. Included in plan as SNCI (see Appendix 3).	<b>Limits to development</b>	- defines the area in which development will normally be allowed within towns and villages, also called village boundary or village envelope (see Appendix 8).
<b>Curtilage</b>	- area surrounding a building to its site boundary.	<b>Listed Building</b>	- a building listed by the Secretary of State for the Environment as being of architectural or historic interest.
<b>Development Brief</b>	- provides more detailed information to guide developers on layout, constraints and requirements of individual sites.	<b>LNR</b>	- Local Nature Reserve Sites declared and managed by Local Authorities under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949.
		<b>Non-operational parking spaces</b>	- space required for vehicles which do not need to park or wait within the curtilage of the building, includes employees cars, shoppers, business callers and visitors.

<b>Open Countryside</b>	- refers to all land which is outside the defined limits to development, as identified in Policy H3.		overall non-site specific housing requirements for District.
<b>Operational parking space</b>	- space required for vehicles which are regularly involved in the operation of the business, such as, deliveries and collections. Residential parking is classified as operational parking space, being essential and directly related to car ownership.	<b>SNCI</b>	- Sites of Nature Conservation Importance, umbrella designation to cover all ecological and geological sites of local, county and regional importance. Designation includes, CWS, CGS, RIGS (see Appendix 3).
<b>Permitted Development Rights</b>	- a range of minor works which can be carried out which do not require planning permission (see Appendix 1).	<b>S.S.S.I.</b>	- Sites of Special Scientific Interest as designated by English Nature under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, to give protection to flora, fauna, geological or physiographical features of special interest (see Appendix 2).
<b>Planning Obligation</b>	- binding undertaking by a developer intended to overcome a planning objection to a proposed development, where it has not proved possible to agree a conventional Section 106 Agreement.	<b>Statutory Undertakers</b>	- Provider of an essential service such as gas, electricity, water or telecommunications.
<b>Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs)</b>	- sets out the Government's policies on different aspects of planning which are taken into account by local authorities when preparing local plans and assessing planning applications and appeals.	<b>Sustainable development</b>	- development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the needs of future generations.
<b>RIGS</b>	- regionally important geological sites, designated by Durham County Council and English Nature of important geological sites. Included in plan as SNCI.	<b>T.P.P</b>	- Transport Policies and Programme, prepared annually by the County Council, as local highway authority, and submitted to the Department of Transport, setting out the County's transport policies and proposed programme of works, with a request for capital allocation from the Government.
<b>Scheduled Ancient Monument</b>	- a building or structure which has been identified by the Department of the Environment as being of national importance and worthy of retention.	<b>Traffic Calming</b>	- Methods of slowing down traffic, usually in residential areas, by means of "road humps" narrowing the width of roads and other measures.
<b>Section 106 Agreement</b>	- (formerly Section 52) voluntary but binding legal agreement (or "planning obligation") between an owner/developer and a planning authority to control some aspect of development.	<b>Tree Preservation Copy</b>	- statutory protection given to an individual or a group of trees which the Local Planning Authority considers worthy of protection.
<b>Social Housing</b>	- provision of housing at less than full cost, generally for those with some identified need who cannot afford to acquire on the open market, may be based on local needs. Can include rented accommodation. Housing Associations and Council stock is seen as social housing.	<b>Use Classes</b>	- a statutory planning list used to categorise different land uses and types of development (see Appendix 6).
<b>Special ProtectionAreas (SPA)</b>	- internationally designated areas for the protection of wildfowl.	<b>Windfarm</b>	- an area of wind turbines which convert wind energy into electricity. A medium-sized windfarm might consist of 10-25 wind turbines. Windfarms generally need to be located in open exposed areas with reasonably high annual mean wind speeds.
<b>Structure Plan</b>	- Strategic Planning Framework, produced by County Councils. Sets	<b>Windfall Housing Site</b>	- A site which becomes available for development during the Plan period which was not available when the Plan was being prepared or which it would be inappropriate to allocate for a specific use.

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**BOLD indicates policy reference**

**BOLD /UNDERLINED indicates village/town studies**