

CHAPTER 1:

INTRODUCTION

ROLE AND PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE

ADJOINING PLANNING AUTHORITIES

EARLIER PLANS

RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER COUNCIL POLICIES

A GUIDE TO THE PLAN

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Darlington Borough is a compact district with an area of 19,747 hectares (48,795 acres). It comprises the town of Darlington and its surrounding rural area. The River Tees and North Yorkshire lie to the south, the Teesside conurbation to the east, the former coalfield areas of County Durham to the north, and rural Teesdale to the west (Figures 1.1 and 1.2).
- 1.2 The Borough has a population of about 100,000 persons, mostly living in the town. It is intersected by major north-south and east-west road and rail routes, and includes most of Teesside International Airport within its boundaries.
- 1.3 The town centre is of sub-regional importance for shopping and services, and the town is also an important employment centre. Darlington retains an important manufacturing base.

ROLE AND PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

- 1.4 The Borough of Darlington Local Plan is the statutory local plan covering the whole of the Borough of Darlington. It has been prepared by the Council in accordance with the Planning Acts¹. Together with the other parts of the development plan it will be the main component in the plan-led planning system.
- 1.5 The Plan will guide most day-to-day planning decisions in the Borough over the next few years. The Planning Acts require decisions on planning applications and other development control matters to accord with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Plan consequently sets out in detail the Council's policies for the control of development. It also puts forward proposals for the development and use of land, including allocating some sites for specific purposes.
- 1.6 The Plan looks forward over almost a decade to a notional end date of 2006. It will, however, be reviewed regularly and may be altered or replaced before the end date depending upon circumstances.

THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

- 1.7 For most people, for most purposes, the Local Plan will be the most relevant part of the statutory development plan for the Borough. It is, however, just one part of the development plan. The other parts at the time of adoption of this Plan comprise:
 - the Durham County Structure Plan, which provides the broad, strategic, framework for planning;
 - the Durham County Minerals Local Plan; and
 - the County Durham Waste Disposal Local Plan.
- 1.8 Appendix 1 outlines the current status of these other plans.
- 1.9 The Local Plan is required to be in general conformity with the Structure Plan. In the event of any subsequent conflict between the two, the provisions of the Local Plan will take precedence.

¹ Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Planning and Compensation Act 1991.

Figure 1.1 Regional Setting and Adjoining Authorities

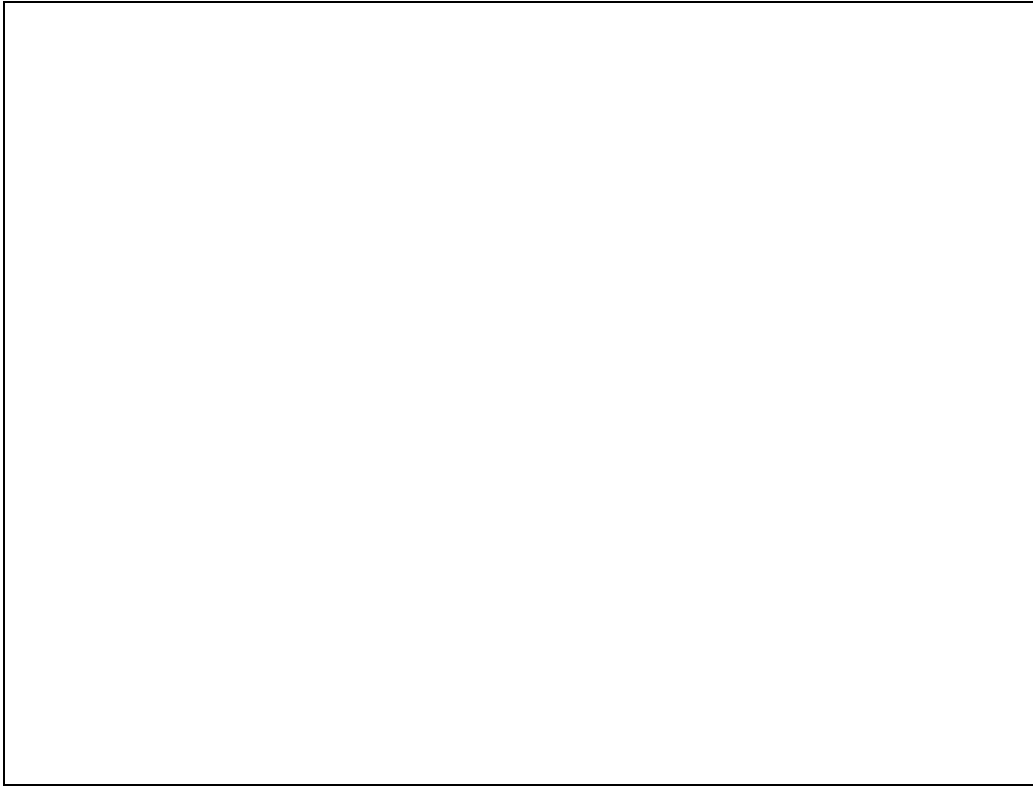
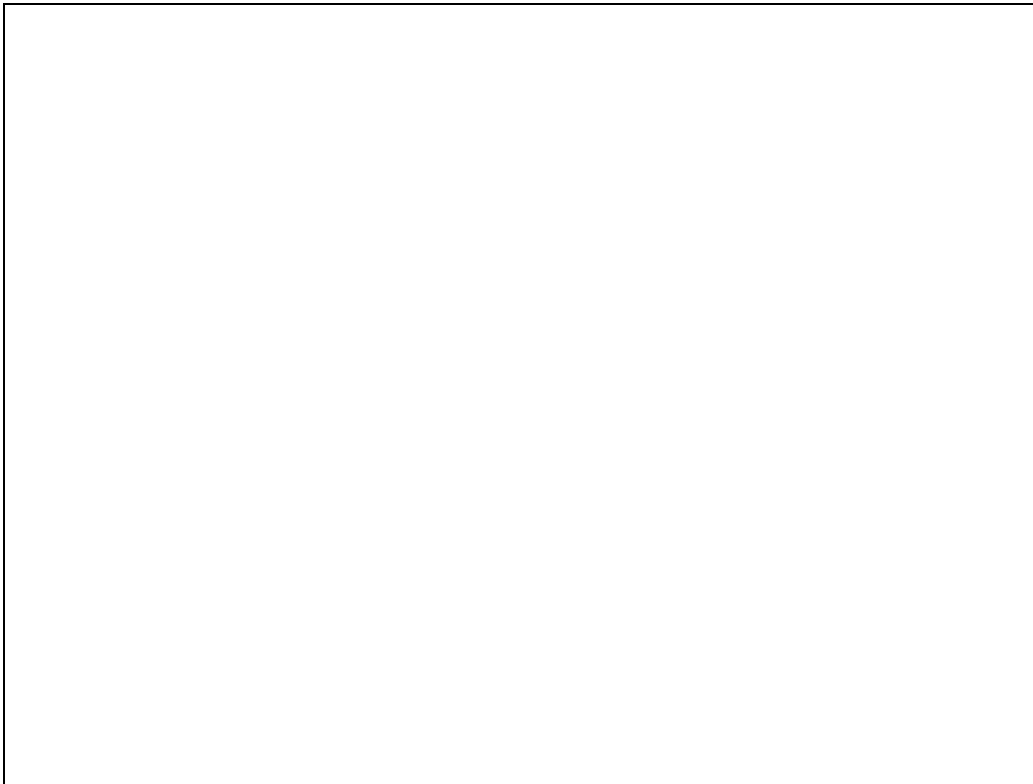


Figure 1.2 The Borough of Darlington



- 1.10 In the event of a conflict between the Borough Local Plan and the Minerals and Waste Local Plans the provisions of the more recently adopted will prevail.

GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE

- 1.11 The Local Plan also needs to take into account current Government planning policy, both national and regional. National guidance is given mainly in the form of topic-based Planning Policy Guidance notes (PPGs). Regional Planning Guidance for the Northern Region was issued by the then Secretary of State for the Environment in 1993 (RPG7). The Council considers the Local Plan to be in accord with Government guidance in force at the time of adoption.

ADJOINING PLANNING AUTHORITIES

- 1.12 The Borough shares a boundary with a number of other local planning authorities, all of whom have their own development plans. Aspects of the structure plans for North Yorkshire and the former county of Cleveland, and the local plans for Teesdale, Sedgfield, Stockton-on-Tees, Hambleton and Richmondshire districts have all needed to be considered in the preparation of the Darlington Plan, to ensure a consistency of policies for contiguous geographical areas.

EARLIER PLANS

- 1.13 On adoption on 11th November 1997, the Local Plan automatically supersedes the following earlier statutory plans: the Darlington County Borough Development Plan (adopted 1952-66); the Durham County Development Plan, so far as it related to Darlington (1969-72); the Hurworth and Hurworth Place Local Plan (1983), the Darlington Central Area Local Plan (1984); and the Inner Darlington Local Plan (1987).
- 1.14 Policies and proposals contained in informal plans previously approved by the Borough Council, such as 'planning statements', are also superseded.

RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER COUNCIL POLICIES

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

A GUIDE TO THE PLAN

- 1.16 An attempt has been made to make the Plan 'user-friendly'. But this is a legal document, subject on the one hand to a number of formal requirements on form and content, and on the other to the prospect of intense scrutiny over the years as to the meaning of its policies and proposals. The wording therefore has to be precise, and at times lengthy. Jargon and technical terms have been kept to a minimum, and a glossary is included to explain those which are essential.
- 1.17 The Plan consists of a Written Statement (the text) and a Proposals Map (actually a set of maps, contained in the wallets inside the back cover). The Written Statement sets out in full the policies and proposals of the Plan and the reasons for them, and the Proposals Map illustrates them on an Ordnance Survey base.

- 1.18 The *Written Statement* is arranged in chapters by topics: environment; housing; recreation, leisure and community; employment; shopping; tourism; and traffic, transport and infrastructure. These are preceded by a chapter outlining the strategic context and the Council's aims for the Plan. A final chapter explains how the Plan will be implemented, or 'achieved'. Following the *Written Statement* is a set of appendices, the glossary and an index.
- 1.19 Each topic chapter commences with a brief background description of the situation at the time of Plan preparation, including relevant planning issues, and a list of the Council's specific objectives. The most important parts of the Plan, the policies and proposals - distinguished by being printed in **BOLD BLOCK CAPITALS** - are then introduced in turn, each with a reasoned justification in lower case type.
- 1.20 'Proposals' define specific sites for particular developments or works of environmental improvement or traffic management. 'Policies' will be used to guide and control the development and use of land, in particular in the determination of applications for planning permission. Some policies relate to the whole Borough, others to specific areas.
- 1.21 The *Proposals Map* defines the areas to which the policies and proposals apply on a set of four map bases, including inset maps for the urban area, central area and the villages. All boundaries shown are intended to be precise. Each map includes a scale and a key to notations.
- 1.22 In the event of a contradiction between the *Written Statement* and the *Proposals Map* the provisions of the *Written Statement* prevail.
- 1.23 Sketch maps and diagrams within the chapters themselves are for illustration only and are of no statutory significance.

CHAPTER 2:

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

AND AIMS

THE STRATEGIC PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

THE AIMS AND STRATEGY OF THE LOCAL PLAN

OTHER PLANS OF THE COUNCIL

CHAPTER 2: STRATEGIC CONTEXT AND AIMS

THE STRATEGIC PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

The International Context

- 2.1 In preparing the Local Plan the Council has had regard to planning issues which extend far beyond its administrative boundaries. With the increasing world-wide concerns for the environment, the desire for sustainable development, and Britain's involvement in the European Union, these now also transcend national boundaries.
- 2.2 'Agenda 21', emerging from the Earth Summit 1992, encourages local authorities to adopt a 'Local Agenda 21' for their community, and to define a sustainable development strategy at the local level. Work on setting local agendas commenced in 1994 for the former county of Durham and in 1995 for Darlington.
- 2.3 The European Union's Fifth Action Programme on the Environment identifies local authorities as key members in its implementation. 'Towards Sustainability', the main element of the programme, includes spatial planning, economic development and transport amongst the areas where local authorities can have a decisive role.

National Policy

- 2.4 Government commitment to the principles of sustainable development is set out in 'Sustainable Development: the UK Strategy', published in 1994.
- 2.5 Current development plan regulations² require structure plans to have regard to environmental considerations. Local plans, in order to conform, must do the same, and the guidance³ is that the environmental and other costs and benefits of policies and proposals should be systematically appraised as part of the Plan preparation process; the environmental appraisal of this Plan is set out in Appendix 3.

Regional Policy

- 2.6 The main theme of the Regional Planning Guidance for the Northern Region⁴, which provides a framework for updating structure plans to 2006, is that structure plans should continue to concentrate on the regeneration of urban areas, attracting employment to the region to improve its economic base. At the same time structure plans should continue to pursue policies designed to safeguard the countryside, forests and coastline.

~~Existing Structure Plan Policies~~

- ~~2.7 The existing policies in the Durham County Structure Plan and Darlington Urban Structure Plan seek to encourage most new development in towns and villages, and to protect the countryside from inappropriate development.~~

² Town and Country Planning (Development Plan) Regulations 1991, and Town and Country Planning (Development Plan) (Amendment) Regulations 1997.

³ PPG12: Development Plans and Regional Planning Guidance, Department of the Environment, 1992. Environmental Appraisal of Development Plans, Department of the Environment, 1993.

⁴ RPG 7: Regional Planning Guidance for the Northern Region, Department of the Environment, 1993.

~~2.8 The existing structure plan policies for the other areas neighbouring Darlington cover the period to 2006. The Cleveland Structure Plan strategy is for most development to take place within the Teesside conurbation, with some new developments on a few large sites on the edge of the built up area, and green wedges extending from the countryside into the heart of the built up area. The North Yorkshire Structure Plan provides for development to be concentrated on the main towns and for the open countryside to be protected.~~

~~Emerging Structure Plan Policy~~

~~2.9 The strategy⁴ of the replacement Durham County Structure Plan has the following main land-use related aims:-~~

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

~~The replacement Structure Plan will cover the period to 2006. Policies for Darlington will be adopted separately.~~

~~2.10 The Tees Valley Joint Strategy Committee is preparing the Tees Valley Structure Plan for the areas covered by the unitary authorities of Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland and Stockton on Tees. This plan will cover the period to 2011.~~

THE AIMS AND STRATEGY OF THE LOCAL PLAN

2.11 The Local Plan sets out a broad land-use and development framework that will guide new development and deal with social, technological and economic changes over most of the next decade. It will provide the basis for the development investment decisions of the Council, other public agencies, residents, businesses and developers.

2.12 The Plan has the following principal Aims:

- i) to provide for the continued growth of the Borough's population;
- ii) to provide for the development of a robust local economy;
- iii) to provide for the enhancement of the Borough's physical fabric and appearance;
- iv) to provide for the efficient use of existing infrastructure;
- v) to provide for the supply of land appropriate to the requirements of new development;
- vi) to provide for the enhancement of the Borough's social infrastructure;
- vii) to provide for economy in the irreversible use of natural resources;
- viii) to provide for the minimisation of travel and transport needs.

2.13 These Aims are in many respects inter-related. In some cases they are complementary, in other cases they conflict. Where choices have to be made, priority should be given to environmental considerations. They are not presented in any order of priority.

⁴ County Durham Structure Plan Review, Durham County Council, 1995.

- 2.14 The Plan embodies a structure based on these Aims, with the underpinning themes of environment, community, economy and transport. It seeks to:
- i) protect and enhance the environment of the Borough, and reduce the consumption of energy and non-renewable resources;
 - ii) provide for improved social facilities;
 - iii) provide for and sustain a robust and diverse local economy; and
 - iv) provide for the enhancement and safe and efficient use of the Borough's transport infrastructure.
- 2.15 It aims to achieve a balance between development and protection of the environment. It proposes that new development should be concentrated in and around the town, that the existing limits to the villages should continue, and that the countryside should be protected from unnecessary building.
- 2.16 Emphasis on care for the environment is considered to be an essential element of development, not a constraint. It is a finite and non-renewable resource, and sustainable development must be achieved for the benefit of future generations. Its maintenance and enhancement is essential to the achievement of economic development and inward investment.

OTHER PLANS OF THE COUNCIL

- 2.17 The Council has, or is formulating, strategies in relation to many of its functions which have land-use implications. Some of these are statutory requirements, for example its Economic Development Strategy, Housing Investment Strategy and Recycling Policy. Others include the Leisure Plan and the Environmental Charter.
- 2.18 In parallel with the Plan, the Council will also be developing separate strategies for the management and enhancement of the town centre (Town Centre Strategy), and of the natural environment (Strategy for the Green Environment).
- 2.19 Additionally, there are the strategies of other public agencies which relate to their various functions and responsibilities.
- 2.20 The Plan takes these strategies and policies into account, and provides an appropriate land-use policy framework to guide development proposals which emanate from them.

CHAPTER 3:

ENVIRONMENT

BACKGROUND

OBJECTIVES

Policies and Proposals:

GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

THE LOCATION OF NEW DEVELOPMENT

THE COUNTRYSIDE

LANDSCAPE AND THE APPEARANCE OF THE BOROUGH

NATURE CONSERVATION

RESOURCE CONSERVATION

BUILDINGS AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

PUBLIC PROTECTION

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

CHAPTER 3: ENVIRONMENT

BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Care for the environment is at the heart of the development plan process. The concept of sustainable development has emerged as a guiding principle. It focuses on achieving and maintaining a balance between development and the protection of the environment. Development plans are expected to allow for the development which is necessary to meet anticipated social and economic needs whilst safeguarding the overall quality of the environment for the benefit of future generations.
- 3.2 The objective of environmental sustainability is reflected in all of the Plan's policies and proposals, and is not to be confined to the Environment chapter. The Plan also takes account of the environment in the widest sense, addressing broader concerns such as global warming and resource consumption, as well as the established issues such as the containment of built-up areas and the appearance of new development.
- 3.3 The practical application of the sustainable development concept in the Plan involves the protection of the best features of the local environment, enhancement of poor or degraded areas, and ensuring that new development makes a positive overall contribution to environmental quality.
- 3.4 'People and Nature in Darlington', the Council's Strategy for the Green Environment, has been prepared to provide the policy framework for nature conservation in the Borough. The Local Plan's policies have been drawn up within that framework to control the impact of development on wild flora and fauna.
- 3.5 Darlington is an attractive Borough of distinctive character. Its built environment reflects its historic roles of market town, early industrial and railway centre, Victorian residential suburbs and agricultural settlements. More ancient elements, such as the Roman fort at Piercebridge and the various deserted medieval villages, can be glimpsed only through archaeology. The natural environment is characterised by quiet rolling countryside with attractive villages and varied landscapes, including the particularly attractive landscape of the Tees valley.
- 3.6 The quality of the environment is enhanced by the clearly defined boundaries between built-up areas and the countryside, which is largely unspoilt by inappropriate development, and by the extensive areas of open land, ranging from formal parks to unused land, within the urban area.
- 3.7 Areas of poor environmental quality remain, mainly within the town as a legacy of its industrial past. The Council's approach to environmental improvement, through its derelict land reclamation, urban fringe and conservation area grant programmes, is well-established. The Council also uses its development control powers to ensure that development is satisfactorily located and designed, and does not give rise to nuisance through noise or other forms of pollution.

OBJECTIVES

- 3.8 The Council's objectives for the environment, to be pursued through the policies and proposals of the Plan, are:
- i) To sustain the balance between meeting the need for development and maintaining the quality of the environment;
 - ii) To ensure that the Borough provides an attractive environment for Darlington residents and visitors, including tourists and business people;
 - iii) To preserve and, where appropriate, enhance the key archaeological, architectural, historic and natural features of the Borough;

- iv) To protect and enhance the character, vitality and diversity of Darlington town centre;
- v) To improve the appearance of prominent buildings and land in need of attention;
- vi) To ensure that new development respects its setting and the wider environment;
- vii) To ensure protection from all forms of pollution;
- viii) To protect and enhance ecological diversity; and
- ix) To reduce energy consumption and to conserve non-renewable resources.

Policies and Proposals:

~~GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION~~

~~POLICY E1 – Keynote Policy for the Protection of the Environment~~

~~AS LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY, THE COUNCIL WILL REGARD THE NEED TO PROTECT AND SUSTAIN THE KEY ATTRIBUTES OF THE BOROUGH'S ENVIRONMENTAL WEALTH AS PRE EMINENT. PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT MUST REFLECT THE NEED TO SAFEGUARD THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF RESIDENTS, TO MAINTAIN ACCEPTABLE STANDARDS OF AIR, WATER (INCLUDING GROUNDWATER) AND LAND QUALITY, TO CONSERVE ENERGY AND OTHER RESOURCES, AND TO PROTECT THE CHARACTER AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASSETS OF THE BOROUGH, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE DETAILED CONSIDERATIONS SET OUT IN THE OTHER POLICIES OF THE PLAN.~~

~~3.9 The Council's intention is that the overall quality of the environment, in its many aspects, should be maintained in tandem with meeting the future needs for development in the Borough. Change must be managed in ways which provide for social and economic needs whilst protecting the best of today's environment for enjoyment by future generations. It is recognised that individual developments may have some negative effects on the environment, but collectively they are expected to contribute as much as they take away, in terms of a balance of costs and benefits. The Council will seek advice from appropriate agencies in assessing development proposals, to determine their environmental impact. Policy E1 is a 'keynote' policy setting out the Council's position on the protection of the environment through the control of development as a context for the more detailed policies set out in this and other chapters of the Plan.~~

~~3.10 Water resources are a particularly vulnerable aspect of the environment in Darlington, which lies across an aquifer. Pollutants can easily permeate the soils and contaminate ground water, and development could also affect the hydrology of the area. Once contaminated, it is very difficult and costly, if not impossible, to clean up groundwater, and it is important that the quality and quantity of groundwater is protected.~~

THE LOCATION OF NEW DEVELOPMENT

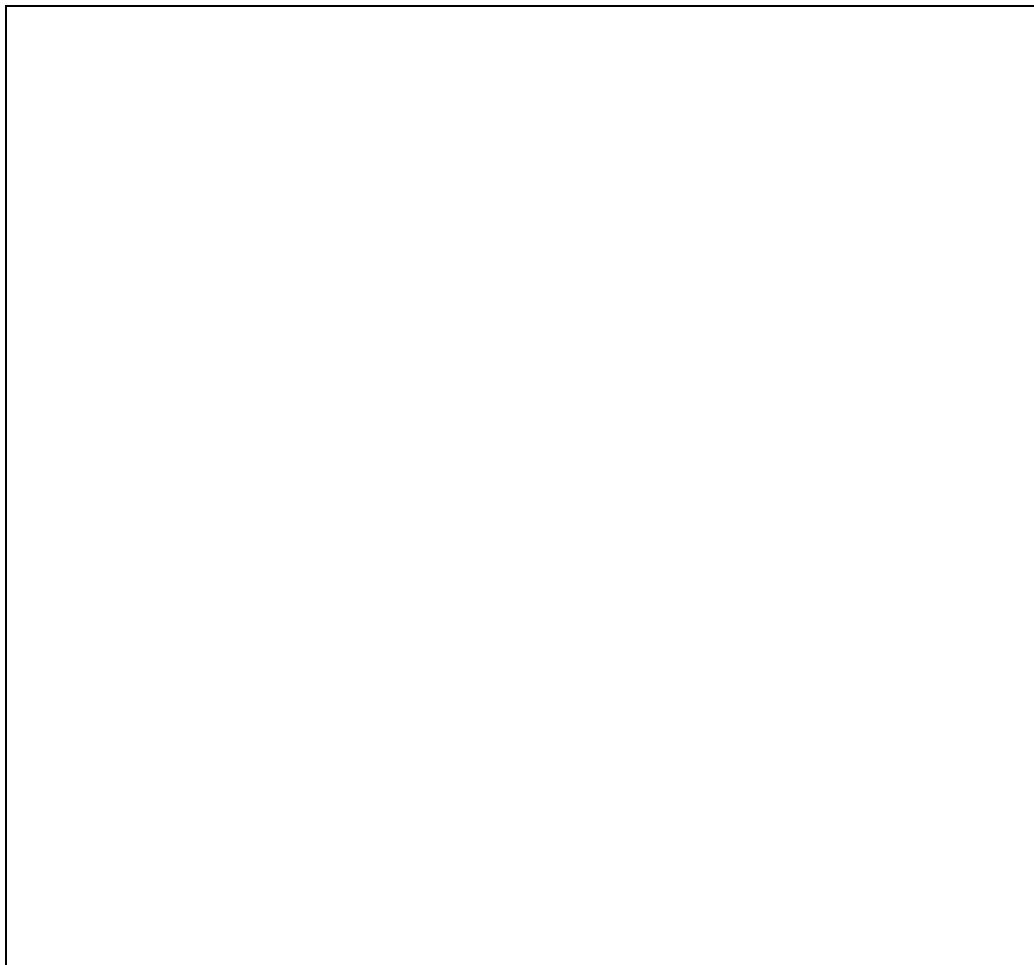
POLICY E2 - Development Limits

MOST NEW DEVELOPMENT WILL FOR THE PLAN PERIOD BE LOCATED INSIDE THE DEVELOPMENT LIMITS DEFINED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP. DEVELOPMENT FOR AGRICULTURAL OR FORESTRY OPERATIONS, AND SMALL SCALE DEVELOPMENT BENEFICIAL TO THE RURAL ECONOMY OR TO THE NEEDS OF RURAL COMMUNITIES (INCLUDING HOUSING DEVELOPMENT PROVIDED UNDER POLICY H10), THE OPERATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF WATER, DRAINAGE AND OTHER UTILITY SERVICE PROVIDERS, AND DEVELOPMENT FOR COUNTRYSIDE-RELATED SPORTS OR RECREATION ACTIVITIES, WILL BE PERMITTED OUTSIDE THEM PROVIDED THAT UNACCEPTABLE HARM TO THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF

THE RURAL AREA IS AVOIDED.

- 3.11 Much of the Borough comprises attractive and generally unspoilt countryside, with well-defined boundaries between built-up and rural areas. The Council has defined development limits, within which most new development will be located, with the intention of maintaining these well-defined boundaries and safeguarding the character and appearance of the countryside. Figure 3.1 and Policy H3 identify those settlements for which development limits have been drawn, and within which development, including new housing development, is acceptable in principle.
- 3.12 Given the compact nature of the Borough, most social and economic needs can be provided for within the urban area. This is the most appropriate location for most housing, business and retail development, with limited development opportunities within the villages.

Figure 3.1 Settlements in Darlington Borough



- 3.13 Outside the development limits, development will be strictly controlled. However, some forms of development need to be located in the countryside, to maintain or diversify the rural economy or otherwise to meet the needs of rural communities. Farm incomes have come under pressure as a result of 'set-aside' and other measures introduced by the Government and its European Union partners to stem production of foodstuffs. The Government recognises that to maintain a healthy rural economy it is necessary to encourage farmers to diversify into non-agricultural enterprises whilst continuing with their traditional agricultural operations, and that this will give rise to development pressures. Development may also be appropriate for countryside-based sport, recreation and tourism uses, or where it would help to maintain or enhance the environment. Policy T53 sets out criteria under which planning permission will be granted for new or extended sewage treatment works. Private gardens are a form of development which may extend beyond development limits even though the dwelling is within the limit. Gardens can be intrusive features in the landscape, depending on the site location and characteristics, and the merits of each case must be considered. Policy E2 establishes the principles for considering development in the countryside.
- 3.14 Policies E4, E6 and E7 set out the conditions which development which is in principle acceptable outside development limits must normally satisfy. Policies H7, H8 and H10 set out the circumstances in which new housing development in the countryside, and the change of use of rural buildings to residential use, may be acceptable. Policies EP14 and EP15 similarly refer to employment development in the countryside, and Policy R14 to sports and recreation development in the countryside. Non-essential development which makes use of existing buildings may be acceptable in accordance with Policy E5.

POLICY E3 - Protection of Open Land

IN CONSIDERING PROPOSALS TO DEVELOP ANY AREA OF OPEN LAND WITHIN THE URBAN DEVELOPMENT LIMIT, THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO MAINTAIN THE USEFULNESS AND ENHANCE THE APPEARANCE AND NATURE CONSERVATION INTEREST OF THE OPEN LAND SYSTEM AS A WHOLE, AND TO SUPPLEMENT THE INTERCONNECTIONS BETWEEN ITS ELEMENTS. PERMISSION WILL NOT BE GRANTED FOR DEVELOPMENT WHICH INFLECTS MATERIAL NET HARM ON:

- 1. THE VISUAL RELIEF AFFORDED BY THE SYSTEM IN BUILT-UP AREAS;**
- 2. THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE LOCALITY THROUGH LOSS OF OPENNESS AND GREENERY;**
- 3. FACILITIES FOR ORGANISED SPORT WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO MEET THE STANDARDS SET OUT IN POLICY R4;**
- 4. FACILITIES AVAILABLE FOR OTHER FORMAL RECREATIONAL AND LEISURE ACTIVITIES, FOR INFORMAL RECREATION OR FOR HORTICULTURE;**
- 5. THE INTERNAL CONTINUITY OF THE SYSTEM, OR ON ITS LINKAGES WITH THE OPEN COUNTRYSIDE; OR**
- 6. AREAS RECOGNISED FOR THEIR NATURE CONSERVATION OR WILDLIFE INTEREST.**

- 3.15 Whilst development inside development limits is acceptable in principle, in accordance with Policy E2, there are many constraints on such development and requirements which it should satisfy. A prime constraint is the need to protect the network of open land in the urban area. It makes a vital contribution to environmental quality, providing a green framework which defines and separates neighbourhoods, contributes greenery and spaciousness, provides for the recreation and sporting needs of residents, and supports wildlife.

- 3.16 Open land is land of amenity, sports, recreation and or nature conservation value within the urban area, including parks and public open spaces, other amenity space including woodlands, school grounds and playing fields, private sports grounds, allotments, churchyards and cemeteries, the grounds of institutions and business premises and land left to nature. The areas of urban land to which Policy E3 applies are identified on the Proposals Map. Figure 3.2 indicates the urban open land network. The policy also applies to any smaller areas of amenity, recreation or nature conservation significance to their locality, including private gardens and grounds, and any area of open land identified or created during the Plan period.

Figure 3.2 The Urban Open Land Network



- 3.17 Policy E3 sets out a flexible approach to the protection of the network of open land as a whole, whilst recognising that there may be circumstances in which development within open land is acceptable, where, for example, the usefulness or amenity of the network is directly enhanced, compensating provisions of equivalent or improved benefit are secured, where required standards of provision are already substantially exceeded, or where existing buildings within it are proposed to be enlarged or new community buildings appropriately provided. This broad policy is overlain by protective policies relating to specific types of open land, and which generally provide a more rigorous level of protection. These include E9 (parklands), E20 (sites of nature conservation importance), R5 (land surplus to educational requirements), R9 (playing pitches), R10 (land for additional playing pitches) and R19 (allotments). The areas to which these more specific policies apply are identified accordingly on the Proposals Map, but nonetheless, all such areas within the urban area are open land to which Policy E3 applies.

- 3.18 An important characteristic of the open land network are the continuous green corridors which dissect the urban area, notably the River Skerne corridor, Staindrop Road and the Denes, Firthmoor and McMullen Road, the Stockton and Darlington Railway trackbed, and the Faverdale Black Path and Barnard Castle railway trackbed. These corridors extend recreation opportunities and, in particular, promote nature conservation by allowing the movement of flora and fauna. Policy E3 seeks to protect the continuity of open land corridors and is reinforced by Policy E21, which protects continuous wildlife corridors.
- 3.19 The Council will monitor progress made in enhancing and extending the open land system, and will publish a report of progress as part of the Plan review process.
- 3.20 The Council's Strategy for the Green Environment will promote the concept of green corridors and their management for nature conservation, recreation and amenity.
- 3.21 Where open space provision is required in association with new development, principally in accordance with Policy R6, the Council's intention is that wherever possible this should link into, reinforce and extend the continuity of the urban open land network. This requirement is set out in Policy E15.

THE COUNTRYSIDE

POLICY E4 - New Buildings in the Countryside

NEW BUILDINGS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE, FOR PURPOSES WHICH ARE ACCEPTABLE IN PRINCIPLE UNDER THE TERMS OF POLICY E2, SHOULD WHEREVER POSSIBLE BE LOCATED WITH AND BE VISUALLY RELATED TO EXISTING BUILDINGS.

- 3.22 It is important that development which is in principle acceptable in the countryside does not detract from the appearance of the area. Policy E7 sets out the requirement that development should respect its landscape setting. This will in most cases be best served by locating new buildings within existing groups of buildings, rather than in isolated sites in open countryside.

POLICY E5 - Change of Use of Buildings in the Countryside

THE CHANGE OF USE OF EXISTING BUILDINGS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT:

- 1. IF THE BUILDING IS OF VISUAL, ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC IMPORTANCE, THE PROPOSAL DOES NOT DAMAGE THE VISUAL ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC CHARACTER OF THE BUILDING OR ITS SURROUNDINGS;**
- 2. FOR OTHER BUILDINGS, THE STRUCTURE IS SOUND AND CAPABLE OF ADAPTATION WITHOUT SIGNIFICANT REBUILDING OR EXTENSION;**
- 3. THE PROPOSED USE WOULD NOT BE INTRUSIVE IN THE COUNTRYSIDE NOR CREATE UNACCEPTABLE TRAFFIC, AMENITY OR DISTURBANCE PROBLEMS.**

EXTENSIONS TO EXISTING BUILDINGS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE WILL NOT BE PERMITTED WHERE A FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE IN THEIR SCALE OR CHARACTER IS INVOLVED.

- 3.23 There is no reason why existing buildings in the countryside should not accommodate new uses which may help to diversify the rural economy. Indeed, encouraging new uses may be the best way of ensuring the retention and maintenance of buildings which, whilst they may or may not be statutorily listed, may be visually important or attractive features in the landscape.

- 3.24 Other buildings which are not of the same degree of 'heritage' importance may nevertheless be capable of accommodating new uses in their existing form, whether or not they are redundant for their present uses. Such changes of use could support the rural economy by encouraging farm diversification and other forms of rural enterprise without intrusive development. In assessing changes of use, the Council will give consideration to the impact on the character, appearance and amenity of the locality.
- 3.25 Extensions to existing buildings can be potentially damaging to the character of the countryside and need to be carefully balanced against the form of the original building. Policies H7 and EP15 refer to the adaptation of rural buildings to residential and employment uses respectively.

~~POLICY E6 – Protection of Agricultural Land~~

~~DEVELOPMENT THAT WOULD RESULT IN THE IRREVERSIBLE LOSS FROM AGRICULTURE OF THE BEST AND MOST VERSATILE LAND WILL NOT BE PERMITTED.~~

- ~~3.26 Agricultural land in grades 2 and 3A is the 'best and most versatile' in the northern region, since there is no grade 1 land because of climatic limitations. Such land is a national resource for the future, and local planning authorities are required to give considerable weight to its protection against development because of its special importance.~~
- ~~3.27 Full details of all works affecting grade 2 and grade 3A agricultural land will be required as part of any planning application to enable the Council, in consultation with the FRCA (Farming and Rural Conservation Agency), to properly assess fully the potential for reversion to agricultural use without loss of quality.~~

~~LANDSCAPE AND THE APPEARANCE OF THE BOROUGH~~

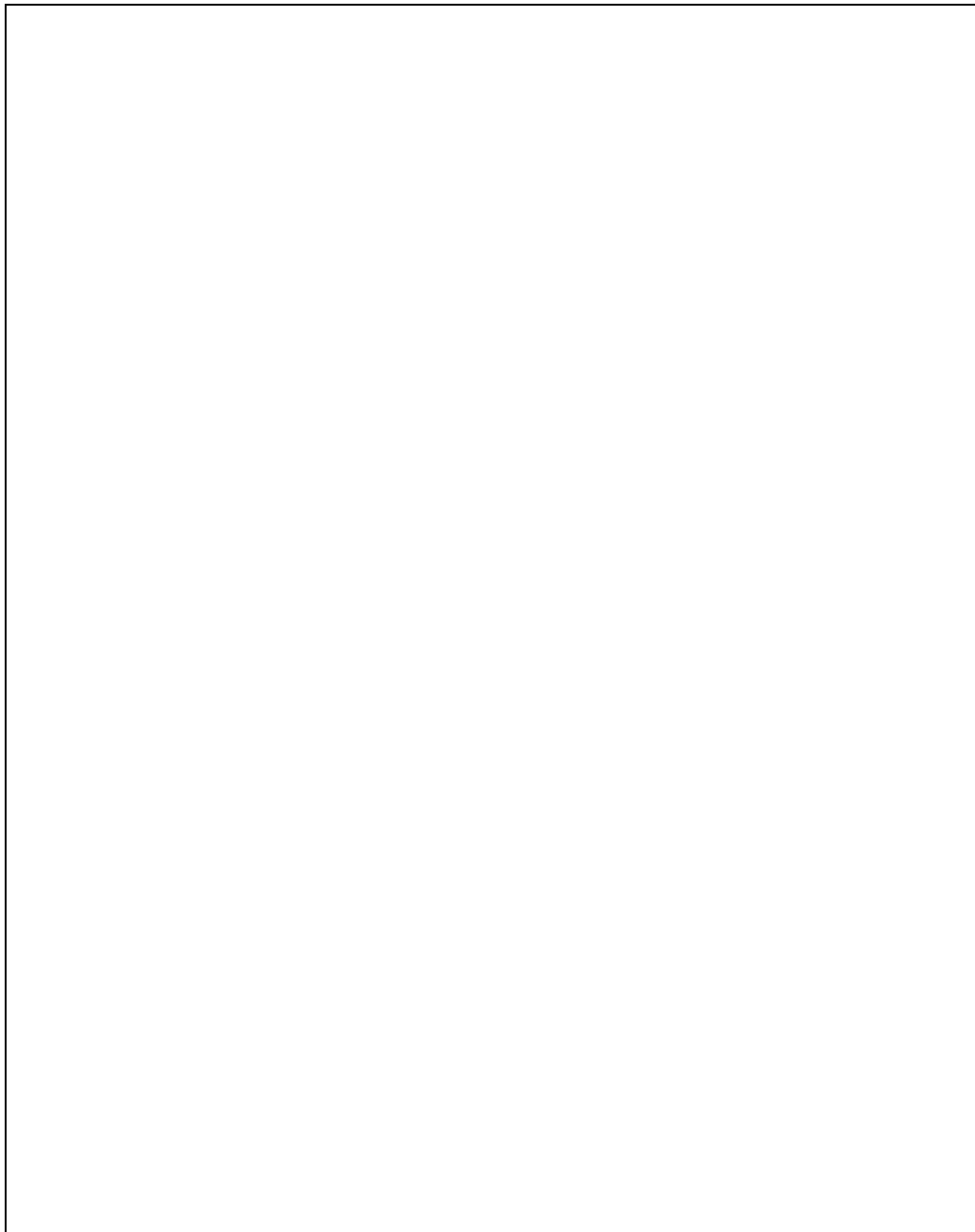
~~POLICY E7 – Landscape Conservation~~

~~DEVELOPMENT WHICH IS ACCEPTABLE IN PRINCIPLE UNDER POLICY E2 AND DEVELOPMENT ON THE EDGES OF BUILT UP AREAS WILL BE REQUIRED TO RESPECT THE CHARACTER OF ITS LANDSCAPE SETTING IN TERMS OF ITS SITING, DESIGN, MATERIALS, LANDSCAPING, PROTECTION OF EXISTING LANDSCAPE FEATURES AND RELATIONSHIP TO ADJOINING BUILDINGS, HAVING REGARD TO THE DISTINCTIVE LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LOCALITY.~~

- ~~3.28 Whilst the Borough's countryside is generally of a gentle and unspectacular character, there are distinctive variations of landscape type resulting from geology, topography, river systems, building materials and farming and land ownership patterns. The Council's intention is that development should respect the particular characteristics of its setting. Three landscape types have been identified: the Tees valley with its flat valley floor and steep, wooded sides; the hilly country of the magnesian limestone escarpment in the northwest; and the generally flatter farmlands of the central belt. This last type has been subdivided into the central belt farmlands and Skerne Valley and Ketton. For most development control purposes, the central belt can be regarded as one zone, but there are particular characteristics, notably of topography, which in terms of landscape assessment identify the Skerne Valley and Ketton as a distinctive landscape. The greater density of woodland cover, the dense network of public rights of way and the historic pattern of settlement and tenure further characterise this area.~~

~~3.29 The approximate boundaries of the landscape areas are shown in Figure 3.3. They are not identified on the Proposals Map because their boundaries cannot be clearly defined and there is considerable overlap and merging of characteristics between them. The magnesian limestone, for example, has been used as a building material sporadically throughout the district, while the Raby estate imposes a distinctive building and settlement pattern across the magnesian limestone, central belt and Tees valley landscape areas. The landscape areas are identified in the text to provide guidance to developers in satisfying the basic requirement set out in Policy E7 that development should respect its landscape setting. Supplementary planning guidance will be issued. This requirement applies to all landscapes. Policy E8 places added emphasis on the protection of particularly attractive landscapes.~~

~~Figure 3.3 Landscape Types~~



~~POLICY E8 - The Area of High Landscape Value~~

~~THE COUNCIL WILL GIVE SPECIAL ATTENTION TO CONSERVING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AND QUALITY WITHIN THE AREA OF HIGH LANDSCAPE VALUE IN THE TEES VALLEY AND THE WEST OF THE BOROUGH. DEVELOPMENT WHICH IS ACCEPTABLE IN PRINCIPLE UNDER POLICY E2 AND DEVELOPMENT ON THE EDGES OF BUILT UP AREAS WITHIN AND ADJACENT TO THE AREA OF HIGH LANDSCAPE VALUE, WILL BE PERMITTED IF IT IS OF A HIGH STANDARD OF DESIGN REFLECTING THE SCALE AND TRADITIONAL CHARACTER OF BUILDINGS IN THE AREA AND DOES NOT DETRACT FROM THE HIGH LANDSCAPE QUALITY. ESSENTIAL INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT WHICH CANNOT MEET THESE DESIGN REQUIREMENTS SHOULD BE DESIGNED TO ENSURE THAT ANY DETRIMENTAL IMPACT ON THE CHARACTER OF THE AREA OF HIGH LANDSCAPE VALUE IS MINIMISED.~~

~~3.30 The Proposals Map identifies the Area of High Landscape Value (AHLV) in the Tees Valley and the west of the Borough. This is an area where the overall landscape quality is high, and where it could be harmed by inappropriate development. In general, development should be designed so as not to detract from the character and quality of the landscape. Some forms of development which have to be located within or on the edge of the AHLV, notably for water or sewage treatment purposes, are often of a character which may appear intrusive or detrimental to the surrounding landscape. The expectation is that every effort will be made to minimise such detrimental impacts on the character of the AHLV.~~

~~3.31 The County Durham Structure Plan Review identifies the Tees valley and the Raby estate as an Area of High Landscape Value. The Local Plan extends the Area to include the magnesian limestone escarpment within the Borough. The AHLV thus covers a range of landscape types, and this requires a sensitivity to building designs, styles and materials and landscape features in the locality when considering the design of new development, in accordance with Policy E7.~~

~~3.32 Outside the AHLV, consideration has been given to the designation of landscapes of local significance. However, the approach adopted in the Plan is one of seeking to conserve the particular character of all landscapes through Policy E7. Whilst it is appropriate to give added weight to the conservation of landscapes of special significance through Policy E8, the overall approach would not be assisted by developing a hierarchy of local landscapes. There are also insufficient differentials in landscape quality outside the AHLV to justify local designations.~~

POLICY E9 - Protection of Parklands

DEVELOPMENT AFFECTING THE PARKS AND GARDENS OF LANDSCAPE OR HISTORIC INTEREST LISTED BELOW WILL NOT BE PERMITTED WHERE IT DETRACTS FROM THEIR CHARACTER OR APPEARANCE OR PREJUDICES EITHER THE SURVIVAL OR REINSTATEMENT OF HISTORIC FEATURES INCLUDING DESIGNED PLANTATIONS. PLANNING PERMISSION, IF GRANTED, WILL BE SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS AIMED TO ENSURE THAT SUCH FEATURES ARE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN THE DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REQUIRED LANDSCAPE WORKS. WHERE PARKLAND IS IN MORE THAN ONE OWNERSHIP, THE COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE OWNERS TO CO-OPERATE SO THAT SUCH LANDSCAPE WORKS, WHETHER ON OR OFF THE APPLICATION SITE, CONTRIBUTE TO THE SAFEGUARDING OR REHABILITATION OF THE DESIGNED LANDSCAPE IN ITS ENTIRETY.

- 1. SOUTH PARK, DARLINGTON;**
- 2. NORTH LODGE PARK, DARLINGTON;**
- 3. BLACKWELL GRANGE, DARLINGTON;**
- 4. ROCKLIFFE PARK, HURWORTH;**
- 5. MIDDLETON HALL, MIDDLETON ST. GEORGE;**
- 6. WALWORTH CASTLE;**
- 7. REDWORTH HALL;**

8. HALL GARTH, COATHAM MUNDEVILLE;
9. NEWBUS GRANGE, HURWORTH;
10. NEASHAM HALL.

- 3.33 The ten parklands listed in Policy E9 are identified on the Proposals Map. Two are urban parks of historic interest, one of which, South Park is included in the English Heritage List of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest. Both are of town-wide amenity and recreation value. A third park, Blackwell Grange, is within the urban area, but is essentially a country house parkland similar in character to those in the rural parts of the Borough.
- 3.34 The seven rural parklands have a distinct character which differs from the surrounding agricultural landscape, resulting from their deliberate creation, often over long periods of time, as ornamental or designed landscapes. The characters of some parklands have been eroded in recent years, but nevertheless they are important at the local level, providing a cohesive focus in the wider landscape which contribute significantly to the Borough's landscape character. The urban parklands are also open land subject to Policy E3.

POLICY E10 - Protection of Key Townscape and Landscape Features

~~DEVELOPMENT WHICH, BECAUSE OF ITS HEIGHT, SCALE, LOCATION OR DESIGN WOULD MATERIALLY DETRACT FROM THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE FOLLOWING TOWNSCAPE AND LANDSCAPE FEATURES WILL NOT BE PERMITTED;~~

- ~~1. THE SKYLINE OF THE CENTRAL URBAN AREA, CHARACTERISED BY THE LANDMARK BUILDINGS OF ST. CUTHBERT'S SPIRE, THE MARKET CLOCKTOWER, ST. JOHN'S CHURCH TOWER AND DARLINGTON STATION CLOCKTOWER;~~
- ~~2. THE TREE CANOPY SKYLINE OF THE SOUTH WESTERN PART OF THE URBAN AREA;~~
- ~~3. THE VILLAGES, SEEN AS COHESIVE GROUPS OF BUILDINGS IN THEIR LANDSCAPE SETTINGS;~~
- ~~4. VIEWS AND VISTAS OF THE NORTH YORK MOORS AND DALES UPLANDS SEEN FROM WITHIN THE URBAN AREA AND THE VILLAGES, AND FROM THE MAIN ROAD NETWORK;~~

- ~~3.35 The skylines of built up areas and their appearance as groups of buildings in the landscape are important components of the Borough's character. The landmark buildings of the central area include the Market and Station clocktowers, St. Cuthbert's spire and St. John's tower. Whilst modern buildings also feature in the urban skyline, these Victorian and medieval structures dominate and dictate its character. In some of the villages the parish church tower provides the landmark feature. Rather more of the villages, seen from approach roads, have a cohesive appearance and harmonious relationship with their landscape settings; these villages are identified in Policy E10. In general the appearance of the Borough from the main travel routes into and through it determine how it is perceived and it is important that attractive or striking views are not harmed.~~

- ~~3.36 Broader landscape vistas also underpin the Borough's visual quality. Of particular significance in relation to Policy E10 are the views from parts of Darlington and some of the villages across the Tees Valley to the North York Moors and the Dales uplands.~~

~~3.37 Policy E10 seeks to ensure that these key views and vistas are not damaged by intrusive development. Telecommunications equipment, which by its very nature is usually higher than its surroundings and uncompromising in design, is a form of development which could damage views and vistas. Policies E52 and E53 set out criteria for such development. It is also recognised that agricultural development is essential for the running of farm businesses and may by its nature be detrimental to significant views. Applicants should demonstrate that they have made every attempt to reduce the impact of their proposals on such views by the use of appropriate materials and screening.~~

~~3.38 The edges of built up areas require careful treatment in order to protect their character and appearance, especially when viewed from main travel routes. Policy E14 requires development which would form the long term edge of built up areas to incorporate appropriate boundary landscaping along the countryside edge of the development.~~

~~**POLICY E11 - Conservation of Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows**~~

~~**THE CONSERVATION OF TREES, WOODLANDS AND HEDGEROWS FOR THEIR LANDSCAPE AND HABITAT VALUE, AND NEW AND REPLACEMENT PLANTING WILL BE ENCOURAGED. PREFERENCE WILL BE GIVEN TO THE USE OF INDIGENOUS SPECIES IN PLANTING PROPOSALS.**~~

~~3.39 Trees are essential. Not only do they contribute to amenity and provide wildlife habitat, but on a global scale they stabilise the atmosphere by consuming carbon dioxide and producing oxygen. Trees are often seen, as well, by some people, as a source of nuisance in built up areas because of leaf litter, the possibility of damage to property, and fear of the possible danger posed by trees adjacent to houses. Many of these problems can be reduced by proper management, and the Council will seek to maintain the health of its own trees, and encourage others to do likewise. Where trees are subject to Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs), or are otherwise within the Council's control, removal will normally only be allowed if arboricultural advice confirms that a tree is dead or dying, that it is causing or likely to cause damage to buildings, or that it is in a condition which poses a threat to public safety, and that there are acceptable replanting proposals. Trees that have been formally planted in or adjacent to the highway to complement adjacent development are an important townscape feature and should normally be replaced if their removal is necessary. The Council will establish a strategic approach to the management of trees in the highway based on these criteria, as part of the Strategy for the Green Environment. The Council will encourage tree planting of appropriate species and sizes in all suitable locations, whilst seeking to ensure that planting does not take place on areas of existing nature conservation interest, where this would harm the nature conservation interest.~~

~~3.40 The condition of many rural woodlands is declining because they are not being actively managed. Traditional woodland management, involving coppicing, selective felling and promoting regeneration, can be the most effective way of maintaining the ecology of deciduous plantations. Such activities, aimed at the sustainable management of woodlands, may be economically viable.~~

POLICY E12 - Trees and Development

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS WILL BE REQUIRED TO TAKE FULL ACCOUNT OF TREES, WOODLANDS AND HEDGEROWS ON AND ADJACENT TO THE SITE. THE LAYOUT AND DESIGN OF THE DEVELOPMENT SHOULD WHEREVER POSSIBLE AVOID THE NEED TO REMOVE TREES AND HEDGEROWS AND PROVIDE FOR THEIR SUCCESSFUL RETENTION AND PROTECTION DURING DEVELOPMENT. WHERE REMOVAL IS UNAVOIDABLE, ANY REQUIRED LANDSCAPE WORKS SHOULD BE SO DESIGNED AS TO COMPENSATE, ON OR OFF THE DEVELOPMENT SITE, FOR THE LOSS TO THE AMENITY OF THE AREA. DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD HARM MATERIALLY ANY AREA OF ANCIENT WOODLAND PROTECTED UNDER POLICY E20 WILL NOT BE PERMITTED.

- 3.41 The Council's intention is to protect all trees worthy of retention wherever possible. Trees are often lost to new development, or subsequently perish, through lack of thought at the design stage. Trees on or adjacent to development sites should be treated as a site constraint from the earliest stages of the design process, and their retention and integration into the development should be an objective in drawing up proposals. The unnecessary loss of trees and hedgerows should be avoided.
- 3.42 Trees within the highway are a characteristic and attractive feature of the local environment. The Council will ensure that wherever possible, highway maintenance and improvement schemes are designed with the retention of trees as a prerequisite.
- 3.43 There are ten areas of ancient woodland in the Borough. These are identified as Sites of Nature Conservation Importance, subject to Policy E20, and shown as such on the Proposals Map. The reference in Policy E12 reinforces the protection provided by Policy E20; their appropriate management is encouraged by Policy E11.

POLICY E13 - Tree Preservation Orders

THE COUNCIL WILL CONTINUE TO USE ITS POWERS TO MAKE TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS, GIVING PRIORITY TO:

- 1. TREES, GROUPS OF TREES OR WOODLANDS WHICH ARE OF LOCAL LANDSCAPE OR AMENITY VALUE AND ARE CONSIDERED TO BE AT RISK;**
- 2. THE UPDATING, CLARIFICATION AND SIMPLIFICATION OF EXISTING ORDERS IN AREAS WHERE TREES ARE AT RISK.**

WHEN DETERMINING APPLICATIONS TO FELL OR CARRY OUT OTHER WORKS TO TREES SUBJECT TO TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS, THE COUNCIL WILL TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE HEALTH AND STABILITY OF THE TREES, THEIR LIKELY FUTURE LIFESPAN AND THEIR PUBLIC AMENITY VALUE.

- 3.44 The global and local importance of trees is referred to in relation to Policy E12, which requires development proposals to take full account of existing trees and hedgerows. The Council will reinforce this requirement by making Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) to protect threatened trees of amenity and landscape value. The Council will seek expert arboricultural advice before determining any application to fell or carry out other works on trees protected by Tree Preservation Orders.
- 3.45 Many Tree Preservation Orders were made over forty years ago, and some have not been updated to reflect tree losses and gains. The Council intends to carry out a comprehensive review of orders, replacing those which are now out of date.

POLICY E14 - Landscaping of Development

PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT WILL BE REQUIRED TO INCORPORATE APPROPRIATE HARD AND SOFT LANDSCAPING WHICH HAS REGARD TO THE SETTING OF THE DEVELOPMENT IN ITS FORM, DESIGN AND PLANT SPECIES, AND WHICH ENHANCES THE APPEARANCE OF THE DEVELOPMENT AND ITS SETTING. OFF-SITE PLANTING WILL BE SOUGHT BY NEGOTIATION WHERE THE COUNCIL CONSIDERS THAT THIS WOULD HELP TO INTEGRATE THE DEVELOPMENT INTO ITS SETTING.

- 3.46 The treatment of land outside buildings can be a key factor in the quality of environment created by development. The form, layout and design of external spaces should be considered early in the development process. For larger sites, landscaping should provide the framework within which the development is designed, in accordance with Policy E15. Preference will be given to landscaping based on low maintenance regimes, wildflower / grass mixes and indigenous tree and shrub species, and incorporating wildlife habitats, where this is appropriate to the setting of the development. Sites held in disuse pending redevelopment should be landscaped, as should residual undevelopable areas.
- 3.47 The Council will seek off-site planting specifically in relation to development on the edge of built-up areas, where such planting would assist in screening development and integrating it into the built-up area and its landscape setting, and where land ownership and other interests permit. This requirement complements the requirements of Policy E10, insofar as it relates to edge of settlement development.

POLICY E15 - Open Land in New Development

~~WHEREVER APPROPRIATE HAVING REGARD FOR THE LOCATION AND EXTENT OF ITS SITE, NEW DEVELOPMENT SHOULD INCORPORATE OPEN LAND AND LANDSCAPE WHICH LINKS WITH, REINFORCES OR EXTENDS THE NETWORK OF OPEN LAND PROTECTED UNDER POLICY E3. LANDSCAPING WORKS SHOULD WHEREVER POSSIBLE INCLUDE THE CREATION AND RETENTION OF WILDLIFE HABITATS HAVING REGARD TO THE CHARACTER OF THE SITE AND ADJOINING OPEN LAND.~~

- ~~3.48 A number of policies require land to be set aside and remain undeveloped within development sites, including E14 (landscaping of development), E23 (nature and development), H11 (design and layout of new housing development) and R6 (open space in new residential development).~~
- ~~3.49 Where such provision is required, and dependent on the location and character of the site, it should be designed to contribute to the urban open land network. Open land and landscaping thus provided in residential developments will count as open space provision for recreation under Policy R6. Individual proposals will be dependent on the relationship of the site to other open land and the nature and character of land; the Council will look in particular, for opportunities to extend or fill in gaps in wildlife corridors, in accordance with Policy E21, enhance recreation opportunities, in accordance with Policy R13, and reinforce open land of amenity or landscape value. Existing watercourses and their immediate surroundings can provide the focus for such provision, and their retention and enhancement will normally be sought.~~

~~**POLICY E16 - Appearance From Main Travel Routes**~~

~~THE APPEARANCE OF THE BOROUGH FROM THE MAIN ROAD NETWORK, THE RAILWAY LINES, THE TEESDALE WAY AND THE PROPOSED RECREATION ROUTES WILL BE MAINTAINED AND ENHANCED BY:~~

- ~~1. ENCOURAGING, ASSISTING AND CARRYING OUT IMPROVEMENTS TO UNSIGHTLY LAND AND BUILDINGS;~~
- ~~2. PROTECTING FEATURES AND BUILDINGS WHICH CONTRIBUTE POSITIVELY TO THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THEIR SURROUNDINGS;~~
- ~~3. REQUIRING NEW DEVELOPMENT TO RESPECT ITS SETTING, AND TO INCORPORATE LANDSCAPING, WHEREVER APPROPRIATE, WHICH MAKES A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION TO THE APPEARANCE OF ITS SURROUNDINGS; AND,~~
- ~~4. PROMOTING THE COMPREHENSIVE IMPROVEMENT AND LANDSCAPING OF MAIN ROAD APPROACHES TO THE CENTRAL AREA.~~

- ~~3.50 Whilst Policy E10 is concerned with views and vistas of particular buildings, groups of buildings or landscapes, Policy E16 relates to the overall impressions gained when passing along main travel routes.~~
- ~~3.51 The Railside Revival Project demonstrated the positive benefits for the image of the Borough that can be derived from improving the appearance of travel corridors. The impressions gained whilst travelling into and through the Borough can have an important bearing on economic development and tourism initiatives: seven million people annually pass through the Borough on the East Coast mainline railway.~~
- ~~3.52 The Council will continue, itself and in partnership with others, to enhance the appearance of main travel corridors as opportunities arise. It will consider the introduction of Roadside Revival schemes.~~
- ~~3.53 Some approaches into Darlington, notably Grange Road, Coniscliffe Road and Staindrop Road / Woodland Road, are especially attractive. The features which create their attractive appearance will be protected and new development will be required to respect their character and appearance in accordance with Policies E3, E10 and E29. The impact of edge of settlement development has been referred to in relation to Policy E10. This can be emphasised by bypass construction. The A66(T), Heighington and Middleton St. George bypasses have opened up the edges of built up areas to public view. The development limits identified in Policy E2 seek to safeguard intervening land which forms part of the landscape setting of the built up area.~~
- ~~3.54 The Council will support and encourage environmental improvements along the A68 within the Borough, in recognition of its potential as a tourist route.~~
- ~~3.55 Whilst Policies E10 and E16 focus on the main travel routes from which the majority of people travelling into and through the Borough form their perceptions, it is also important that the appearance of all landscape and buildings open to public view are protected and, where possible enhanced. The enjoyment of public rights of way will be influenced by the appearance of the 'corridor' through which they pass; the Teesdale Way long distance path will be used by residents and visitors alike, and the Council is especially concerned to protect the appearance of areas visible from it and from proposed recreation routes (Policies R12 and R13).~~

POLICY E17 - Landscape Improvement

OPPORTUNITIES WILL BE SOUGHT FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF AREAS OF POOR OR DEGRADED LANDSCAPE CHARACTER BY:

- 1. THE EARLY RECLAMATION OF LAND WHICH BECOMES DERELICT; AND**
- 2. THE ENHANCEMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF UNUSED AND UNDER-USED LAND THROUGH TREE PLANTING, LANDSCAPE CREATION AND WILDLIFE HABITAT CREATION.**

THE RECLAMATION AND RESTORATION OF THE DARCHEM WASTE TIP AT WEST AUCKLAND ROAD, SKIPBRIDGE BRICKWORKS, SADBERGE RESERVOIR AND LAND OFF HERON DRIVE WILL BE SOUGHT.

- 3.56 Almost all derelict land in the Borough has been reclaimed in recent years. The Council will continue to press for the treatment of any which remains or becomes derelict, in order to enhance the attractiveness of the Borough and ensure the efficient use of land. The Darchem tip poses the major outstanding landscape problem in the Borough, emphasised by its location on a main road access into the town (Policy E16). The Heron Drive site has recently been cleared of buildings, but consists of tipped land which is unsuitable for housing and other forms of development. Skipbridge Brickworks has been partially reclaimed, but there are still a number of buildings, hardstandings and piles of rubble. Sadberge Reservoir is a disused open reservoir on the western edge of Sadberge, consisting of a brick basin enclosed by grass embankments rising above natural ground level. The Council will seek the treatment of other minor areas of dereliction as opportunities and resources allow. In promoting and carrying out reclamation schemes it will recognise the importance of identifying and taking account of any existing nature conservation interest that may have developed on the land, and of taking steps

to protect groundwater supplies from contamination in accordance with the Environment Agency's Policy and Practice for the Protection of Groundwater.

- 3.57 Poor landscape occurs in some places around the edges of the town where land is unused or under-used. The proximity of the urban population, with attendant problems of trespass and vandalism, often brings about a decline in farming, and in the management of land. These problems need to be tackled in partnership with landowners in order to resolve conflicts and assist in the maintenance of the landscape.
- 3.58 The Council will seek landscape improvements in association with new development (as a condition of planning permission), through derelict land reclamation schemes, through its own capital, and through Railside Revival-type partnerships, which encourage businesses and others to join the Council in bringing about area-based improvements. Policy E18 refers to a partnership programme for the River Skerne corridor within the urban area.

POLICY E18 - The River Skerne

OPPORTUNITIES WILL BE SOUGHT TO ENHANCE THE APPEARANCE, VITALITY, AND RECREATION AND NATURE CONSERVATION VALUE OF BUILDINGS AND LAND ADJACENT TO THE RIVER SKERNE WITHIN THE URBAN AREA. THE COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE DEVELOPMENT WHICH ACCORDS WITH OTHER RELEVANT POLICIES OF THE PLAN AND WHICH WILL CONTRIBUTE TO SUCH ENHANCEMENT.

- 3.59 The River Skerne corridor is a resource with considerable amenity, recreation and nature conservation potential. It offers opportunities, too, for urban regeneration and revitalisation. Much has already been done, through the creation of the parkland between Albert Road and Rivergarth. Enhancement is continuing here through the extension of the riverside foot and cycle path, and by the restoration of the river and riverside land to a more natural form.
- 3.60 The built-up section of the river corridor, between Albert Road and Russell Street, is generally run down and unattractive and a poor setting for the Skerne Bridge, which is a scheduled ancient monument and potential tourist attraction and currently the subject of an enhancement programme. The Council will encourage development in this area which helps to improve and revitalise it, and which enhances the appearance and accessibility of the riverside. The private Skerne Studios initiative, providing office, workshop and living space in converted warehouses alongside the river, demonstrates the potential for revitalisation through the introduction of new uses into the area.
- 3.61 The riverside environment in the town centre, alongside the inner ring road, is a major area of open space in the town. It provides an attractive walking and sitting area and open views of St. Cuthbert's Church and the central area. Opportunities for enhancement and extension will be taken, as they arise, with imaginative planting along the riverbank and careful choice of materials for walls and railings.
- 3.62 Policy E18 is an advocative policy, reflecting the Council's intention that the Skerne corridor should be enhanced. It does not override any of the other policies in the Plan, and prospective developers should take guidance from the policies illustrated in detail on the Proposals Map on what development may be acceptable within the Skerne corridor.

~~NATURE CONSERVATION~~

~~POLICY E19 - Sites of Special Scientific Interest~~

~~DEVELOPMENT WITHIN OR WHICH IS LIKELY TO AFFECT A SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST WILL BE SUBJECT TO SPECIAL SCRUTINY TO ASSESS ITS LIKELY IMPACT ON THE SCIENTIFIC INTEREST OF THE SITE. DEVELOPMENT THAT WOULD DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY DAMAGE OR ADVERSELY AFFECT A DESIGNATED OR PROPOSED SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST WILL NOT BE PERMITTED UNLESS IT CAN BE DEMONSTRATED THAT LOCATIONAL OR OTHER MATERIAL~~

~~CONSIDERATIONS OUTWEIGH THE EFFECT ON THE SPECIAL INTEREST OF THE SITE ITSELF AND ON THE NATURE CONSERVATION VALUE OF THE NATIONAL NETWORK OF SITES, OR THAT CONDITIONS OR PLANNING AGREEMENTS CAN PREVENT DAMAGING IMPACTS ON THE SITE.~~

~~3.63 The Plan's nature conservation policies seek to protect local biodiversity from erosion by development. Biodiversity can be defined as "the sum total of life's variety on earth". The UK Government is a signatory to the Biodiversity Convention, arising from the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, and is committed to the maintenance of biodiversity at national and global levels. In policy terms, the environmental assets to be safeguarded can be divided into: 'critical natural capital', those aspects of native biodiversity which cannot be readily replaced; and 'constant natural assets', those aspects of native biodiversity which should not be allowed, in total, to fall below minimum levels, but which could be replaced by creating new features or habitats within the locality. The Plan's policies reflect this categorisation of assets~~

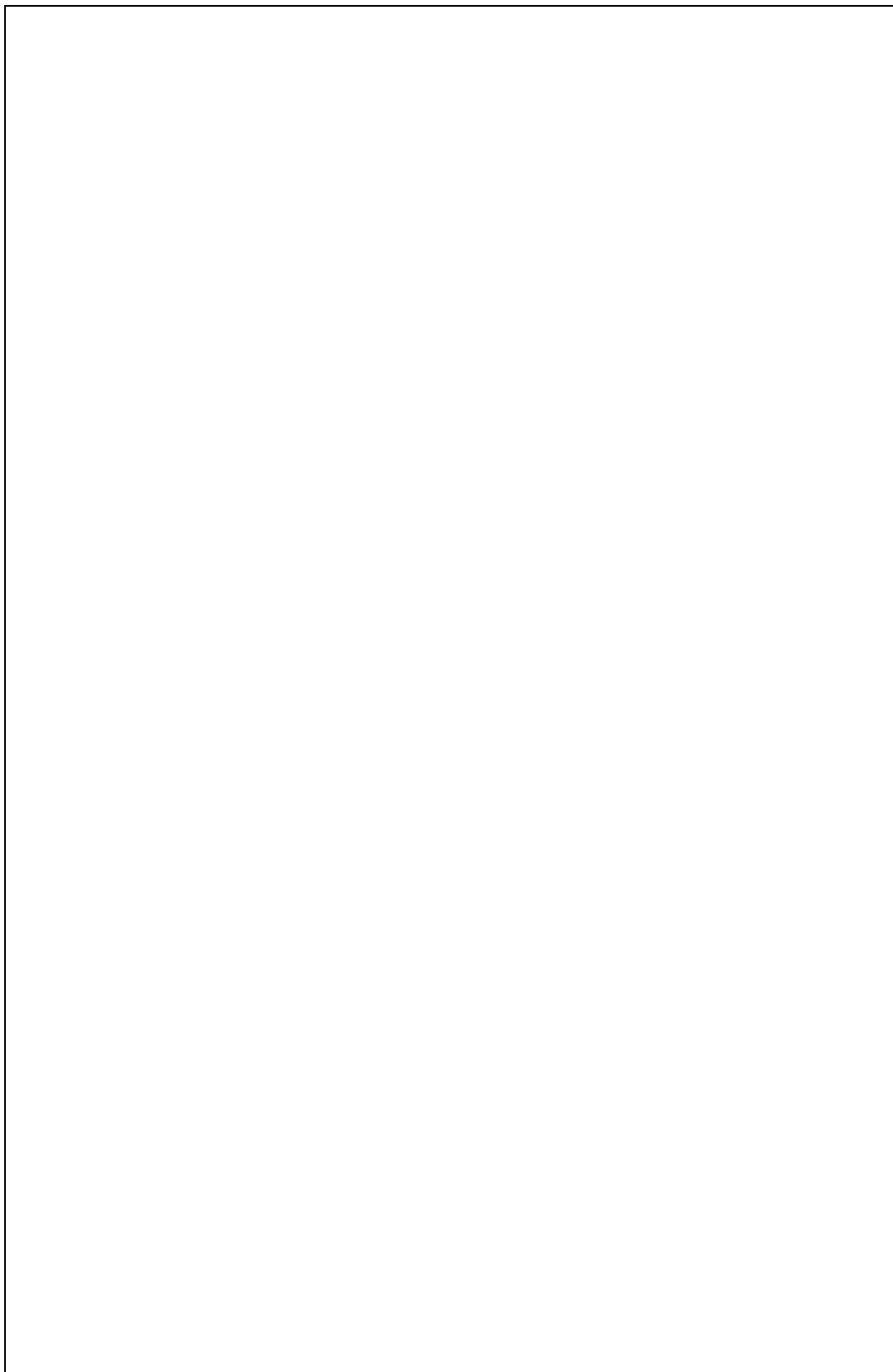
~~3.64 There are, at the time of adoption of the Plan, four designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) in the Borough, at Hell Kettles, Redear Field, Newton Ketton Meadow and Neasham Fen (Figure 3.4). Sites of Special Scientific Interest are the best examples of our national heritage of wildlife habitats, geological features and landforms. Such sites are statutorily protected, and the local planning authority is required to consult English Nature, which is responsible for site designation, about any proposals within a SSSI, or which might adversely affect a SSSI. The Council will have regard for the views of English Nature in assessing any proposal for development in or adjacent to a SSSI.~~

POLICY E20 - Sites of Nature Conservation Importance

THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO PROTECT AND ENHANCE THE HABITAT VALUE OR SPECIAL FEATURES OF SITES OF NATURE CONSERVATION IMPORTANCE. DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD DAMAGE OR ADVERSELY AFFECT A SITE'S NATURE CONSERVATION VALUE OR GEOLOGICAL OR GEOMORPHOLOGICAL FEATURES WILL NOT BE PERMITTED UNLESS:

- 1. THE ADVERSE IMPACT OF THE DEVELOPMENT CAN BE SATISFACTORILY MITIGATED THROUGH THE IMPOSITION OF CONDITIONS OR BY FORMAL AGREEMENT;**
- 2. BENEFITS FOR NATURE CONSERVATION ARISING FROM DEVELOPMENT IN THE FORM OF ENHANCEMENT AND / OR ONGOING MANAGEMENT OF THE SITE OUTWEIGH ITS HARMFUL EFFECTS;**
- 3. NATURE CONSERVATION FEATURES CAN BE PROVIDED WITHIN THE SITE OR ELSEWHERE WHICH FULLY COMPENSATE FOR ANY SUCH FEATURES LOST TO THE DEVELOPMENT; OR**

Figure 3.4 Nature Conservation Sites



4. THE NEED FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OR FOR THE BENEFITS ARISING FROM IT OVERRIDE NATURE CONSERVATION INTERESTS TO THE EXTENT THAT AN EXCEPTION TO THIS POLICY IS JUSTIFIED. THE COUNCIL WILL ASSIST IN ESTABLISHING ARRANGEMENTS TO MANAGE SITES FOR NATURE CONSERVATION.

- 3.65 The Plan identifies a range of different types of features as Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCIs). They include County Wildlife Sites and County Geological / Geomorphological Sites, identified by Durham Wildlife Trust using a set of agreed criteria. Ancient woodlands are identified in the Plan as SNCIs. Other sites have been identified locally by the Council in consultation with the Wildlife Trust or the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV). As a result, the designation covers several 'tiers' of sites, from those of broader significance to those of Borough-wide importance, and from the irreplaceable to those which can be readily re-created. All, however, are sites which have a particular nature conservation or geological significance which should be a material consideration in determining development proposals. Regionally Important Geological / Geomorphological Sites (RIGS) will be subject to Policy E20, if and when any are identified in the Borough. Other sites may also be designated as SNCIs subject to Policy E20, as they become identified in future.
- 3.66 Urban SNCIs are also open land, subject to Policy E3 except for the Cleveland Street grassland site. Ancient woodlands are subject to Policy E12, as well as E20. Local Nature Reserves, which are subject to Policy E22, are identified as such on the Proposals Map, but are also SNCIs and subject to Policy E20. The Council will encourage the involvement of local volunteer and other similar groups in the management and enhancement of SNCIs for nature conservation.

POLICY E21 - Wildlife Corridors

DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD MATERIALLY HARM THE WILDLIFE HABITAT VALUE OF LINEAR FEATURES PROVIDING CORRIDORS WITHIN WHICH WILDLIFE CAN MOVE AND LIVE, INCLUDING THE OPEN LAND NETWORK WITHIN THE URBAN AREA WHERE IT FORMS CONTINUOUS CORRIDORS, RIVERS AND STREAMS, ROAD AND RAIL CORRIDORS, WOODLANDS, HEDGEROWS AND GREEN LANES WILL NOT BE PERMITTED. HARM WILL BE ASSESSED ACCORDING TO THE IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT ON THE VALUE OF THE FEATURE IN TERMS OF ITS CONTINUITY AND ECOLOGICAL STRUCTURE AND DIVERSITY. THE LANDSCAPING OF NEW DEVELOPMENT WITHIN OR ADJACENT TO WILDLIFE SHOULD, WHERE APPROPRIATE, INCORPORATE SEMI-NATURAL HABITATS WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO MAINTAINING THE WILDLIFE VALUE OF THE CORRIDOR.

- 3.67 Reference is made in relation to Policy E3 to the value of continuous green corridors, which often function as wildlife corridors, providing a continuity of habitat which is essential to the colonisation and regeneration of many plant and animal species. Policy E3 seeks to protect such corridors, for their general amenity as well as nature conservation value, where they are formed by linked parts of the open land network, and Policy E15 seeks their consolidation and extension. Policy E21 reinforces this protection, and extends it to other features which are not identified as 'open land' but which are nevertheless valuable as wildlife corridors. Many features, such as hedgerows and roadside verges, function in this way.
- 3.68 The Cross Town Route safeguarding corridor provides an important wildlife and amenity corridor across the northern part of the urban area. The proposed road will inevitably have detrimental impacts on the corridor in its present form. However the concept of a wildlife corridor should not be abandoned as a consequence, and the proposal offers the opportunity to incorporate appropriate planting and habitat creation to retain an effective linear feature. The Council will seek appropriate landscaping proposals for each section of the road, and will also seek satisfactory interim treatment of land in the safeguarding corridor, pending road construction.

POLICY E22 - Local Nature Reserves

DECLARED LOCAL NATURE RESERVES WILL BE PROTECTED FROM DEVELOPMENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY E20. PRIORITY WILL BE GIVEN TO THE INVESTIGATION OF DRINKFIELD MARSH AND NEASHAM BRICKWORKS AS SITES SUITABLE FOR FURTHER DECLARATIONS, AND MORE WILL BE INVESTIGATED AS THEY ARE IDENTIFIED.

- 3.69 Durham County Council declared the Whinnies at Middleton St. George as a Local Nature Reserve (LNR) shortly before local government reorganisation and the Borough Council has taken over responsibility for it. The Council can declare reserves, in consultation with English Nature, on land in which it has a legal interest. Any LNR will be based around Sites of Special Scientific Interest or other identified wildlife sites. There are educational and recreational as well as conservation objectives in declaring LNRs.
- 3.70 Drinkfield Marsh and Neasham brickworks are the most obvious candidates for LNR status. Investigations are required into the need for land outside the Council's ownership to be incorporated to secure the proper management of the areas. Other sites will be considered on their merits after the investigation of Drinkfield Marsh and Neasham brickworks.
- 3.71 The Council can declare LNRs using its powers under Section 21 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. Declaration affords added protection because the Council is required to have or acquire a legal interest in the land before declaration, and there is a requirement to manage the site to maintain its special interest. Proposed reserves are protected as Sites of Nature Conservation Importance from the harmful effects of development by Policy E20. LNR status will give added weight to the protection of the site's special interest in the application of Policy E20.

~~POLICY E23 - Nature and Development~~

~~DEVELOPMENT SHOULD BE SO DESIGNED AS TO MINIMISE ITS ADVERSE EFFECTS ON WILDLIFE AND HABITAT. ANY UNAVOIDABLE LOSS OR IRRETRIEVABLE DISRUPTION OF ANY HABITAT IDENTIFIED PRIOR TO OR DURING THE CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSALS AS BEING OF LOCAL OR WIDER IMPORTANCE SHOULD BE COMPENSATED FOR BY CREATING COMPARABLE CONDITIONS WITHIN THE APPLICATION AREA OR BY AGREEMENT ELSEWHERE IN THE LOCALITY, IN CONJUNCTION WITH REQUIRED LANDSCAPE WORKS. DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD MATERIALLY HARM ANY PROTECTED SPECIES, EITHER DIRECTLY OR THROUGH LOSS OR DAMAGE OF HABITAT, WILL NOT BE PERMITTED.~~

- ~~3.72 Whilst identified sites of ecological value, protected by Policies E19 and E20, provide reservoirs of wildlife habitat, these isolated sites are not sufficient in themselves to guarantee the well-being of local flora and fauna. Other areas of open space and undeveloped land, including development sites, are of greater or lesser nature conservation value. Together with linear landscape features in the countryside, they contribute to the network of green corridors, referred to in relation to Policies E3 and E21, which facilitate the movement and migration of flora and fauna.~~
- ~~3.73 There is no reason why development and nature conservation should be fundamentally in conflict. Development can be accommodated on many sites without irrevocable damage to the site's ecology and nature conservation value. Development may provide the opportunity to enhance that value. Where habitat of local or wider significance is present on the site, any loss should be balanced by habitat creation so that the overall nature conservation value of the site is not eroded, and ecological relationships with the wider area are not lost.~~
- ~~3.74 Many species of flora and fauna are afforded a range of protections by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Badgers are protected by the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. The EC Habitats and Species Directive 92/43 EEC requires the UK Government to protect species of community wide interest. The protection of particular sites is only a partial response to the conservation of protected species, which may have variable or unpredictable distribution. The~~

~~great crested newt is a protected species which is found extensively throughout the urban area. The seasonal ponds located on the impervious boulder clay in the northern part of the town provide its principal habitat. The newt migrates between ponds, and the grasslands surrounding the ponds are a significant habitat, as well as the actual water areas. It is important, therefore, that the network of ponds as a whole is protected. Individual ponds are identified as Sites of Nature Conservation Importance and protected by Policy E20. Buildings can be important habitats for example as bat roosts or bird nesting sites. The Council will seek the advice of English Nature if there is a possibility that development proposals will affect the habitat of a protected species or individual members of a protected species.~~

~~RESOURCE CONSERVATION~~

~~POLICY E24 Conservation of Land and Other Resources~~

~~THE COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE THE CONSERVATION OF NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCES BY:~~

- ~~1. GIVING PRIORITY TO THE REDEVELOPMENT OF PREVIOUSLY DEVELOPED LAND WITHIN BUILT UP AREAS IN PREFERENCE TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF OTHER SITES;~~
- ~~2. PROTECTING MINERAL DEPOSITS OF ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE FROM STERILISATION BY DEVELOPMENT;~~
- ~~3. ENCOURAGING THE RE-USE OF EXISTING BUILDINGS AND THE USE OF RECYCLED BUILDING MATERIALS;~~
- ~~4. REQUIRING THE PROVISION OF SITES FOR COLLECTION POINTS FOR GLASS, PAPER, STEEL AND OTHER CONSUMER WASTE PRODUCTS IN APPROPRIATE NEW DEVELOPMENTS, AND ENCOURAGING THE PROVISION OF SUCH COLLECTION POINTS ELSEWHERE IN CONVENIENT AND ACCESSIBLE LOCATIONS.~~

~~3.75 The Council is committed to the recycling of materials and conservation of non renewable resources through its Environmental Charter. A number of sites for the reception of consumer waste products have been established. Large retail and commercial developments, and other developments visited by the public, can provide additional sites in convenient and accessible locations; Policy S14 requires major new shopping developments to provide recycling facilities.~~

~~3.76 The control of development, however, offers a broader range of opportunities to secure the conservation of resources. Land, along with air and water, is the most precious of resources. Safeguarding undeveloped land, and re-using previously developed land, is a valuable way of protecting our environmental heritage for future generations. However, not all the development which is needed socially and economically can be accommodated on redevelopment sites, and the Plan does allocate some undeveloped land for housing and industrial / business uses. In doing so, sites on the edge of the town have generally been preferred to open land within the built up area which is to be protected for its amenity, recreation and nature conservation value. Policies E2 (development limits) and E3 (protection of open land) seek to protect undeveloped land. Previously developed land often provides valuable wildlife habitats, particularly where it has remained unused for a long time. Whilst priority is given to the development of such land in advance of greenfield sites, proposals will be considered within the framework of Plan policies, and, in terms of nature conservation, against the context provided by Policy E23.~~

~~3.77 There are mineral deposits of economic importance within the Borough, including sand and gravel and coal. The Council will safeguard such deposits for the future. The allocation of development sites in the Plan has had regard to the location of known mineral deposits.~~

~~3.78 Existing buildings represent a major investment of materials and energy. Demolition destroys this investment, and new buildings use up yet more valuable resources. Existing buildings which become vacant should be adapted to new uses wherever practical, rather than be redeveloped. Where demolition is necessary, materials should be salvaged wherever possible and made available for use in new buildings. Policy E44 seeks the salvage of features and materials of architectural value or interest.~~

~~POLICY E25 Energy Conservation~~

~~THE COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE THE EFFECTIVE USE OF PASSIVE SOLAR ENERGY AND THE REDUCTION OF WINDCHILL IN THE LAYOUT, DESIGN AND ORIENTATION OF BUILDINGS, AND THE USE OF ENERGY EFFICIENT MATERIALS AND CONSTRUCTION TECHNIQUES.~~

~~3.79 Almost half the energy used in the United Kingdom is associated with buildings, and the burning of fossil fuels to produce this energy has a significant effect on global warming through the 'greenhouse effect'. Local action to reduce energy consumption can play its part in ameliorating this global issue. The orientation and inter-relationship of buildings, their detailed design and the materials used in their construction can reduce energy needs. Policy E25 is complemented by the Plan's transport and housing policies, which seek to minimise day to day travel needs, promote cycling and walking as energy efficient and pollution free means of transport, and seek to minimise energy use in new housing development.~~

~~POLICY E26 Energy From Renewable Sources~~

~~THE COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE PROPOSALS FOR THE GENERATION OF ENERGY FROM RENEWABLE SOURCES. PROPOSALS WILL BE PERMITTED WHERE THERE IS NO MATERIAL ADVERSE IMPACT ON LANDSCAPE, WILDLIFE AND AMENITY. PROPOSALS FOR WIND TURBINES MUST SATISFY THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:~~

- ~~1. IN THE AREA OF HIGH LANDSCAPE VALUE, THEY DO NOT SIGNIFICANTLY DETRACT FROM THE PARTICULAR LANDSCAPE QUALITY OF THE AREA, AND THERE ARE NO OTHER SUITABLE SITES IN LESS SENSITIVE AREAS;~~
- ~~2. ELSEWHERE, PROPOSALS DO NOT SIGNIFICANTLY AFFECT LANDSCAPE CHARACTER OR VISUAL AMENITY;~~
- ~~3. TURBINES AND ASSOCIATED STRUCTURES ARE OF A HIGH STANDARD OF DESIGN; AND~~
- ~~4. PROPOSALS DO NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE AMENITY OF NEIGHBOURING PROPERTIES OR THE CHARACTER AND SETTING OF SETTLEMENTS BY REASON OF NOISE, SHADOW FLICKER, VISUAL DOMINANCE OR ELECTRO-MAGNETIC INTERFERENCE.~~

~~3.80 The use of energy generated from renewable sources is expected to increase during the period covered by the Plan. Some minor developments have little impact on amenity, but larger developments such as wind farms can only operate efficiently in certain localities, frequently in open countryside of high landscape value. Such proposals will need to be carefully considered having regard to the other policies in the Plan relating to the locality. The study 'Renewable Energy in County Durham', carried out jointly by Durham County Council and ETSU (the Energy Technology Support Unit), indicated that the potential resources for renewable energy development in Darlington are very limited. The technologies which are most likely to have commercial potential, such as biogas, energy from waste, forestry and energy crops, and solar energy, can be controlled within the Plan's framework of development control policies. Specific criteria are needed for controlling wind energy development, which can have unique and significant impacts on visual amenity and landscape. The wind resource in Darlington will not support commercial development within the current economic and technological constraints. The criteria set out in Policy E26 will apply to any proposals which may arise should those constraints change in the future, and to any non commercial proposals for turbines serving individual consumers.~~

~~POLICY E27 – Flooding and Development~~

~~DEVELOPMENT IN AREAS AT RISK FROM FLOODING WILL NOT NORMALLY BE PERMITTED.~~

~~POLICY E28 – Surface Water and Development~~

~~NEW DEVELOPMENT WILL BE EXPECTED TO MAKE PROVISION FOR HANDLING SURFACE WATER RUN OFF WITHOUT INCREASING FLOODING RISKS.~~

~~3.81 It is important that new development is not at risk from flooding and that it does not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere by impeding floodwater flows or as a result of its effect on the surface water run off regime. Proposals will be assessed having regard to the advice of the Environment Agency and Northumbrian Water plc. Areas at risk from flooding will be indicated on the Proposals Map at the first review of the Plan following notification from the Environment Agency of those areas.~~

BUILDINGS AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

~~POLICY E29 – The Setting of New Development~~

~~NEW DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING ALTERATIONS AND EXTENSIONS TO EXISTING BUILDINGS, WILL BE REQUIRED TO RESPECT THE INTRINSIC CHARACTER OF ITS TOWNSCAPE SETTING IN TERMS OF ITS SITING, DESIGN, MATERIALS, LANDSCAPING AND THE PROTECTION OF EXISTING TOWNSCAPE FEATURES, INCLUDING GARDENS AND OTHER OPEN SPACES WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO THE CHARACTER OF THE SETTING, AND NOT TO MATERIALLY DETRACT FROM THE APPEARANCE OF ITS SURROUNDINGS.~~

~~3.82 Most of the Borough's built up areas have a distinctive character, based on a cohesiveness of layout and design and reflecting their historic origins, which is worth protecting and, in some cases, enhancing. Some areas have been designated as conservation areas and are the subject of policies below. Those areas which do not merit such designation, however, nevertheless have a form and character which should be respected by new development. The Council's intention is to achieve well mannered forms of development which have regard to their setting whatever the location. Gardens and other open spaces can make a significant contribution to townscape character. The desirability of protecting such features will be a factor in the consideration of development proposals. Policy E29 is concerned with the appearance of new development. Other aspects of the design of development, including landscaping, safety and security, accessibility, traffic generation and impact on the natural environment, are the subject of other policies in the Plan.~~

~~3.83 The Council will have particular regard to the impact of proposals for external lighting on visual, residential and landscape amenity. Lighting structures can be obtrusive and lighting can give prominence during the hours of darkness to a development which in daylight is relatively unobtrusive. Addressing all the design issues at an early stage in the development process will help to ensure that proposals achieve a satisfactory form of development and an acceptable relationship to their setting. The Council will prepare appropriate supplementary design guidance.~~

~~POLICY E30 – Protection of Listed Buildings and Their Settings~~

~~THE COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE THE RETENTION, RESTORATION, MAINTENANCE AND CONTINUED USE OF STATUTORILY LISTED BUILDINGS. CONSENT FOR THE DEMOLITION OF A LISTED BUILDING WILL BE GRANTED ONLY EXCEPTIONALLY, AND IN ANY CASE NOT UNLESS THE COUNCIL IS SATISFIED THAT EVERY POSSIBLE EFFORT HAS BEEN MADE TO CONTINUE THE PRESENT USE OF THE BUILDING OR TO FIND A SUITABLE ALTERNATIVE USE. THE SETTINGS OF LISTED BUILDINGS WILL BE PROTECTED BY CONTROL OVER THE DESIGN OF NEW DEVELOPMENT IN~~

~~THEIR VICINITY, CONTROL OVER THE USE OF ADJACENT LAND AND BY THE PRESERVATION OF TREES AND OTHER LANDSCAPE FEATURES.~~

~~POLICY E31 Alterations to Listed Buildings~~

~~ALTERATIONS TO LISTED BUILDINGS MUST:~~

- ~~1. BE IN KEEPING WITH THE CHARACTER OF THE BUILDING AND ITS SURROUNDINGS IN TERMS OF THE QUALITY, SCALE, FORM AND DETAILING OF THE DESIGN AND THE MATERIALS USED, AND PRESERVE THE SPECIAL ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC CHARACTER OF THE BUILDING AND ANY DISTINCTIVE FEATURES; AND~~
- ~~2. MAINTAIN THE CHARACTER OF INTERIORS AND RETAIN INTERNAL FEATURES OF INTEREST.~~

~~3.84 The Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport is required to compile lists of buildings of special architectural or historic interest, "with a view to the guidance of local planning authorities in the performance of their functions". There are over 500 listed buildings in the Borough, with the number being added to steadily as the lists are revised. The majority are buildings dating from the 18th and 19th centuries, mainly domestic in origin. Overall, the age span is from the 12th century to the mid 1960s, and some of the entries are uninhabitable structures such as mileposts, headstones and telephone kiosks.~~

~~3.85 Listed buildings are the most important individual features of Darlington's built heritage and, as a rule, their demolition will be resisted by the Council. The Council will request anyone applying for consent to demolish a listed building to submit a statement outlining the structural and economic justification for demolition. Insensitive alterations or extensions can cause almost as much damage: the Council will permit only those changes which reflect the character of the original buildings in such matters as design, scale, colour and materials. The Secretary of State determines applications from local authorities for listed building consent. Authorities are expected to deal with their own listed buildings in ways which provide examples of good practice to other owners.~~

~~POLICY E32 Buildings of Local Character and Townscape Value~~

~~THE COUNCIL WILL MAINTAIN AND UPDATE A NON-STATUTORY LIST OF BUILDINGS OF LOCAL CHARACTER AND TOWNSCAPE VALUE WHICH MERIT RETENTION, AND WILL SEEK TO SAFEGUARD THEM AS TOWNSCAPE FEATURES.~~

~~3.86 There are many buildings which, whilst not statutorily listed, make an important contribution to the character and appearance of the urban area and the villages. The Council does not have control over the demolition of such buildings, except in conservation areas.~~

~~POLICY E33 Archaeological Sites of National Importance~~

~~PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD ADVERSELY AFFECT SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENTS OR OTHER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE OR THEIR SETTINGS WILL NOT BE PERMITTED.~~

~~POLICY E34 Archaeological Sites of Local Importance~~

~~WHERE IMPORTANT ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES ARE KNOWN OR THOUGHT TO EXIST WITHIN A POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT SITE, THE DEVELOPER WILL BE REQUIRED TO CARRY OUT AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD EVALUATION AND TO SUBMIT THE RESULTS OF THE EVALUATION AS PART OF THE PLANNING APPLICATION. PROPOSALS WHICH COULD AFFECT ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS OF LOCAL IMPORTANCE WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT THEY ALLOW FOR THE PRESERVATION IN SITU OF THE REMAINS OR, WHERE THE COUNCIL DECIDES THAT SUCH PRESERVATION IS NOT JUSTIFIED, THAT APPROPRIATE AND SATISFACTORY ARRANGEMENTS ARE MADE FOR THE EXCAVATION AND~~

~~RECORDING OF THE REMAINS AND THE PUBLICATION OF THE RESULTS.~~

- 3.87 ~~The Borough contains archaeological remains of various ages and descriptions, as might be expected in an area of long habitation. These remains are a finite and irreplaceable resource which is part of our national and local heritage and culture. A small number enjoy special protection as scheduled ancient monuments of national importance, as identified by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. English Heritage's ten year monuments protection programme will result in an increase in the number of scheduled ancient monuments. At the time of Plan preparation the scheduled monuments in the Borough are as follows:-~~

~~Medieval site, Archdeacon Newton;
Castle Hill earthworks, Bishopston;
Ketton Bridge, Brafferton;
Skerne Bridge, Darlington;
Coniscliffe Road Waterworks, Darlington;
Camp on Shackleton Hill, Heighington;
Smotherlaw round barrow, High Coniscliffe;
Croft Bridge, Hurworth;
Earthworks of manor house, Low Dinsdale;
Deserted village of West Hartburn, Middleton St. George;
Piercebridge Roman station;
Piercebridge Bridge;
Shrunken medieval village, Sadberge;
All Saints Church, Sockburn;
Summerhouse earthworks;
Deserted village, Walworth;
Deserted medieval village, Ulaby;
Tower Hill Motte, Middleton St. George;
Coatham Mundeville medieval village.~~

- 3.88 ~~Further remains of national importance may come to light during the course of development works. In all these cases, physical preservation of the remains in situ will be sought. In areas where the possibility of such finds has been identified by, or at, planning application stage the applicant will be required to enter into a legal agreement providing adequate safeguards.~~

- 3.89 ~~Most archaeological remains in the Borough are of more local importance. Some have been identified through earlier work, but many are in locations where remains are simply thought by archaeologists to be likely to exist. These include the oldest developed parts of the Borough, in particular the town centre and villages, where human settlements have been known to exist for many centuries. Many of these are designated conservation areas. Opportunities for investigation usually only occur when sites are undergoing redevelopment. The field evaluation required by Policy E34 will help to define the character and extent of remains, and indicate the weight which should be attached to their preservation. Thus it will help the Council to decide if the remains should be preserved in situ or through excavation and recording, and will indicate the degree to which the proposed development is likely to affect the remains and the options available for minimising or avoiding damage.~~

- 3.90 ~~The Council, with the assistance of its specialist archaeological advisers, will endeavour to advise developers at the earliest opportunity if a proposal might affect archaeological remains. However, it is ultimately the responsibility of prospective developers to make their own enquiries during initial research into a site as to its archaeological sensitivity, and they should consult the Council for advice at the earliest possible stage of the planning process. Consideration will be given to the feasibility of defining sites of local importance on the Proposals Map at each review of the Plan, as information becomes available.~~

~~POLICY E35 - Conservation Areas~~

~~PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT IN OR ADJACENT TO CONSERVATION AREAS WILL BE PERMITTED WHERE THEY PRESERVE OR ENHANCE THE CHARACTER OR APPEARANCE OF THE AREAS. IN ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS THE COUNCIL WILL PAY SPECIAL ATTENTION TO THE LOSS OF GARDENS OR OPEN SPACES, TO MATTERS OF DETAILED DESIGN AND TO THE USE OF TRADITIONAL MATERIALS. FULL OR PARTIAL DEMOLITION OF A BUILDING IN A CONSERVATION AREA WILL BE PERMITTED ONLY IF:~~

- ~~1. BECAUSE OF ITS DESIGN IT MAKES LITTLE OR NO CONTRIBUTION TO THE CHARACTER OR APPEARANCE OF THE AREA; OR~~
- ~~2. IT IS WHOLLY BEYOND REPAIR OR OTHERWISE INCAPABLE OF REASONABLE BENEFICIAL USE; AND~~
- ~~3. THERE ARE SATISFACTORY DETAILED PLANS FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE.~~

~~WHERE APPROPRIATE, THE GRANT OF DEMOLITION CONSENT WILL BE SUBJECT TO A CONDITION REQUIRING THAT DEMOLITION SHALL NOT TAKE PLACE UNTIL A CONTRACT FOR THE EXECUTION OF THE REDEVELOPMENT WORKS HAS BEEN ENTERED INTO AND PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THOSE WORKS HAS BEEN GRANTED. SCHEMES FOR THE ENHANCEMENT OF CONSERVATION AREAS WILL BE CARRIED OUT AS NECESSARY.~~

POLICY E36 - Designation of Further Conservation Areas

THE COUNCIL WILL DESIGNATE FURTHER CONSERVATION AREAS, OR EXTEND EXISTING AREAS, WHERE ADDITIONAL PROTECTION IS REQUIRED, GIVING PRIORITY TO:

1. EXTENSIONS TO VILLAGE CONSERVATION AREAS TO INCORPORATE LAND WHICH PROVIDES THE LANDSCAPE SETTING FOR THE VILLAGE;
2. SMALL GROUPS OF HOUSES IN THE COUNTRYSIDE WHOSE SETTING WOULD BE HARMED BY FURTHER DEVELOPMENT;
3. RESIDENTIAL PARTS OF THE URBAN AREA WHICH REPRESENT THE TOWN'S VICTORIAN AND EDWARDIAN BUILDING INHERITANCE.

3.91 It is a duty of local planning authorities to designate areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, as conservation areas. At the time of preparation of the Plan there are six conservation areas designated for parts of the urban area of Darlington, and a further ten for specific rural villages. It is also a duty of local planning authorities to prepare schemes for the enhancement of conservation areas. The Council has carried out enhancement schemes mainly in the town centre and North Road Station conservation areas; further work will be carried out as opportunities arise.

3.92 The Council will consider making Article 4 Directions under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order to restrict permitted development rights in those conservation areas where additional protection from the damaging effects of inappropriate alterations to buildings on the character of the area is required. The Stanhope Road / Grange Road Conservation Area is the priority for consideration, followed by the village conservation areas. The Council will pay particular attention to proposals resulting in the loss of garden or other spaces, as well as to design and materials, because such losses can be particularly harmful to character and appearance, especially in village conservation areas.

POLICY E37 - Enhancement of the Built Environment

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES WILL BE CARRIED OUT IN THE BOROUGH, WITH PRIORITY BEING GIVEN TO THE TOWN CENTRE AND CONSERVATION AREAS.

3.93 It is not only buildings which contribute to an attractive built environment, but also urban

spaces created by the grouping of buildings. The Council is committed to improving the appearance of the Borough as a whole, and to enhancing its character wherever possible, but attention will be especially focused on the town centre and on conservation areas. The Council recognises the need to maintain and enhance the vitality and attractiveness of the town centre. Shopping, transport and conservation policies are directed towards this objective, and environmental improvements will also help to achieve it.

- 3.94 Other policies, for example enhancement of the River Skerne corridor (E18) and maintaining the appearance of the town from main travel routes (E16) are also important. The Council will continue improving the appearance and security of town centre car parks.
- 3.95 Some of the work will be a continuation of schemes already underway. For example, considerable progress has been made in upgrading the most complete of the old town centre yards, in line with a detailed environmental improvement scheme adopted in 1990, but more needs to be done to realise fully the area's potential. And the recent repair and restoration of the turn-of-the-century ornamental stonework and railings on High Row needs to be followed by a comprehensive repaving and landscaping scheme in order to maximise the benefits of pedestrianisation there.
- 3.96 The successful implementation of all the environmental improvement schemes will depend on the support and co-operation of many bodies, private and public, and not only on the resources of the Borough Council. Detailed proposals will be presented for public discussion before new schemes are finalised.

POLICY E38 - Alterations to Business Premises

ALTERATIONS TO RETAIL AND BUSINESS PREMISES, INCLUDING THE INSTALLATION OF SHOPFRONTS, SECURITY MEASURES AND SIGNING WILL BE PERMITTED IF THERE WOULD BE NO MATERIAL ADVERSE EFFECT ON THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE BUILDING, OR OF THE STREET SCENE IN WHICH THE BUILDING IS LOCATED. PROPOSALS WILL BE ASSESSED AGAINST THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:

- 1. EXISTING SHOPFRONTS WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO THE CHARACTER OF THE BUILDING OR STREET SCENE SHOULD BE RETAINED AND RESTORED RATHER THAN BEING REPLACED;**
 - 2. NEW SHOPFRONTS OR ALTERATIONS TO EXISTING SHOPFRONTS SHOULD RESPECT THE SCALE, PROPORTIONS AND CHARACTER OF THE BUILDING AND OF NEIGHBOURING BUILDINGS AND SHOPFRONTS;**
 - 3. SECURITY MEASURES WHICH ARE INTEGRAL ELEMENTS OF THE OVERALL SHOPFRONT DESIGN, INCLUDING STALLRISERS AND SPECIALIST GLAZING, WILL BE PREFERRED; IF FURTHER SECURITY MEASURES ARE ESSENTIAL, GRILLES OR LATTICE SHUTTERS WITH HOUSINGS INTEGRATED INTO THE SHOPFRONT DESIGN WILL BE PREFERRED TO SOLID SHUTTERS;**
 - 4. SIGNING SHOULD BE CO-ORDINATED AND BE AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE OVERALL SHOPFRONT DESIGN.**
- 3.97 The requirement for sensitive and well-mannered development which respects its setting has been established earlier in this chapter of the Plan. Shop fronts, signing, and the installation of security grilles and shutters are aspects of design which can have a profound impact on the appearance of shopping streets and commercial areas. Problems most often arise from the imposition of standard corporate designs on buildings without regard to their style, scale or setting. Installations which are specially designed for the particular building are more likely to be acceptable. Detailed guidance on the design of shopfronts and security measures is available.

POLICY E39 - Advertisements in Built-Up Areas

ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT WILL BE GRANTED WITHIN BUILT-UP AREAS EXCEPT WHERE THERE WOULD BE AN ADVERSE EFFECT ON AMENITY OR PUBLIC SAFETY, JUDGED AGAINST THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:

- 1. THE NEED FOR THE SCALE, LOCATION AND DESIGN OF ADVERTISEMENTS TO RESPECT THE CHARACTER, APPEARANCE AND ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS OF THE BUILDING OR OTHER STRUCTURE ON WHICH THEY ARE TO BE DISPLAYED;**
- 2. THE NEED TO SAFEGUARD THE VISUAL AMENITY OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD WHERE AN ADVERTISEMENT IS TO BE DISPLAYED, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE IMPACT OF THE PROPOSED ADVERTISEMENT AND ITS CUMULATIVE IMPACT TOGETHER WITH OTHER ADVERTISEMENTS IN THE AREA AND THE PARTICULAR CHARACTER OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD;**
- 3. THE NEED TO PRESERVE OR ENHANCE THE DISTINCTIVE CHARACTER OF CONSERVATION AREAS, AND TO ENSURE THAT THE SPECIAL CHARACTER OF LISTED BUILDINGS AND THEIR SETTINGS IS NOT HARMED;**
- 4. THE NEED TO PROTECT THE AMENITY AND APPEARANCE OF RESIDENTIAL AREAS AND THE VILLAGES;**
- 5. THE NEED TO MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE THE APPEARANCE OF MAIN TRAVEL CORRIDORS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY E16, INCLUDING THE MAIN ROAD APPROACHES INTO THE URBAN AREA AND RAIL CORRIDORS;**
- 6. THE NEED TO AVOID CLUTTER; AND,**
- 7. THE NEED TO ENSURE THAT ADVERTISEMENTS DO NOT CAUSE CONFUSION OR DISTRACTION TO DRIVERS AND OTHER HIGHWAY USERS TO THE EXTENT THAT THEY POSE A THREAT TO HIGHWAY SAFETY.**

POLICY E40 - Advertisements in the Countryside

ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT WILL BE GRANTED FOR SIGNS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE WHICH ADVERTISE THE LOCATION OF RURAL BUSINESSES AND TOURIST AND RECREATION FACILITIES PROVIDED THAT:

- 1. THEY ARE DESIGNED AND SITED TO HARMONISE WITH THEIR SETTING AND DO NOT HARM THE RURAL CHARACTER OF ROAD FRONTAGES OR THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE WIDER LANDSCAPE;**
- 2. ON MAIN ROAD FRONTAGES THERE ARE NO MORE THAN TWO SIGNS, ONE FACING IN EACH DIRECTION, LOCATED WITHIN 200m OF THE RELEVANT JUNCTION;**
- 3. ON MINOR ROAD FRONTAGES THEY ARE REMINDER SIGNS ONLY AND NECESSARY FOR HIGHWAY SAFETY;**
- 4. THEY ARE NON-ILLUMINATED AND DO NOT RESULT IN CLUTTER; AND,**
- 5. THEY DO NOT POSE A THREAT TO HIGHWAY SAFETY.**

POLICY E41 - Poster Hoardings

ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT FOR LARGE SCALE POSTER HOARDINGS WILL BE GRANTED PROVIDED THAT:

- 1. THE SITE IS NOT WITHIN THE OPEN COUNTRYSIDE, THE RURAL VILLAGES, RESIDENTIAL OR PREDOMINANTLY RESIDENTIAL AREAS, AREAS OF PLEASANT OPEN SPACE OR WOODED TOWNSCAPE OR THOSE PARTS OF CONSERVATION AREAS WHICH ARE NOT IN PREDOMINANTLY SHOPPING OR BUSINESS USE;**
- 2. THE SCHEME INCLUDES, WHERE APPROPRIATE, GOOD QUALITY HARD AND SOFT LANDSCAPING; AND,**
- 3. THE PROPOSAL SATISFIES THE CRITERIA SET OUT IN POLICY E39.**

- 3.98 Advertisements can have a major impact on the appearance of buildings and the wider locality. Well-designed signs, tailored to their locations, can inform and attract the public without

damaging their settings. The intention of Policies E39, E40 and E41 is to protect visual amenity and highway safety, reduce unsightly clutter on buildings and to protect the architectural character and quality of buildings and townscapes in general, and conservation areas, residential areas and the villages in particular, and to protect the character and appearance of the countryside. Further, more detailed, guidance will be issued. This policy is reinforced by the design requirements of Policy E38.

- 3.99 As well as commercial advertisements, the Council is concerned about the detrimental effects of highway signs, which are sometimes uncoordinated and result in a cluttered appearance, especially at road junctions. Tourist information signs, too, may inform at the expense of damage to the original atmosphere of a place which first attracts the tourists. The Council will encourage co-ordinated signing schemes which provide sufficient information without clutter.
- 3.100 Parts of the Borough, including the rural area, and the villages, and some of the urban conservation areas, may merit the stricter controls over the size and height of advertisements that would be provided by their declaration as Areas of Special Advertisement Control.

POLICY E42 - Street Furniture

THE COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE PROPOSALS FOR ITEMS OF STREET FURNITURE WHICH MINIMISE ADVERSE IMPACT ON THEIR SURROUNDINGS WITH PARTICULAR REGARD TO NUMBERS, SITING AND APPEARANCE. PROPOSALS WHICH WOULD DETRACT FROM THE CHARACTER OR APPEARANCE OF LISTED BUILDINGS, CONSERVATION AREAS AND THE COUNTRYSIDE, BE DETRIMENTAL TO RESIDENTIAL AMENITY OR INTERFERE WITH PEDESTRIAN FLOWS WILL BE DISCOURAGED, AND, WHERE SUBJECT TO PLANNING CONTROL, WILL NOT BE PERMITTED. THE COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE THE PLANNED CO-ORDINATION OF STREET FURNITURE WHERE CONCENTRATIONS OCCUR, AND THE REMOVAL OF INAPPROPRIATE EXISTING ITEMS. ITEMS OF HISTORICAL INTEREST SHOULD BE RETAINED WHERE POSSIBLE.

- 3.101 Street furniture can take many forms and can be the responsibility of a large number of different organisations, each with their own requirements. Some items such as lamp-posts, bollards, traffic signs and signals, guard-rails and bus stops are essential to the functioning of the street itself. Others such as telephone kiosks, poles and cabinets and pillar boxes are important parts of the communications system. Others still, such as seats, litter bins, cycle parking stands, trees, planting boxes and pedestrian direction signs are added to streets to make them more pleasant places. The overall result of having a large number of items of street furniture in close proximity can, however, be one of visual clutter and inconvenience to pedestrians and people with disabilities. Only a small proportion of items of street furniture require prior planning approval from the Council as planning authority but the Council will try to encourage all relevant organisations to minimise any adverse effect on amenity particularly of the more sensitive areas through its other functions, including town centre management.

POLICY E43 - Vacant Upper Floors

THE COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE OWNERS AND OCCUPIERS TO FIND APPROPRIATE USES FOR VACANT UPPER FLOORS OF COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES, IN PARTICULAR LISTED BUILDINGS AND THOSE IN CONSERVATION AREAS. WHERE APPROPRIATE, HAVING REGARD TO THE LOCATION OF THE PROPERTY, ITS RELATIONSHIP TO NEIGHBOURING PROPERTIES AND THE PROPOSED USE OF UPPER FLOORS, THE COUNCIL WILL CONSIDER THE RELAXATION OF NORMAL CAR PARKING, LAYOUT, DAYLIGHT AND EXTERNAL SPACE STANDARDS.

- 3.102 The upper floors of older commercial properties, particularly town centre shops, are frequently unused or under-used. This can lead to inadequate maintenance of the fabric of a building, which may eventually result in disrepair and premature demolition. The potential for re-use of upper floors is sometimes limited by technical difficulties, security problems, safety regulations, etc, but wherever possible the Council will assist owners to find new uses. Generally speaking, restrictions of use on retail frontages do not apply above ground floor

level. Appropriate uses may include offices or residential accommodation. In the case of the latter, schemes for 'living over the shop' could make a small but valuable contribution to the Borough's housing needs.

POLICY E44 - Architectural Salvage

WHERE DEVELOPMENT INVOLVES THE DEMOLITION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS OR STRUCTURES, THE COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE THE SALVAGE OF ANY FEATURES OR MATERIALS OF ARCHITECTURAL VALUE OR INTEREST, AND THEIR REUSE WITHIN THE DEVELOPMENT OR ELSEWHERE.

- 3.103 The re-use of building materials is encouraged in general by Policy E24. Policy E44 is concerned with particular features of buildings to be demolished which are of architectural value or interest, and may also have a local cultural significance as well-known townscape features. Such features may include doors, windows, staircases, signs or unusual architectural detailing and materials.

~~**POLICY E45 - Development and Art**~~

~~**THE COUNCIL WILL, THROUGH NEGOTIATION WITH DEVELOPERS, ENCOURAGE THEM TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE FUNDING OF PUBLIC ART BY COMMISSIONING AND INSTALLING NEW WORKS OF ART IN VISUALLY PROMINENT LOCATIONS WITHIN THEIR DEVELOPMENTS.**~~

- ~~3.104 Art in the environment may range from the sculptures and murals that are generally perceived as art works, to artists advising on the design of playgrounds and landscaping, or on housing revitalisation schemes. The opportunities for artists to contribute to the creation of identity and sense of place in the environment, and to enhancing image and civic pride, are wide ranging.~~
- ~~3.105 The 'percent for art' approach, of encouraging developers to allocate a proportion of the capital costs of developments to the commissioning of new works by artists and craftspeople for incorporation in the schemes, is one which the Council is now pursuing in relation to large retail and commercial proposals.~~

PUBLIC PROTECTION

~~**POLICY E46 - Safety and Security**~~

~~**PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING THE REFURBISHMENT OF EXISTING BUILDINGS, WILL NORMALLY BE REQUIRED TO BE DESIGNED TO CREATE A SAFE AND SECURE ENVIRONMENT AND TO REDUCE OPPORTUNITIES FOR CRIME.**~~

- ~~3.106 The sensitive design of buildings and landscaping can reduce the opportunities for crime; it can also reduce the fear of crime, which is a serious problem affecting the quality of life of many people, particularly for women and the elderly. Safety and security considerations may influence the design and equipping of buildings, the layout of car parks, the form and arrangement of private garden spaces and pedestrian ways, and lighting and landscaping details. Developers should consult the Police Architectural Liaison Officer at an early stage of the design process, so that safety and security provisions are designed into the scheme from the outset.~~

~~**POLICY E47 - Contaminated and Unstable Land and Development**~~

~~**PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT ON LAND WHICH IS LIKELY TO BE CONTAMINATED, UNSTABLE OR A FORMER LANDFILL SITE WILL BE PERMITTED ONLY IF THE APPLICANT CAN DEMONSTRATE THAT THE SITE IS OR WILL BE MADE SAFE FOR THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND SURROUNDINGS. PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT NEAR TO SOURCES OF POTENTIAL POLLUTION, AND IN PARTICULAR WITHIN 250m OF LANDFILL SITES, WILL BE PERMITTED ONLY IF THE APPLICANT CAN DEMONSTRATE**~~

~~**THAT THE DEVELOPMENT CAN BE CARRIED OUT AND USED SAFELY.**~~

~~3.107 A number of sites within the Borough are contaminated or unstable as a result of previous uses. It is desirable that such sites which are otherwise suitable for development are brought back into productive use, but it is essential that the health and well-being of people working on the site or the end users of any development are not put at risk.~~

~~3.108 Where a site is known to have contamination or landfill related problems, the applicant will be required to investigate conditions on the site, and submit a report on the investigation methods, results, and the measures needed to enable development to be carried out safely, before planning permission is granted. Investigations should include consideration of the need to protect the quality and quantity of groundwater supplies. The Council will have regard to Government and other appropriate guidance on the assessment and monitoring of landfill and contaminated land sites when assessing such reports. In considering outline applications, sufficient information will be required to enable the Council to be satisfied that the development can be carried out and used safely, and that any outstanding problems are capable of solution and can be dealt with as matters of detail.~~

~~3.109 Gypsum, which is readily dissolved by flowing underground water, underlies parts of the Plan area. Developers will need to satisfy themselves that their proposals for development will not be affected by this geological feature.~~

~~**POLICY E48 Noise Generating / Polluting Development**~~

~~**PLANNING PERMISSION WILL NOT BE GRANTED FOR DEVELOPMENT WHICH, BY REASON OF THE EMISSION OF NOISE OR OTHER POLLUTANT, WOULD BE MATERIALLY HARMFUL TO THE AMENITIES OF EXISTING OR PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL OR OTHER POLLUTION SENSITIVE AREAS.**~~

~~**POLICY E49 Noise Sensitive Development**~~

~~**DEVELOPMENT IN LOCATIONS IN WHICH ITS OCCUPIERS WOULD BE MATERIALLY AFFECTED BY NOISE WILL NORMALLY BE REQUIRED TO INCORPORATE MEASURES TO MITIGATE ITS EFFECTS. PLANNING PERMISSION WILL NOT BE GRANTED WHERE AN APPROPRIATE AMELIORATION OF NOISE LEVELS IS NOT PREDICTED THROUGH THE USE OF SUCH MEASURES.**~~

~~3.110 Noise is a form of pollution which can impair people's quality of life, especially where it affects residential areas or other noise sensitive developments such as schools, hospitals and open spaces. Some sources of noise, such as that arising from anti social behaviour or the barking of dogs, are beyond the scope of development plans. The effects of extraneous sources, including road and rail traffic and industrial processes, can be controlled by locating new residential or other noise sensitive development away from them, or by preventing the location of noise generating development within or close to existing or proposed residential or other noise sensitive areas.~~

~~3.111 Where residential areas and noise sources cannot be separated, a range of measures may be required to reduce noise to acceptable levels, including noise 'buffer' zones, mounding, landscaping and secondary double glazing. In new development, the design and orientation of buildings can also reduce the effects of noise. Whilst making provision to reduce noise inside dwellings, the importance of gardens and other external spaces as components of the residential environment should not be overlooked. Local shops which are normally an acceptable form of development in residential areas, can cause noise and traffic disturbance. Where appropriate, conditions will be imposed to limit hours of operation and servicing and prevent disturbance during 'unsocial' hours.~~

~~3.112 When assessing a proposal for residential development near a transport related or mixed transport and industrial related source of noise, the Council will determine into which of the four noise exposure categories (NECs) identified below the proposed site falls, taking into~~

~~account both day and night time noise levels. In determining and conditioning development proposals, the Council will then have regard to the guidance for each NEC, as follows:~~

~~NEC A: noise need not be a determining factor in granting planning permission, although the noise level at the high end of the category should not be regarded as a desirable level;~~

~~NEC B: noise should be taken into account when determining applications and, where appropriate, conditions should be imposed to mitigate the effects of noise;~~

~~NEC C: planning permission should not normally be granted, but where it is considered that permission should be given, conditions should ensure a commensurate level of protection against noise;~~

~~NEC D: planning permission should normally be refused.~~

~~The table below gives the noise levels which define each of the NECs, measured in $L_{Aeq,T}$ at the position of the proposed dwellings, well away from existing buildings and at 1.2m to 1.5m above the ground levels, for both day and night time periods.~~

NOISE LEVELS CORRESPONDING TO THE NOISE EXPOSURE CATEGORIES FOR NEW DWELLINGS $L_{Aeq,T}$ ^{dB}				
NOISE SOURCE	NEC A	NEC B	NEC C	NEC D
road traffic				
07.00-23.00 hrs	<55	55-63	63-72	>72
23.00-07.00 hrs	<45	45-57	57-66	>66
rail traffic				
07.00-23.00 hrs	<55	55-66	66-74	>74
23.00-07.00 hrs	<45	45-59	59-66	>66
air traffic				
07.00-23.00 hrs	<57	57-66	66-72	>72
23.00-07.00 hrs	<48	48-57	57-66	>66
mixed sources				
07.00-23.00 hrs	<55	55-63	63-72	>72
23.00-07.00 hrs	<45	45-57	57-66	>66

~~3.113 The NEC system is applicable only to proposed residential development adjacent to transport or mixed transport and industrial noise sources. The impact of industrial noise will have to be individually assessed, because both the noise and people's response to it can be so variable. Assessment will generally be based on appropriate guidance, such as British Standard 4142:1990 'Method for Rating Industrial Noise Affecting Mixed Residential and Industrial Areas', and will involve a comparison of the measured or predicted noise level (in $L_{Aeq,T}$) against the existing background noise level. The difference in levels will not be expected to be greater than 5-10 dB(A) but in any event should not exceed the levels identified for mixed sources in the above table. Non-residential noise sensitive developments are variable in their character and layout, so that the impact of noise cannot be assessed by applying the NEC principle. Specific guidance is published for hospitals and schools, and developers should refer to these sources instead.~~

~~3.114 Other forms of pollution can also impair people's quality of life and damage the environment. Responsibility for controlling pollution at source lies with the Environment Agency, the Council in its environmental health capacity, or other agencies. As local planning authority, the Council will reinforce these specific controls by seeking to limit the damaging effects of pollution on people and the environment through the location and design of potentially polluting development.~~

~~POLICY E50 - Hazardous Installations~~

~~PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT IN THE VICINITY OF NOTIFIED HAZARDOUS INSTALLATIONS WILL NORMALLY ONLY BE PERMITTED IF THE COUNCIL IS SATISFIED THAT THERE WOULD BE NO INCREASE IN THE POPULATION POTENTIALLY AT RISK.~~

~~3.115 The Council has been notified by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) of five installations in~~

~~the Borough handling hazardous substances. These are located at Aycliffe Industrial Estate (storage of vinyl chloride monomer), Broken Scar Water Works (chlorine storage), Valley Street gas holder (natural gas storage), Trees Park Village at Teesside Airport (liquid petroleum gas storage), and Gatherley Moor Reservoir (chlorine storage). The HSE has drawn consultation zones around each of these installations and the Council will seek their advice on development proposals within them, with the aim of precisely defining any area within which certain classes of development must be restricted. Once defined, such areas will be shown on the Proposals Map on a review of the Plan.~~

POLICY E51 - Broken Scar Development Limitation Zone

EXCEPT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TEES GRANGE FARM SITE, NO FURTHER PROPOSALS FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OR OTHER DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD RESULT IN AN INCREASE IN THE 'AT RISK' POPULATION WILL BE PERMITTED WITHIN THE DEVELOPMENT LIMITATION ZONE AROUND BROKEN SCAR WATER WORKS, OTHER THAN FOR SINGLE DWELLINGS ON INFILL SITES, UP TO A CUMULATIVE MAXIMUM OF FIVE DWELLINGS, WHICH WILL BE CONSIDERED ON THEIR MERITS.

- 3.116 The use of chlorine is a routine part of the water treatment process, and the storage of chlorine at Broken Scar does not pose a greater threat, per se, to people living in its vicinity than is the case with other Notifiable Hazards. It is the extensive residential developments in the area in recent years which have taken up the acceptable risk margin and led to the conclusion that further development involving an increase in the population which could be affected by any incident should be strictly limited once the Tees Grange Farm and Hummersknott housing sites have been developed. The term 'at risk population' refers to people who, because of their situation, could not be easily organised and evacuated in an emergency. It includes residents of private houses and nursing homes, hospital patients and children at school. Single dwelling infill development, up to a maximum of five new dwellings within the zone, which is identified on the Proposals Map, excluding Tees Grange Farm, may be acceptable if suitable sites are identified.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

- 3.117 Telecommunications are an essential part of modern life and the continuing developments in technology have changing effects on the environment. Minor development does not need planning permission but policies are needed for larger new structures and other equipment for transmitting and receiving signals.

~~**POLICY E52 - New Masts**~~

~~**PROPOSALS FOR NEW MASTS OR OTHER STRUCTURES FOR TELECOMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT WILL BE CONSIDERED HAVING REGARD TO THE SPECIAL SITING, TECHNICAL AND OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS OF THE EQUIPMENT, THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROPOSAL AS PART OF A NATIONAL NETWORK AND THE NEED TO MINIMISE VISUAL INTRUSION AND DAMAGE, AND WILL BE APPROVED PROVIDED THAT:**~~

- ~~**1. THERE IS NO EXISTING MAST, STRUCTURE OR BUILDING THAT CAN BE SATISFACTORILY USED FOR THE PURPOSE;**~~
- ~~**2. THE PROPOSAL WILL REPLACE EXISTING MASTS OR STRUCTURES, AND WILL FACILITATE FUTURE NETWORK DEVELOPMENT BY REDUCING THE NEED FOR ADDITIONAL MASTS OR STRUCTURES;**~~
- ~~**3. IF THE SITE IS LOCATED IN THE AREA OF HIGH LANDSCAPE VALUE, A CONSERVATION AREA OR WITHIN THE SETTING OF A LISTED BUILDING, THERE IS NO SUITABLE ALTERNATIVE SITE OUTSIDE SUCH AREAS; AND**~~

~~4. THE PROPOSAL IS DESIGNED AND LANDSCAPED TO MINIMISE ANY ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE APPEARANCE AND AMENITY OF ITS SURROUNDINGS.~~

~~3.118 Some equipment needs to be in prominent, often rural, locations for operational reasons but technology is improving and it is important that the visual impact of new masts is kept to a minimum. A balance needs to be struck between visual amenity and telecommunications technology. In sensitive locations, such as the Area of High Landscape Value, applicants should show that other possibilities have been explored first. Proposals for all masts within 3km of Teesside Airport must be notified to the Civil Aviation Authority.~~

POLICY E53 - Satellite Antennae

PERMISSION WILL BE GRANTED WHERE REQUIRED FOR SATELLITE ANTENNAE ON DWELLINGS AND OTHER BUILDINGS PROVIDED THAT:

- 1. THE SITING, DESIGN AND COLOUR MINIMISES VISUAL IMPACT ON THE BUILDING;**
- 2. THERE IS NO MATERIAL ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE AMENITY OF NEIGHBOURING BUILDINGS.**

SHARED SYSTEMS SHOULD NORMALLY BE INSTALLED ON BUILDINGS CONTAINING MORE THAN ONE DWELLING OR BUSINESS.

3.119 Most dishes and other antennae do not require permission provided that they comply with the criteria contained in the General Development Order. However, antennae which do not meet the criteria, or any on listed buildings, require careful control in order to minimise their impact. A proliferation of dishes on blocks of flats, offices and other mixed use buildings must be avoided. The Council issues detailed guidance for developers and householders.

CHAPTER 4:

HOUSING

BACKGROUND

OBJECTIVES

Policies and Proposals:

HOUSING PROVISION

NEW HOUSING

HOUSING IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

NEW HOUSING DESIGN

EXISTING RESIDENTIAL AREAS

SPECIALIST HOUSING

CHAPTER 4: HOUSING

BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The 1991 Census enumerated a resident population for the Borough of 98,900, of whom 86,300 lived in the urban area, making Darlington the largest town in the then county of Durham. The nearest larger urban areas are the Teesside and Tyneside conurbations and York.
- 4.2 The figures show only a slight increase over the previous ten years, from 98,700 in 1981. However, the number of dwellings in 1991 was 41,567, an increase of 3,027 since 1981. Households are getting smaller, fewer people are sharing homes, and there has been a significant increase in the numbers of young and old.
- 4.3 The rate of construction of new dwellings has, in recent years, exceeded that anticipated in the current Durham County Structure Plan.
- 4.4 Strategic planning policy in recent years has encouraged new housing development to be located in and around the town, with limited infill in some of the larger villages, and only essential housing in the countryside.
- 4.5 The Council has constantly sought to ensure that there is a good supply of housing land available in a variety of locations. There is regular liaison with private house builders, housing associations and others to seek agreement on housing land availability in accordance with Government advice.
- 4.6 In parallel with its functions as planning authority, the Council as housing authority is responsible for preparing and reviewing a Housing Strategy Statement. This addresses the nature and location of housing need and demand in the Borough. The Plan provides a longer term land use planning framework to assist the implementation of the Strategy.

OBJECTIVES

- 4.7 The Council's objectives for housing, to be pursued through the policies and proposals of the Plan, are:
 - i) To make provision for sufficient housing to meet the needs of local people and people moving into the area;
 - ii) To allocate sufficient land to meet the need for new housing up to 2006;
 - iii) To concentrate new development in or adjacent to the town;
 - iv) To encourage housing development on suitable disused or under-used land and buildings;
 - v) To limit new development in the villages in order to maintain their character;
 - vi) To make provision for enough affordable housing to meet the needs of those who are unable to buy or rent at market rates;
 - vii) To make provision for housing for those with special needs e.g. the elderly, people with disabilities and those requiring special care, particularly near the town centre and other centres;
 - viii) To improve the environment and housing conditions of older housing areas.

Policies and Proposals:

HOUSING PROVISION

POLICY H1 – Supply of Housing Land

~~A SUPPLY OF LAND ADEQUATE TO MEET HOUSING REQUIREMENTS FOR AT LEAST FIVE YEARS AHEAD WILL BE CONSTANTLY MAINTAINED. THIS SHOULD MAKE PROVISION FOR A WIDE RANGE OF DWELLING TYPES AND SIZES IN A VARIETY OF LOCATIONS TO MEET IDENTIFIED NEED AND DEMAND FROM ALL SECTIONS OF THE COMMUNITY.~~

- ~~4.8 The Borough Council has undertaken jointly with the House Builders Federation and the Tees Valley authorities a study of land availability for private housing development in the Borough over the five year period 1997-2002. The Study indicates that using the housing requirement figure for Darlington of 4,450 dwellings over the period 1991-2006 contained in the Darlington Structure Plan as the basis for calculating the Borough's housing requirement over the study period, the Borough has an adequate supply of sites to meet projected requirements to beyond 2002.~~
- ~~4.9 Some of this land has planning permission. The balance is committed by development plan allocations, or on a non-statutory basis e.g. supplementary planning guidance or other Council resolution. Sites in all of these categories are identified in the Council's Housing Land Schedule, which is reviewed annually.~~
- ~~4.10 The Council will encourage developers to make provision for all sections of the community. Their attention will be drawn to needs identified by the Council as housing authority through, for example, the Housing Strategy Statement and local surveys.~~
- ~~4.11 Encouragement will also be given to the development of smaller sites within easy access of public transport, shops and other community facilities for housing to meet the specialist needs of, for example, the elderly, single people, those with disabilities or those in need of care. Provision of a mix of housing types will be encouraged on the larger new housing sites. The Council will normally expect development to maintain existing densities or, where it is in keeping with the established residential character and appearance of the area, to increase them.~~
- ~~4.12 Depending on the outcome of a Borough wide housing needs assessment, provision of low-cost housing may also be sought on some of the larger new housing sites (Policy H9). Special provision is made for exceptional cases where a need for housing in the rural areas which cannot be met by other Plan policies is identified (Policy H10).~~
- ~~4.13 Provision is also made for housing suitable for people with disabilities (Policy H14), accommodation for smaller households through the sub-division of larger dwellings (Policy H18), hostels and accommodation for those in need of care (Policy H19), and gypsy sites (Proposal H20 and Policy H21).~~

POLICY H2 – Level of Housing Provision

~~LAND, COMPRISING SITES OF 0.4ha OR ABOVE, WILL BE ALLOCATED TO ACCOMMODATE APPROXIMATELY 1000 NEW DWELLINGS BETWEEN 1995 AND 2006. THE SITES ARE IDENTIFIED IN PROPOSAL H5.~~

- ~~4.14 This provision is additional to the anticipated contribution from sites already with planning permission and other unidentified sites which is set out as follows:~~

Category	April 1995	April 1999
Completions April 1991 onwards	917	2,479⁺
Sites under construction, with planning permission, and otherwise committed	1,634	578
Small sites to March 2006	285	245
Windfall sites to March 2006	225	175
Total	3,161	3,477

⁺ Allows for 63 dwellings built on allocated sites, and 10 dwellings demolished, between April 1995 and March 1999

~~4.15 The overall requirement for the years 1991-2006 is for 4,450 new dwellings to be completed. It allows for 4,400 additional houses to accommodate an increase in population to 101,000 and a reduction in average household size. The balance provides for a relatively small number of dwellings to be demolished. It allows for continuation of housebuilding at the rate experienced over the years 1980-1995. The Plan as adopted identified a requirement for land to be allocated for approximately 1300 dwellings, based on the April 1995 figures set out above. The Plan as altered identifies a requirement for approximately 1000 dwellings, based on the April 1999 figures. The latter take into account higher than previously anticipated contributions, to 2006 from sites under construction, with planning permission and otherwise committed, and from April 1995 to March 1999 from completions on small sites and windfall sites.~~

~~4.16 Small sites are those under 0.4 hectares, together with conversions. These are not identified except in the area covered by the Central Area Inset (Proposals Map, Map 4) (Proposal H5).~~

~~4.17 The 'sites under construction, with planning permission and otherwise committed' category refers only to sites of 0.4ha or more. The category only includes sites which, following a recent re-appraisal for the Plan, are considered to be likely to be developed by 2006.~~

~~4.18 Since 1981, the number of dwellings built on small sites and the number of conversions has gradually increased, reflecting an increased emphasis on the provision of housing to meet the needs of smaller households and the development or redevelopment of smaller urban sites. This trend is expected to continue. An overall completion rate of 35 dwellings per annum, from April 1999 onwards, is anticipated. At that date there was already capacity to meet requirements in this category on sites with planning permission and sites identified in the annual Housing Land Schedule.~~

~~4.19 Windfall sites are those sites of 0.4ha or more where development cannot be anticipated by the Plan, for example through redevelopment of sites in other uses. An overall completion rate of 25 dwellings per annum is anticipated, from April 1999 onwards, based on an assessment of recent previously unidentified developments on sites of between 0.4ha and 1ha which accord with the policies in the Plan. At that date there was already capacity to meet requirements in this category on sites already with planning permission and sites identified in the annual Housing Land Schedule.~~

NEW HOUSING

POLICY H3 - Locations for New Housing Development

~~NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT WILL NORMALLY BE APPROVED WITHIN THE DEVELOPMENT LIMITS OF THE URBAN AREA OF DARLINGTON AND THE FOLLOWING VILLAGES AND OTHER PLACES IN THE COUNTRYSIDE, PROVIDED THAT THE SITE IS NOT SPECIFICALLY PROPOSED OR SAFEGUARDED FOR ANOTHER USE AND THAT THE DEVELOPMENT ACCORDS WITH OTHER PLAN POLICIES. DEVELOPMENT WILL NORMALLY BE EXPECTED TO MAINTAIN EXISTING DENSITIES AND WHERE APPROPRIATE INCREASE THEM. THE SPECIFIED VILLAGES AND OTHER PLACES TO WHICH THIS POLICY APPLIES ARE:~~

BARMPTON;	HIGH CONISCLIFFE;	MIDDLETON ST. GEORGE;
BEAUMONT HILL;	HURWORTH;	NEASHAM;
BISHOPTON;	HURWORTH PLACE;	OAK TREE;
BRAFFERTON;	KILLERBY;	PIERCEBRIDGE;
DENTON;	LITTLE STAINTON;	REDWORTH;
GREAT BURDON;	LOW CONISCLIFFE;	SADBERGE;
GREAT STAINTON;	MERRYBENT;	SUMMERHOUSE;
HEIGHINGTON;	MIDDLETON ONE ROW;	VIRGINIA ESTATE.

~~4.20 The development limits are defined in Policy E2 and identify areas in which housing and other development may be acceptable, in order to consolidate the existing settlement framework and avoid extensions into the countryside. They take account of the character of existing development and the surrounding countryside, drainage and other infrastructure, and accessibility. They are subject to reconsideration at each review of the Plan.~~

~~4.21 For the purposes of this policy, housing development includes the following:~~

- ~~i) a new building used for residential purposes;~~
- ~~ii) the change to residential use of the whole or part of an existing building; or~~
- ~~iii) a residential caravan in permanent occupation.~~

~~Areas proposed or safeguarded for other purposes are identified on the Proposals Map. The latter also identifies areas within which specific policies which would affect housing proposals apply. A large number of additional policies apply generally throughout the Borough.~~

~~POLICY H4 New Housing Development in and Around the Town Centre and Other Centres~~

~~THE COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE THE PROVISION OF RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION IN, OR WITH EASY ACCESS TO, THE TOWN CENTRE, DISTRICT AND LOCAL CENTRES, AND LOCAL SHOPPING AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES, PARTICULARLY ON REDUNDANT, DISUSED OR UNDER USED LAND AND IN PARTS OF BUILDINGS SUCH AS UPPER FLOORS. SUCH ACCOMMODATION SHOULD, WHEREVER POSSIBLE, PROVIDE FOR THE NEEDS OF SMALLER HOUSEHOLDS, THE ELDERLY AND THOSE WITH DISABILITIES, TOGETHER WITH LOCAL NEEDS FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING.~~

~~4.22 Such locations meet the requirements of these groups for easy access to shopping, recreational and community facilities, and public transport.~~

~~4.23 A continuous supply of suitably located land and buildings is anticipated:~~

- ~~i) through sites proposed in the Plan;~~
- ~~ii) through the emergence of small sites and conversions;~~
- ~~iii) through the development of upper floors over shops;~~
- ~~iv) through the release of land in Council ownership;~~
- ~~v) in conjunction with proposals for the reclamation of derelict land and buildings; and~~
- ~~vi) where land and buildings otherwise become vacant or redundant, particularly if continuation of their existing use is undesirable in the context of other policies.~~

~~4.24 In these circumstances the Council will seek the involvement of housing associations in the provision of social housing (i.e. to meet the specialist needs of disadvantaged groups) and securing affordability (Policy H9). The Council was involved in a 'Living Over the Shop' initiative in 1994.~~

PROPOSAL H5 - New Housing Development Sites

THE FOLLOWING SITES ARE PROPOSED FOR NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT:

	Site area (ha)	Dwelling capacity (1995 estimate)	Completions 1995-99	Anticipated contribution 1999-2006
Sites where construction had commenced April 1999:				
1. HARROWGATE HILL RESERVOIR	1.7	50	16	34*
9. TEES GRANGE FARM	1.0	12	3	8*
10. GREENBANK HOSPITAL	0.8	25	nil	41*
11. HARROWGATE FARM	12.0	300	5	268*
12. MT. PLEASANT, MIDDLETON ST. GEORGE	2.3	65	39	21*
Sub-total	17.8	452	63	372*
Sites without planning permission April 1999:				
4. EAST HAVEN	1.9	60	nil	60
5. ROSEMARY COURT	0.7	30	nil	30
6. PARKSIDE	1.8	49	nil	49
7. SMITHFIELD ROAD	2.0	56	nil	56
8. CLIFTON ROAD	2.2	92	nil	nil
13. AYCLIFFE HOSPITAL	8.8	150	nil	75
17. HUNDENS LANE	1.6	35	nil	35
18. NEASHAM ROAD	1.1	30	nil	30
19. SNIPE HOUSE FARM	4.3	125	nil	125
20. CLEVELAND TERRACE	0.8	12	nil	12
21. WEST AUCKLAND ROAD	8.0	150	nil	150
Sub-total	33.2	789	nil	622
Total sites of 0.4 ha or more	51.0	1,241	63	994
Small sites:				
14. VICTORIA ROAD	0.3	30	nil	13
16. KENDREW STREET	0.2	25	nil	25

* dwellings with planning permission

- 4.25 The sites are identified on the Proposals Map. (Note that there are no sites H5.2, H5.3 or H5.15. Planning permission was granted before April 1995 for the sites previously identified H5.2 and H5.15. The allocation of the site previously identified H5.3 was quashed by the High Court in June 1998.)
- 4.26 Proposal H5.8 (Clifton Road) involves the redevelopment of the site of the existing cattle market. As it is not possible to timetable the relocation and / or cessation of this use, the proposal is not assumed to contribute towards the overall requirement for new dwellings identified in Policy H2 and paragraph 4.14.
- 4.27 Nine previously uncommitted sites are proposed (H5.1, H5.10, H5.11, H5.13, H5.17, H5.18, H5.19, H5.20 and H5.21), following an appraisal of a number of alternatives within and around the urban area and the villages. They have the following characteristics which make them suitable for development:
- i) Harrowgate Hill Reservoir (H5.1) is a derelict site within the urban area, surrounded by housing, and with easy access to the main road and public transport networks. It is prominently located on one of the main road approaches to the town and development should comply with Policy E10 (protection of key townscape and landscape features).
 - ii) Greenbank Hospital (H5.10) is a site which has become surplus to health requirements. The site, which is within an established residential area close to the town centre, is suitable for housing, together with the provision of some public open space to make good existing deficiencies in the area.

- iii) Harrowgate Farm (H5.11) uses land of little agricultural value, is well contained by Burtree Lane, the existing housing development to the south, the industrial development on Whessoe Road to the west, and the higher land to the north, and provides an opportunity to introduce public open space provision which can serve existing housing areas in addition. Developers will need to make provision for improvements to Burtree Lane, adjacent to the site, and the junction between Burtree Lane and North Road, pursuant to Policy T12 (new development - road capacity). All vehicular access to the site shall be from Burtree Lane.
 - iv) Aycliffe Hospital (H5.13) is a site which has become surplus to health requirements. The buildings do not generally lend themselves to alternative community uses, neither is the site well located for them. Housing is considered to be an acceptable alternative use for the already developed area, retaining existing trees and open areas, and using existing infrastructure wherever possible. Development should be limited to a maximum area of 8.8ha, within the area identified on the Proposals Map (Policy H6). The site could also accommodate public open space and community uses to serve the development and the housing to the north. The site is expected to contribute only in part (maximum 75 dwellings) to the requirement for additional dwellings on newly-allocated sites identified in Policy H2.
 - v) Hundens Lane (H5.17) uses part of an area previously used for school playing fields. Development should be in conjunction with the reservation of the remaining land for the provision of playing pitches for public use, pursuant to Proposal R10 (Eastbourne playing pitches).
 - vi) Neasham Road (H5.18) is an industrial site adjacent to a local centre.
 - vii) Snipe House Farm (H5.19) uses land of little agricultural value, immediately to the south of the existing housing at Skerne Park, and is separated from the open countryside to the south by the A66(T) Darlington southern bypass. It provides an opportunity to introduce a playing field to serve a larger area. The southern boundary will be prominent from the A66 and development should comply with Policy E10 (protection of key townscape and landscape features) and Policy E49 (noise sensitive development).
 - viii) Cleveland Terrace (H5.20) uses disused land within the urban area previously part of school playing fields.
 - ix) West Auckland Road (H5.21) is a derelict site, previously in industrial use, within the urban area. Development should be in conjunction with any works necessary to ensure the stability of the tipped land to the west, and with improvements to the appearance of the latter in accordance with Policy E17 (landscape improvement).
- 4.28 All of the sites are considered to be capable of development within the Plan period. Ground conditions, infrastructure requirements and land ownerships are not expected to present any insuperable problems.

~~POLICY H6 - Aycliffe Hospital~~

~~NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT ON THE SITE OF AYCLIFFE HOSPITAL (PROPOSAL H5.13) WILL BE LIMITED TO A SCHEME WITH A MAXIMUM AREA OF 8.8ha, WITHIN THE AREA IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP AND BASED ON THE EXISTING DEVELOPED AREA AND ACCESS. DESIGN, DENSITY, LAYOUT AND LANDSCAPING SHOULD RESPECT THE EXISTING PARKLAND SETTING, MAINTAINING VISUAL SEPARATION FROM SCHOOL AYCLIFFE AND NEWTON AYCLIFFE. EXISTING TREES AND HEDGEROWS SHOULD BE RETAINED. THE SCHEME FOR DEVELOPMENT MUST ACCORD WITH A PLANNING BRIEF FOR THE WHOLE SITE, TO INCLUDE LAYOUT, ACCESS, DESIGN, OPEN SPACE AND LANDSCAPING, AND TO BE APPROVED BY THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY. THE BRIEF WILL INCLUDE PROVISION FOR THE FOLLOWING:~~

- ~~1. THE RE USE, AS FAR AS POSSIBLE, OF LAND AREAS PREVIOUSLY OCCUPIED BY BUILDINGS, ROADS AND HARDSTANDINGS;~~

- ~~2. THE CONSERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE LANDSCAPE SETTING OF THE SITE;~~
- ~~3. THE RECLAMATION OF ANY RESIDUAL LAND AREAS PREVIOUSLY OCCUPIED BY BUILDINGS, ROADS AND HARDSTANDINGS;~~
- ~~4. THE LAYOUT AND DESIGN OF PUBLIC OPEN SPACE IN ACCORDANCE WITH OTHER PLAN POLICIES;~~
- ~~5. THE LANDSCAPING AND USE OF THE REMAINING UNDEVELOPED LAND WITHIN THE SITE;~~
- ~~6. THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE IN RESPECT OF REDEVELOPMENT IN THE VICINITY OF HAZARDOUS INSTALLATIONS; AND~~
- ~~7. THE ADAPTATION OF THE EXISTING ACCESS, ALTHOUGH ALTERNATIVE ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS, APPROPRIATE TO THE SCALE OF THE DEVELOPMENT, WILL BE CONSIDERED IF IT CAN BE DEMONSTRATED THAT THESE ARE NECESSARY TO SAFEGUARD EXISTING TREES AND HEDGEROWS AND THE LANDSCAPE SETTING OF THE SITE, AND WOULD PROVIDE IMPROVED HIGHWAY SAFETY CONDITIONS AT THE JUNCTION WITH SCHOOL AYCLIFFE LANE.~~

~~4.29 Proposal H5.13 seeks to secure a satisfactory replacement use on a previously developed site in the countryside. The site is the subject of attractive distant views, and is also clearly separated from the housing at School Aycliffe. The existing buildings are separated by open landscaped areas which soften distant views, and it is important that redevelopment retains this characteristic.~~

~~4.30 It is important that the site is redeveloped comprehensively and that open space and structural landscaping are implemented as an integral part of the proposal. The views of the Health and Safety Executive are important as part of the site lies within an area where consultation with their Major Hazards Assessment Unit is required in respect of major housing developments, educational establishments and institutional accommodation (the industrial site to the north-east includes a hazardous installation).~~

HOUSING IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

POLICY H7 - Areas of Housing Development Restraint

IN THE COUNTRYSIDE, OUTSIDE THE DEVELOPMENT LIMITS, NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT WILL BE PERMITTED WHERE:

- 1. IT IS ESSENTIAL FOR THE PROPER FUNCTIONING OF A FARM OR FORESTRY ENTERPRISE FOR A FARM OR FORESTRY WORKER TO LIVE AT OR IN THE IMMEDIATE VICINITY OF HIS / HER PLACE OF WORK; OR**
- 2. IT INVOLVES THE CONVERSION OF AN EXISTING STRUCTURALLY SOUND BUILDING WITHOUT ADVERSELY AFFECTING ITS CHARACTER OR THAT OF ITS SETTING; OR**
- 3. IT INVOLVES THE SUBDIVISION OF AN EXISTING RESIDENTIAL BUILDING; OR**
- 4. IT EXTENDS AN EXISTING RESIDENTIAL BUILDING WITHOUT MATERIALLY DETRACTING FROM ITS CHARACTER OR THAT OF ITS SETTING.**

~~4.31 Strict control of development outside the development limits identified on the Proposals Map (Policy E2) is essential to safeguard the character of the countryside and the villages, to make best use of existing infrastructure and community provision, and to minimise essential travel requirements.~~

- 4.32 For the purposes of this policy new residential development includes the following:
- i) a new building to be used for residential purposes;
 - ii) substantial extensions to an existing residential building, such as to fundamentally change its character or provide the opportunity for sub-division for use as a separate dwelling unit;
 - iii) the change to residential use of the whole or part of an existing building;
 - iv) the sub-division of an existing residential building to form additional residential units;
 - v) a residential caravan in permanent occupation;
 - vi) the rebuilding of a building previously used for residential purposes involving the replacement of the whole or the bulk of the fabric of the building;
 - vii) the re-establishment of residential use of an abandoned dwelling.
- 4.33 In exceptional circumstances a new dwelling may be necessary for occupation by a farm or forestry worker, to allow, for example, a minimum essential level of supervision or the ability to respond rapidly to emergencies. Evidence of need must be provided by the applicant and should normally include a detailed assessment by an independent person or body. Permission will not normally be granted if there are existing dwellings or buildings suitable for extension, sub-division or conversion, or unoccupied dwellings which are available and well-related to the workplace. The Council will investigate the history of a holding to establish the recent pattern of use of land and buildings, where a suitable dwelling has formerly been available.
- 4.34 The change-of-use of structurally sound existing buildings of visual, architectural or historic interest may be permitted where the character of the building and surroundings is not detrimentally affected (Policy E5). The insertion of windows, and the addition, for example, of chimneys, porches, dormers and the creation of external garaging and garden areas can be difficult to achieve without unacceptably altering the character of rural buildings and their surroundings.
- 4.35 Large extensions to dwellings (for example by 50% or more of the floorspace of the original dwelling) and extensions to their curtilages often have an unacceptable impact on the landscape, and will not normally be permitted in such circumstances in the context of Policies E2 and E7.

~~POLICY H8 – Agricultural Occupancy~~

~~NEW DWELLINGS WHICH ARE ESSENTIAL TO ENABLE FARM OR FORESTRY WORKERS TO LIVE AT OR IN THE IMMEDIATE VICINITY OF THEIR PLACE OF WORK WILL BE REQUIRED TO BE:~~

- ~~1. SUBJECT TO AN APPROPRIATE CONDITION AND / OR LEGAL AGREEMENT RESTRICTING OCCUPANCY; AND~~
- ~~2. SITED IN A LOCATION WHICH IS WELL RELATED TO THE ACTIVITY AND TO OTHER DWELLINGS; AND~~
- ~~3. OF A SIZE COMMENSURATE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE ACTIVITY.~~

~~4.36 These requirements are necessary to ensure that the exception to the Plan policies restricting the construction of new dwellings in the countryside, contained in Policy H7, is not abused.~~

~~4.37 Occupation will be limited by condition and / or legal agreement. Such a condition or agreement will not normally be lifted unless it can be established, after a detailed assessment, that there is no longer a need for the dwelling on the holding / business or in the area.~~

~~4.38 Where an agricultural or other enterprise is being developed and long term viability has not been achieved, permission can normally only be justified on a probationary basis; that is, for a temporary dwelling subject to a short time limit.~~

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

POLICY H9 – Meeting Affordable Housing Needs

~~THE COUNCIL WILL INSTITUTE, AND KEEP UNDER REVIEW, ASSESSMENTS OF NEEDS FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND OTHER SPECIALIST HOUSING NEEDS. THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO NEGOTIATE WITH DEVELOPERS FOR AN ELEMENT OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING ON NEW HOUSING SITES WITHIN DEVELOPMENT LIMITS, WHERE A LOCAL NEED HAS BEEN IDENTIFIED.~~

~~4.39 The Council has resolved to institute, and keep under review, assessments of needs for affordable housing and other specialist housing needs, to assist in developing policies for securing an adequate supply of affordable housing. The term 'affordable housing' encompasses the range of both subsidised and market housing designed for those whose incomes generally deny them the opportunity to purchase houses on the open market as a result of the local relationship between income and market price. A particular concern is to ensure that there is an adequate supply of affordable houses to help young people setting up home.~~

~~4.40 Affordable housing can take a number of forms. Housing provided by local authorities and housing associations (currently about a fifth of the Borough's housing stock and new house construction) is an important contributor to overall provision. In the urban area, bringing vacant buildings back into use (such as through 'living over the shop' schemes) and sub-division of large houses can make an important contribution, as can the provision of higher density market housing. The Council has not identified any significant outstanding unmet need. It has, in the past, successfully sought the provision of well located local authority and housing association development through its land acquisition and disposal policy. Market conditions have also enabled the private sector to make a significant contribution without direct intervention by the Council.~~

~~4.41 The housing policies in the Plan assume that this situation will continue. They must, however, anticipate the desirability of seeking specific provision as part of the development of larger new housing sites, particularly those which are of sufficient size (either on their own or in conjunction with neighbouring development) to require and support neighbourhood facilities (the latter include local shopping, public transport, recreational open space and other local community activities). At April 1995, there was outstanding capacity for approximately 100 dwellings on unallocated sites owned by the Council and specifically reserved for local authority / housing association development. Of the sites allocated under Policy H5, sites H5.4, H5.5, H5.8, H5.10, H5.14 H5.16 and H5.18 are considered to be particularly suitable in terms of size and location for the provision of affordable housing. All except H5.10 and H5.18 are owned by the Council. The remaining sites are also considered to be suitable for contributing in part.~~

~~4.42 Aspects of need which would will be considered include:~~

- ~~i) existing residents in the area in shared, overcrowded or otherwise unsuitable accommodation;~~
- ~~ii) first time buyers or newly married couples living within the area;~~
- ~~iii) persons dependent on a household living in the area;~~
- ~~iv) older people or people with disabilities living within the area and who need more specialist accommodation;~~
- ~~v) households which include persons employed in the area or about to take up an offer of employment in the area and who need to live locally;~~
- ~~vi) people with established kinship ties with the area.~~

POLICY H10 - Affordable Housing in the Rural Area

IN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES, RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT TO MEET IDENTIFIED LOCALISED NEEDS FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING MAY BE PERMITTED ON SITES ADJACENT AND WELL-RELATED TO VILLAGES WITH ADEQUATE LOCAL FACILITIES, PROVIDED THAT A SUITABLE SITE CANNOT

BE FOUND WITHIN THE DEVELOPMENT LIMITS, AND PROVIDED THAT:

- 1. THE NEEDS ARE SUBSTANTIATED; AND,**
- 2. THE NEEDS CANNOT BE MET IN ANY OTHER WAY; AND,**
- 3. PROVISION IS MADE TO MEET THOSE NEEDS IN PERPETUITY; AND,**
- 4. THE DEVELOPMENT IS OF SMALL SCALE, REFLECTING AND RESPECTING ITS SURROUNDINGS.**

- 4.43 Most people living in the villages and rural area look to Darlington and centres outside the Borough for employment and leisure pursuits, but there will continue to be people who will need to work and live there.
- 4.44 Proposal H5.12 makes specific provision for a further 65 houses on a site at Middleton St George, and there are planning permissions for other sites of 0.4 hectare or above at Middleton St. George, Hurworth and Sadberge with a capacity of over 200 dwellings. Opportunities for further new development in the villages are largely limited to infill.
- 4.45 The following categories of need will be considered:
- i) where it would be desirable for social and community reasons for long-established residents to have separate accommodation in the area, for example newly married couples and people leaving tied accommodation on retirement;
 - ii) where people provide important local services and there would be significant benefit to the community served in their being housed nearby;
 - iii) where people have long standing links with the local community which it would be desirable to reinforce, for example, to facilitate the care of elderly or relatives with disabilities.
- 4.46 Justification must be provided by assessments of affordable housing needs undertaken by or for the Council as housing authority (Policy H9). Appropriate local facilities include a primary school, convenience shopping, a post office, a public house, and bus services. Suitable villages include Middleton St. George, Hurworth, Hurworth Place, Heighington, High Coniscliffe and Sadberge. The areas within which needs will be considered to be local will be centred on these villages.

NEW HOUSING DESIGN

~~POLICY H11 – Design and Layout of New Housing Development~~

~~THE DESIGN AND LAYOUT OF NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT WILL BE REQUIRED TO:~~

- ~~1. RELATE WELL TO THE SURROUNDING AREA, RESPECT ITS PREDOMINANT CHARACTER AND DENSITY, AND AVOID DAMAGE TO THE AMENITIES OF ADJOINING PROPERTIES;~~**
- ~~2. PROVIDE AN ATTRACTIVE, EFFICIENT AND SAFE RESIDENTIAL ENVIRONMENT;~~**
- ~~3. PROVIDE ADEQUATE PRIVACY IN THE ROOMS, GARDENS AND OTHER OUTDOOR AREAS OF THE PROPOSED DWELLINGS AND EXISTING ADJACENT PROPERTY;~~**
- ~~4. PROVIDE ADEQUATE DAYLIGHT AND SUNLIGHT ENTERING THE PRINCIPAL ROOMS OF THE PROPOSED DWELLINGS AND EXISTING ADJACENT PROPERTY;~~**
- ~~5. PROVIDE ADEQUATE GARAGING OR CAR PARKING AND OTHER PRIVATE AMENITY SPACE WITHIN INDIVIDUAL DWELLING CURTILAGES IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY T24;~~**
- ~~6. PROVIDE CONVENIENT AND SAFE PEDESTRIAN ACCESS TO RECREATIONAL FACILITIES (E.G. CHILDREN'S PLAY AREAS AND PLAYING FIELDS) AND OTHER LOCAL SERVICES (E.G. SHOPS AND~~**

- ~~PUBLIC TRANSPORT);~~
- ~~7. DISCOURAGE UNAUTHORISED PUBLIC ACCESS TO ADJOINING AGRICULTURAL LAND;~~
 - ~~8. PROVIDE CONVENIENT AND SAFE ROAD ACCESS FOR RESIDENTS, VISITORS AND SERVICE VEHICLES IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY T13;~~
 - ~~9. INCORPORATE EXISTING WILDLIFE HABITATS AND LANDSCAPE FEATURES, WHEREVER APPROPRIATE, AND PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE CREATION OF NEW WILDLIFE HABITATS; AND~~
 - ~~10. LOCATE ANY DWELLINGS PROVIDED FOR THE ELDERLY OR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES WITHIN 200m OF BUS STOPS.~~

~~4.47 Housing development proposals will be assessed having regard to the Plan's policies applicable to new development generally. External materials used for buildings, roads and footpaths should respect and enhance their surroundings. The design, layout and density of residential development should respect the existing characteristics of the site and its surroundings and provide a safe and amenable living environment for all residents and visitors.~~

~~4.48 The provision of adequate space around dwellings is an important element in achieving this aim. It can provide for adequate sunlight and daylight, privacy, children's play, gardening and future extensions to dwellings, and assist in achieving a high standard of design and layout.~~

POLICY H12 - Alterations and Extensions to Existing Dwellings

ALTERATIONS AND EXTENSIONS TO EXISTING DWELLINGS WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT:

- 1. THEY ARE IN KEEPING WITH THE CHARACTER, DESIGN AND EXTERNAL APPEARANCE OF THE PROPERTY;**
- 2. THEY ARE IN KEEPING WITH THE STREET SCENE AND SURROUNDING AREA;**
- 3. THEY MAINTAIN ADEQUATE DAYLIGHT ENTERING THE PRINCIPAL ROOMS OF NEARBY BUILDINGS;**
- 4. THEY MAINTAIN ADEQUATE PRIVACY IN THE ROOMS, GARDENS AND OTHER OUTDOOR AREAS OF NEARBY BUILDINGS;**
- 5. THEY ARE NOT OVERBEARING WHEN VIEWED FROM NEIGHBOURING PROPERTIES; AND,**
- 6. THEY MAINTAIN ADEQUATE GARAGING OR CAR PARKING AND OTHER EXTERNAL SPACE WITHIN THE CURTILAGE.**

4.49 It is important that alterations and extensions respect and reflect the characteristics of their surroundings. The amenity of neighbours living or working in nearby dwellings or other buildings needs to be protected. Sufficient space should be left within the curtilage of the dwelling to accommodate adequate garden and amenity areas, and garaging and car parking, in accordance with Policies H11 and T24.

POLICY H13 - Backland Development

PERMISSION WILL NOT BE GRANTED FOR RESIDENTIAL BACKLAND DEVELOPMENT WHICH UNACCEPTABLY CONFLICTS WITH:

- 1. THE FREE AND SAFE FLOW OF TRAFFIC;**
- 2. THE PRIVACY AND QUIET ENJOYMENT OF NEIGHBOURING DWELLINGS AND GARDENS IN GENERAL, AND OF DWELLINGS WHICH ADJOIN ANY PROPOSED ACCESSWAY IN PARTICULAR; OR**
- 3. THE SCALE AND CHARACTER OF THE SURROUNDING DEVELOPMENT.**

4.50 Backland development comprises development to the rear of existing houses, usually in large back gardens or open areas used, for example, as vegetable plots or for vehicle parking. It is not normally acceptable where it involves the loss of significant trees, the loss of an open area which contributes to the general amenity of an area, or where it adjoins and / or adversely

affects the appearance of the countryside.

- 4.51 Tandem development consisting of one house behind the other and sharing the same access, cannot normally achieve satisfactory standards of design, privacy and access.

~~POLICY H14 Accessible Housing~~

~~PROVISION WILL BE SOUGHT, ON THE BASIS OF AN ASSESSMENT OF LOCAL NEED, FOR THE BUILDING IN NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS OF A PROPORTION OF DWELLINGS ADAPTED TO MEET THE NEEDS OF WHEELCHAIR USERS.~~

- ~~4.52 All new dwellings with ground floor accommodation or accessed by lift should allow for easy use and visiting by most people with disabilities. Conversions and alterations should also allow for this where possible. This will also benefit many less mobile people (most wheelchair users do not need them at all times) and will make life easier, for example, for accommodating prams and moving furniture.~~
- ~~4.53 A proportion of houses on larger new development sites, should be specifically designed to be capable, without further structural alteration, of adaptation to enable full wheelchair accessibility. These units should normally be evenly distributed throughout the development.~~
- ~~4.54 The proportion to be sought will be based on an assessment of local needs, undertaken by or for the Council as housing authority, and an assessment of site suitability, particularly in respect of topography and access to local services.~~

EXISTING RESIDENTIAL AREAS

~~POLICY H15 The Amenity of Residential Areas~~

~~PERMISSION WILL NOT BE GRANTED FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT, ENLARGEMENT OR MATERIAL INTENSIFICATION OF NON RESIDENTIAL USES WHICH WOULD UNACCEPTABLY CONFLICT WITH THE AMENITIES OF SURROUNDING AREAS HAVING A PREDOMINANTLY RESIDENTIAL CHARACTER OR WITH THE QUIET ENJOYMENT OF DWELLINGS AND GARDENS IN PARTICULAR.~~

- ~~4.55 The Council seeks to protect areas having a predominantly residential character against the undesirable effects of non residential uses located within or near them. This protection extends to committed and proposed housing sites (Proposal H5).~~
- ~~4.56 Within these areas, it is highly desirable that residents should not be subject to disturbance and annoyance as a result of non residential noise, dust, smell and other forms of air pollution, and traffic and parking. Residents should also be able to expect a safe, secure and attractive residential environment.~~
- ~~4.57 Although non residential uses are present in or adjacent to many of the older areas and in some instances cause disturbance and annoyance to residents, they are generally well established, and cannot be easily moved. Many fulfil an important employment and service function.~~
- ~~4.58 The Plan's employment policies and proposals set out the locations and circumstances in which employment development is acceptable and would be encouraged. They also seek to stem the loss of employment uses, some of which may be in residential areas (Policy EP15).~~
- ~~4.59 New non residential uses or developments which provide local amenities, such as a small local shop (Policy S16), or the development of a local community facility (Policy R27), may be permitted where the residential amenity of immediate neighbours would not be impaired.~~

~~POLICY H16 The Improvement of Older Residential Areas~~

~~IN CONSIDERING APPLICATIONS FOR PLANNING PERMISSION, THE COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE DEVELOPMENT WHICH SECURES IMPROVEMENTS IN THE ENVIRONMENT AROUND OLDER RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES, AND WILL ITSELF PROMOTE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES IN AREAS SUFFERING FROM SOCIAL DEPRIVATION OR BADLY DEGRADED SURROUNDINGS. A PRIORITY ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENT AREA TO THE NORTH OF THE TOWN CENTRE IS DEFINED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP. FURTHER SUCH AREAS WILL BE IDENTIFIED WHERE JUSTIFIED BY LOCAL CONDITIONS.~~

~~4.60 The Council, as housing authority and local planning authority will promote environmental improvements in housing areas through area programmes, the renovation of its own housing stock, and through local environmental improvement schemes in areas of social deprivation or where the residential environment has otherwise been badly degraded.~~

~~4.61 A housing environment improvement area has been identified in the area north of the town centre, between Northgate and Greenbank Road. This includes three areas where there are already heavy concentrations of houses in multiple occupation, at Greenbank Road (South), Corporation Road and Station Road / Westbrook Villas (Policy H17).~~

~~4.62 When considering planning applications in such areas, the Council will have regard to the need to improve the residential environment. The Council will also investigate environmental improvement schemes for locations where there are specific problems, and pursue improvements to the highway environment and traffic management schemes (Policy T10).~~

POLICY H17 - Concentrations of Houses in Multiple Occupation

THE SUB-DIVISION OF DWELLINGS INTO SMALLER UNITS OF ACCOMMODATION WILL NOT BE PERMITTED WHERE:

- 1. IT IS WITHIN AREAS WHERE THERE IS ALREADY A HIGH CONCENTRATION OF HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPANCY, INCLUDING GREENBANK ROAD (SOUTH), CORPORATION ROAD AND STATION ROAD / WESTBROOK VILLAS; OR**
- 2. IT INVOLVES THE SUB-DIVISION OF SMALL TWO-STOREY FAMILY HOUSES.**

POLICY H18 - Houses in Multiple Occupation in Other Areas

THE SUBDIVISION INTO SMALL DWELLINGS OF LARGE DWELLINGS, DWELLINGS UNSUITABLE FOR SINGLE FAMILY OCCUPATION, OR NON-RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS IN RESIDENTIAL SURROUNDINGS OTHER THAN THOSE THE SUBJECT OF POLICY H17, WILL NOT BE PERMITTED WHERE THIS WILL HAVE A MATERIAL ADVERSE EFFECT ON:

- 1. THE QUIET AND PRIVATE ENJOYMENT OF OTHER DWELLINGS AND GARDENS;**
- 2. THE ADEQUACY OF AVAILABLE OFF STREET PARKING AND AMENITY SPACES;**
- 3. THE FREE AND SAFE FLOW OF TRAFFIC; AND**
- 4. THE VISUAL AND NOISE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SURROUNDINGS.**

4.63 A significant proportion of the Borough's stock of larger Victorian and Edwardian housing stock (i.e. with a floor area of 115m² or more) is sub-divided into flats and bedsitters, which make a significant contribution towards meeting the housing needs of smaller households, particularly young single people. This situation has developed incrementally over many years.

4.64 In some areas there has been a cumulative adverse effect on residential amenity as a result of, for example, the conflict between the lifestyles of existing families and the occupants of the sub-divided dwellings, the parking and movement of motor vehicles, the loss of garden areas and trees, and the disfigurement of buildings through the construction of balconies and fire-escapes.

- 4.65 Areas of high concentration are, typically, continuous residential frontages or streets where upwards of a quarter of the original dwellings are in multiple occupation. This situation already exists in parts of the housing environment improvement area identified in Policy H16.
- 4.66 Further conversions will not normally be permitted in these areas, except in one or more of the following circumstances:
- i) where the proposal involves the conversion to self-contained dwellings of a property used for accommodation units sharing amenities and registered with the Council; or
 - ii) where the property is terraced and already bounded on both sides by properties in multiple occupation and registered with the Council or in non-residential use; or
 - iii) where the property is in mixed residential and non-residential use.
- 4.67 Proposals should not involve undue loss of amenity for neighbouring occupiers or the surrounding area. Wherever possible, they should have regard to people with disabilities (Policy H14).
- 4.68 Adequate provision for parking should normally be made on site in accordance with the parking standards for dwellings (Policy T24).
- 4.69 Smaller dwellings (those with a floor area of under 115m²) are considered to be normally only suitable for single family occupation, and sub-division will not normally be permitted.
- 4.70 Recognising that many existing houses in multiple occupation do not meet the criteria in this policy, the Council has adopted a corporate enforcement policy which reconciles the housing needs of the occupants with its planning enforcement function.
- 4.71 A Borough-wide registration scheme, under the provisions of the Housing Act 1985, has been in operation since February 1992. This is concerned primarily with matters relating to standards of fitness / occupancy, and standards of management. For properties registered at that time, planning enforcement action is only carried out where complaints are received. For those properties registered since that date planning applications are sought and joint investigation and, where appropriate, enforcement action is carried out in relation to both planning and housing legislation.

SPECIALIST HOUSING

POLICY H19 - Special Care Accommodation

HOSTELS AND HOMES PROVIDING GROUP ACCOMMODATION FOR PEOPLE IN NEED OF CARE WILL NORMALLY ONLY BE PERMITTED IN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO PUBLIC TRANSPORT, SHOPPING AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES, AND WHERE A SATISFACTORY RESIDENTIAL ENVIRONMENT CAN ALSO BE ACHIEVED.

- 4.72 Such people include the elderly, blind, single homeless, mentally ill or handicapped, and women with dependants seeking refuge, who require accommodation with facilities for the provision of care and which is designed and located to meet their special needs.
- 4.73 Location in close proximity to services is generally desirable to help enable people affected by problems of ageing, mental illness, mental handicap or physical and sensory disability to live as independently as possible in homely settings in the community.

PROPOSAL H20 - Gypsy Sites

THE COUNCIL WILL CONTINUE TO MAKE PROVISION FOR GYPSIES AT HONEYPOT LANE AND NEASHAM ROAD.

~~POLICY H21 – Additional Gypsy Sites~~

~~PRIVATE SITES FOR SETTLED OCCUPATION BY GYPSIES WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT ALL OF THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA ARE MET:~~

- ~~1. THE SITE DOES NOT ENCROACH ON OPEN COUNTRYSIDE;~~
- ~~2. THE SITE IS NOT IN THE AREA OF HIGH LANDSCAPE VALUE;~~
- ~~3. THE SITE IS NOT PROMINENT AND THE OCCUPIED PART OF THE DEVELOPMENT CAN BE ADEQUATELY SCREENED BY ESTABLISHING NEW, OR RE-MODELLING EXISTING, PLANTING AND EARTH MOUNDING;~~
- ~~4. THE DEVELOPMENT WILL NOT RESULT IN DISTURBANCE AFFECTING THE OCCUPIERS OF EXISTING LAND OR BUILDINGS;~~
- ~~5. THE SITE HAS CONVENIENT ACCESS TO PUBLIC TRANSPORT AND LOCAL SERVICES SUCH AS SHOPS, HOSPITALS AND MEDICAL FACILITIES;~~
- ~~6. THE DEVELOPMENT INCORPORATES ADEQUATE ARRANGEMENTS FOR ACCESS TO AND FROM ADJOINING HIGHWAYS, FOR THE PARKING AND MANOEUVRING OF VEHICLES, FOR OUTDOOR AMENITY AREAS AND STORAGE, AND FOR THE SECURITY OF THE SITE DURING PERIODS WHEN IT IS UNOCCUPIED;~~
- ~~7. THE DEVELOPMENT CAN BE PROVIDED WITH ADEQUATE UTILITY SERVICES; AND~~
- ~~8. THE DEVELOPMENT WILL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT ANY BUILDINGS OR AREAS OF AGRICULTURAL LAND QUALITY, ARCHITECTURAL, HISTORIC OR SCIENTIFIC IMPORTANCE.~~

~~4.74 The existing facilities at Honeypot Lane are temporary in nature and may need to be relocated to accommodate the Cross Town Route. An area of land suitable for the provision of permanent and more extensive facilities is identified on the Proposals Map.~~

~~4.75 An allocation also covers the existing facilities at Neasham Road, which are relatively permanent in nature. The site is considered to be suitable for extension if the need arises.~~

~~4.76 The Secretary of State has identified the former County Durham as an area where sufficient gypsy sites already exist.~~

~~4.77 The Council does not consider that there is a quantitative need for additional sites in view of the level of provision at the existing sites and the ability to expand them.~~

~~4.78 Policy H21 identifies the principal locational criteria which will be applied in the consideration of planning applications for the development of further sites. It allows for the development of privately owned sites.~~

CHAPTER 5:

RECREATION, LEISURE AND COMMUNITY

BACKGROUND

OBJECTIVES

Policies and Proposals:

DESIGNING FOR SPECIAL NEEDS

OPEN SPACE FOR RECREATION

PLAYING FIELDS

ACCESS FOR INFORMAL RECREATION

RECREATION DEVELOPMENT IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

GOLF DEVELOPMENT

ALLOTMENTS

SPORTS, RECREATION AND LEISURE DEVELOPMENT

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

CHAPTER 5: RECREATION, LEISURE AND COMMUNITY

BACKGROUND

- 5.1 The provision of a wide range of opportunities for recreation and leisure enhances people's quality of life and improves the image of the locality, whilst community life can be nurtured and sustained by the provision of appropriate facilities and services.
- 5.2 Sport and recreation are important components in the life of a community, and are also major land uses. The Northern Council for Sport and Recreation's 'Priorities for Progress' provides the regional strategy for the development of sport and recreation facilities. The planning system is expected to ensure that sufficient land and water resources are available to meet the needs of the community for organised sport and informal recreation; development plans have a key role to play in allocating adequate areas of land and safeguarding open space with recreation value. Planning Policy Guidance Note 17, 'Sport and Recreation', sets out the Government's guidance on the role of development plans. Local planning authorities have a responsibility to take account of the community's needs for recreation space in determining planning applications, to assess current provision and requirements, and to resist the development of open space if it would conflict with the wider public interest. This responsibility should be exercised in relation to all types of open space which have public value, and not only those areas laid out or used as public open space. Sport and recreation can bring economic benefits, helping to attract investment and jobs and providing significant inputs into the local economy.
- 5.3 This chapter is concerned with the recreation and leisure needs of the Borough's residents, ranging from organised indoor and outdoor sports, informal recreation activities (such as walking and enjoyment of the countryside), to arts and entertainment based leisure pursuits, whether as participant or audience. It is also concerned with residents' needs for community services and facilities and with ensuring that the special needs of various people within the community are taken into account in development proposals. The Tourism chapter deals with the needs of visitors to the Borough, though clearly there is overlap between these areas. The Dolphin Centre, for example, provides sports, recreation and leisure facilities for both residents and visitors.
- 5.4 The Plan's focus is on providing and safeguarding open space in amounts, locations and forms suited to the sporting, recreation and play needs of all residents. This chapter is concerned with open space as a land use, and complements the Environment policies in Chapter 3 which focus on the amenity value of open space. The Plan also focuses on access for informal recreation to the countryside and to open land in the urban area. The scope and content of the recreation policies reflect the overriding need to protect and enhance environmental quality. The Plan also refers to the provision of particular sports facilities for which there is a perceived need, and to safeguarding Darlington's role as a sub-regional centre for sports, recreation and leisure provision.

OBJECTIVES

- 5.5 The Council's objectives for recreation, leisure and community, to be pursued through the policies and proposals of the Plan, are:
- i) To meet the needs of all residents for recreation and community facilities;
 - ii) To continue to promote and develop Darlington's role as a sub-regional centre for recreation and leisure provision;
 - iii) To protect and improve existing facilities;
 - iv) To identify and respond to shortfalls in provision in relation to perceived local needs;

- v) To create a safe and attractive environment for all members of the community;
- vi) To ensure that the needs of children, the elderly and people with disabilities are satisfied;
- vii) To improve access to the countryside for informal recreation; and
- viii) To ensure that the environmental impact of recreation, leisure and community provision is sustainable.

Policies and Proposals:

DESIGNING FOR SPECIAL NEEDS

~~POLICY R1 - Designing For All~~

~~THE DESIGN AND LAYOUT OF NEW DEVELOPMENT WILL BE REQUIRED, WHERE APPLICABLE AND HAVING REGARD TO THE SCALE, LOCATION AND PROPOSED USE OF THE DEVELOPMENT, TO MAKE PROVISION TO MEET THE NEEDS OF ALL MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY, INCLUDING CHILDREN, THE ELDERLY, PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AND PEOPLE WITH YOUNG CHILDREN.~~

- ~~5.6 General design requirements for the appearance and landscaping of new development, and relating to other aspects of the impact of development on the environment, are set out in the Environment chapter of the Plan. However, the quality of the environment is also measured by its 'user friendliness'. It is essential that the public environment is accessible and usable by all members of the community, and that no one is disadvantaged because of the lack of appropriate facilities.~~

~~POLICY R2 - Access For People With Disabilities~~

~~PROPOSALS FOR NEW BUILDINGS OR THE CHANGE OF USE OR ALTERATION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS TO WHICH THE GENERAL PUBLIC AND EMPLOYEES HAVE ACCESS WILL BE REQUIRED, WHERE PRACTICABLE AND REASONABLE, TO PROVIDE SUITABLE ACCESS AND FACILITIES FOR PEOPLE WITH IMPAIRED MOBILITY.~~

- ~~5.7 Within its wide ranging intention to take account of the needs of all members of the community, set out in Policy R1, the Council as local planning authority is specifically required when granting planning permission to draw the attention of applicants to Sections 4 and 7 of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970. This requires developers of specified types of buildings to provide suitable means of access, parking, and toilet facilities to meet the needs of people with disabilities where practicable and reasonable. The types of building to which the Act applies are buildings open to the public, such as shops, restaurants, hotels and entertainment, leisure and community buildings, places of employment, education buildings, and most types of buildings other than residential.~~

- ~~5.8 Access provision should comply with the 'Code of Practice for Access for the Disabled to Buildings', British Standards Institution Code of Practice BS 5810; in the case of new buildings, Part M of the Building Regulations will apply.~~

- ~~5.9 There is often perceived to be a conflict between conservation and improving access for people with disabilities, especially in listed buildings. Nevertheless, there will usually be opportunities with sensitive and imaginative design to improve access and facilities for people with disabilities. Whenever alterations are proposed these opportunities should be taken.~~

~~POLICY R3 - Provision of Public Facilities in New Buildings~~

~~THE BOROUGH COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE DEVELOPERS, BY NEGOTIATION, TO PROVIDE CRECHE AND CHILDCARE FACILITIES AND PUBLIC CONVENIENCES WHERE THEY ARE WARRANTED BY THE SCALE~~

AND CHARACTER OF NEW OR ADAPTED BUILDINGS TO WHICH THE PUBLIC HAVE ACCESS AS VISITORS OR EMPLOYEES.

- 5.10 As well as providing for people with disabilities, the Council also seeks the provision of toilet facilities for the general public, and breastfeeding and nappy changing facilities, in buildings to which the public will have access, including retail, office and administrative, recreation, leisure and entertainment developments. Whilst such facilities are not a requirement of the Building Regulations, their provision is an important aspect of satisfying the basic needs of the public using such developments.

OPEN SPACE FOR RECREATION

POLICY R4 - Open Space Provision

THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO ENSURE THAT PROVISION OF ALL FORMS OF OPEN SPACE FOR RECREATION IN THE URBAN AREA, INCLUDING PARKS, INFORMAL AMENITY OPEN SPACE, PLAYING FIELDS AND CHILDREN'S PLAY AREAS, IS MAINTAINED IN ACCORDANCE WITH AN OVERALL STANDARD OF 3.6ha PER 1,000 POPULATION, BROKEN DOWN AS FOLLOWS:

MAJOR OPEN SPACE - SERVING A TOWN-WIDE POPULATION

- | | |
|---|--------------|
| 1. PLAYING PITCHES FOR YOUTH AND ADULT USE | 1.6ha |
| 2. INFORMAL / PASSIVE RECREATION USE | 0.8ha |

LOCAL OPEN SPACE - SERVING A NEIGHBOURHOOD POPULATION

- | | |
|--|--------------|
| 1. CHILDREN'S PLAY - EQUIPPED PLAYGROUNDS | 0.2ha |
| 2. CHILDREN'S PLAY - AREAS FOR ACTIVE GAMES | 0.4ha |
| 3. INFORMAL / PASSIVE RECREATION USE | 0.6ha |

IN CONSIDERING THE DISTRIBUTION AND ACCESSIBILITY OF LOCAL OPEN SPACES THE COUNCIL WILL AIM TO ENSURE THAT AN ENTRANCE TO AN OPEN SPACE EQUIPPED FOR CHILDREN'S PLAY LIES WITHIN 400m SAFE WALK OF EVERY DWELLING.

WITHIN THE VILLAGES THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO ENSURE THAT PROVISION ACCORDS WITH THE LOCAL OPEN SPACE STANDARD.

- 5.11 The standard of 3.6 hectares per thousand population embraces all forms of open space to which the public has access for recreation, together with school and privately-owned sports facilities, which contribute significantly to the provision of playing pitches in the community. Allotments are not included in the above standards.
- 5.12 Major open spaces are those which are used by people from throughout the town and further afield, and are not related to particular neighbourhoods. The larger parks serve a wide catchment area, and playing pitches for organised sports are provided on a town-wide basis.
- 5.13 Playing pitches include all forms of outdoor playing pitches, greens, courts, running tracks and training areas. Golf courses, water areas and park pitches used only as informal kickabout areas are excluded from this category. The standard of 1.6ha per thousand population accords with the recommendations of the National Playing Fields Association (NPFA). The Council's 1992 Playing Pitch Strategy found that this is an appropriate level of provision to meet current needs in Darlington.
- 5.14 The standard for major open space for informal use reflects existing provision, which is in Council ownership and which the Council intends to retain.
- 5.15 Local open spaces serve neighbourhoods, and it is important that spaces for children's play, including equipped playgrounds, and for informal recreation such as walking, are available within 400 metres of all dwellings, without the need to cross a main road or other impeding barrier. The local open space standards reflect NPFA recommendations for children's play, and are already used by the Council in securing acceptable levels of provision. They therefore form the basis of the specific requirements for provision within residential development set out in Policies R6 and R7.

- 5.16 At present, open space provision meets the overall standard of 3.6ha per thousand population across the urban area, but is unevenly distributed. There is a shortfall in playing pitch provision, reflected in Proposal R10, and areas lacking in local open space, notably in the western part of the urban area. The existing pattern of provision in the villages varies considerably.
- 5.17 All recreation open space within the urban area is open land and subject to the protection provided by Policy E3. This general protection against unconsidered loss to development is reinforced by Policy R5, in relation to land within school grounds which is currently surplus to educational requirements, and Policy R9 in relation to playing pitches.

~~POLICY R5 – Land Surplus to Educational Requirements~~

~~DEVELOPMENT OF LAND WITHIN SCHOOL GROUNDS OR DETACHED SCHOOL PLAYING FIELDS WHICH BECOMES SURPLUS TO CURRENT EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT ITS IMPACT IS ACCEPTABLE WITHIN THE TERMS OF POLICIES E3 AND R9, AND THAT IT CAN BE DEMONSTRATED THAT THE LAND IS NOT NEEDED FOR RECREATIONAL USE BY THE SCHOOL OR THE WIDER COMMUNITY IN THE FUTURE.~~

- ~~5.18 Land within school grounds makes a significant contribution of greenery and spaciousness to the amenity of residential areas. Such land is identified as open land to which Policy E3 applies. School grounds also provide playing pitches which are an important component in the overall provision of pitches for the community. Where land is declared surplus to educational requirements it should not automatically be regarded as a development opportunity. Proposals for development will be assessed in accordance with Policies E3 and R9, having regard to the long term needs of the school and the community.~~

~~POLICY R6 – Open Space Provision in New Residential Development~~

~~NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OF TEN OR MORE DWELLINGS WILL BE REQUIRED TO MAKE PROVISION FOR OPEN SPACE FOR RECREATION, TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE FUTURE RESIDENTS OF THE DEVELOPMENT, PRO RATA IN ACCORDANCE WITH A MINIMUM STANDARD OF 1.2ha PER 1,000 POPULATION (EQUIVALENT TO 12m² PER BEDSPACE). THE FORM IN WHICH PROVISION IS MADE WILL BE AS APPROPRIATE TO THE LOCATION AND TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT, AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE GUIDELINES SET OUT IN POLICY R7.~~

- ~~5.19 Developers are expected to make provision of local open space for children's play and informal recreation to serve the needs of their development. The requirement set out in Policy R6 accords with the local open space element of the overall open space standard set out in Policy R4.~~
- ~~5.20 The requirement to make open space provision applies only to developments of ten or more dwellings. Smaller developments cannot support a scale of provision which is of any practical benefit.~~
- ~~5.21 Where open land is to be provided within large scale developments, in accordance with Policy E15, the open space required by Policy R6 will normally be provided within the open land framework, rather than in addition to it.~~
- ~~5.22 Policy R6 establishes a quantitative open space requirement for which all residential development of ten or more dwellings is liable. Policy R7 is concerned with the various ways in which that liability may be discharged as a response to the specific circumstances of each proposal.~~

~~POLICY R7 – The Design of Open Space Provision~~

~~WHERE PROVISION FOR OPEN SPACE FOR RECREATION IS REQUIRED~~

~~UNDER THE TERMS OF POLICY R6, IT SHOULD COMPRISE OPEN SPACE FOR INFORMAL USE (0.6ha PER 1,000 POPULATION / 6m² PER BEDSPACE), AREAS FOR CHILDREN'S ACTIVE GAMES (0.4ha / 4m²), AND EQUIPPED CHILDREN'S PLAYGROUNDS (0.2ha / 2m²). THE BALANCE BETWEEN THESE DIFFERENT TYPES OF PROVISION MAY BE VARIED HAVING REGARD TO DWELLING SIZE AND TYPE. SMALLER DEVELOPMENTS WHICH CANNOT MAKE EFFECTIVE PROVISION FOR ALL TYPES OF OPEN SPACE SHOULD GIVE PRIORITY TO PROVISION FOR CHILDREN'S PLAY, HAVING REGARD TO DWELLING SIZE AND TYPE. OPEN SPACE MAY BE PROVIDED WITHIN OR ADJACENT TO THE SITE OR, WHERE THERE IS ADEQUATE OPEN SPACE PROVISION IN THE LOCALITY, BY IMPROVEMENTS TO EXISTING FACILITIES, OR THROUGH ANY COMBINATION OF THESE OPTIONS, HAVING REGARD TO SITE LOCATION AND CHARACTERISTICS. WHERE APPROPRIATE, OFF SITE PROVISION MAY BE MADE BY MEANS OF A CAPITAL PAYMENT TO THE COUNCIL. WHERE THE COUNCIL AND THE DEVELOPER AGREE THAT OFF SITE PROVISION IS APPROPRIATE, THE DEVELOPER WILL BE REQUIRED TO ENTER INTO FORMAL ARRANGEMENTS TO SECURE THE PROVISION.~~

~~5.23 New residential development places additional demands on local open space. Policy R7 seeks to ensure that the provision required by Policy R6 is designed to meet the particular needs of the development and of the surrounding locality. The liability for open space provision applies equally to all residential development and Policy R6 provides a measure of (and a means of costing) that liability, but the form which provision takes will be dependant on the type and scale of development and the characteristics of the site and the neighbourhood.~~

~~5.24 The breakdown of local open space into its constituent parts, as set out in Policy R7, provides an indicator of the normal balance of provision which is desirable in family housing development. The desired balance may be different in specialised forms of housing development, such as starter homes or elderly persons dwellings, where the emphasis will be on amenity open space and children's play facilities may not be required.~~

~~5.25 The total open space liability for smaller developments will not be sufficient to enable all the local open space elements to be provided at a scale which is of any practical value. Priority should be given to provision for children's play, where this is appropriate to the type of housing proposed. A development of ten dwellings could support the provision of a small equipped playground suitable for use by younger children. Seventy or more dwellings could support the provision of all the elements at usable scales.~~

~~5.26 The form of provision may be influenced by existing open space provision in the locality. The needs of the residents of the development as well as the locality may be best served by improving existing facilities rather than providing additional open space. When assessing existing provision the Council will take account of local open space only. Parks and playing pitches which serve a town-wide population are counted against the major open space standard set out in Policy R4, and they should not be regarded, for the purpose of assessing levels of provision, as doubling up as local open space. Allotments will not be counted as local open space.~~

~~5.27 A number of locations within the following areas of existing public open space have been set aside by the Council as sites for the provision of children's play equipment: Parkside, Heron Drive, Whinfield Green Lane, and Hampass, Sadberge. Developers of land in close proximity to these sites may choose to discharge all or some of their open space liability by installing equipment. The key test of such proposals, as with all off site open space provision, is whether the need for off site provision arises directly from the development itself. Where children's play facilities are to be provided, whether on site, off site or through a payment to the Borough Council, the provision of play equipment is required.~~

~~5.28 The Council will encourage developers to discuss their proposals at the earliest possible stage, to agree a bedspace figure as the basis for measuring open space liability and to consider the most appropriate ways of making provision. Supplementary planning guidance will be prepared by the Council.~~

~~POLICY R8 – Maintenance of Recreation Facilities~~

~~WHERE THE BOROUGH COUNCIL IS ASKED TO ADOPT AREAS OF OPEN SPACE AND PLAY FACILITIES PROVIDED IN ASSOCIATION WITH NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPALLY FOR THE USE OF RESIDENTS OF THE DEVELOPMENT, A CAPITAL SUM WILL BE SOUGHT BY NEGOTIATION WITH THE DEVELOPER TO COVER THE MAINTENANCE OF THE FACILITIES FOR A PERIOD TEN YEARS.~~

- ~~5.29 It is accepted that where recreation facilities are provided exclusively or primarily for the benefit of residents of a new housing development, it is reasonable that the costs of maintaining those facilities should be met initially by the developer rather than the local authority. The developer may choose to make private arrangements for maintenance, and if necessary, the Borough Council will seek a formal planning agreement requiring open spaces and play equipment to be retained and maintained to a reasonable standard. If, however, the Council is asked to adopt facilities, a commuted sum will be sought, calculated to cover maintenance costs for ten years.~~

PLAYING FIELDS

~~POLICY R9 – Protection of Playing Pitches~~

~~DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD RESULT IN THE LOSS OF ANY PLAYING FIELD, PITCH OR COURT WILL NOT BE PERMITTED UNLESS ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING CIRCUMSTANCES APPLIES:~~

- ~~1. THE DEVELOPMENT IS FOR NEW OR IMPROVED FACILITIES RELATED TO THE USE OF THE PLAYING FIELD;~~
- ~~2. THE DEVELOPMENT INVOLVES A SMALL PART OF A PLAYING FIELD AND WILL BRING ABOUT THE ENHANCEMENT OF THE REMAINDER AND AN OVERALL IMPROVEMENT IN THE QUALITY OF THE FACILITY;~~
- ~~3. ALTERNATIVE PROVISION WILL BE PROVIDED BY THE DEVELOPER; OR~~
- ~~4. THE COUNCIL'S MONITORING OF PLAYING PITCH PROVISION AGAINST DEMAND FOR FACILITIES INDICATES AN EXCESS OF PLAYING PITCH PROVISION.~~

~~IN THE URBAN AREA THE IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS WILL ALSO BE ASSESSED WITHIN THE TERMS OF POLICY E3.~~

- ~~5.30 The Council's intention to protect open land in the built up areas has already been established (Policy E3). Playing fields are identified as open land on the Proposals Map, but they merit specific protection because of their special recreational significance and the development pressures to which they are increasingly vulnerable.~~

- ~~5.31 The Council's Playing Pitch Strategy has found that participation levels in pitch sports are rising and that, at the time of drafting the Plan, the provision of playing pitches is beginning to fall short of demand. This practical finding correlates with the theoretical shortfall measured against the Council's standard for playing pitch provision, referred to in paragraph 5.16 above. This is compounded by the fact that not all education pitches, which contribute to provision, are available for use by the community. As a result the condition of other Council owned pitches is deteriorating as they become overplayed. Some 80% of the pitches on which the Strategy's analysis of provision is based are owned privately or by the Council as education authority. These pitches are available to the community either for hire or through the playing of league fixtures on them.~~

- ~~5.32 Playing fields are often seen as potentially valuable assets by their owners, providing a development opportunity as an alternative to the liability of ongoing maintenance. However, local planning authorities are encouraged to take a long term view of community recreation needs in considering proposals involving the loss of playing fields. The Playing Pitch Strategy has demonstrated that any such loss in Darlington would be a serious blow to sports and recreation provision. Privately owned sites provide the best playing pitches in the Borough available to the community, and the loss would be qualitative as well as quantitative.~~

~~PROPOSAL R10 - Eastbourne Playing Pitches~~

~~LAND FORMERLY WITHIN THE GROUNDS OF EASTBOURNE SCHOOL WILL BE RESERVED FOR THE PROVISION OF TWO PLAYING PITCHES FOR PUBLIC USE.~~

- ~~5.33 At present Council owned playing fields at Alderman Crooks Park are not used because of the lack of changing facilities. The Playing Pitch Strategy concludes that even if these pitches can be brought back into use at least two more football pitches are required to satisfy current levels of demand. These pitches could be provided on the land declared surplus to educational requirements at Eastbourne School and disposed of in 1993. The land, identified on the Proposals Map, adjoins Hundens Park, so that pitches could be managed in conjunction with the Council's pitches in the park.~~

POLICY R11 - Artificial Turf Playing Pitch

PROPOSALS TO INSTALL ARTIFICIAL TURF PLAYING SURFACES WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT:

- A. THE SITE IS ACCESSIBLE TO PEDESTRIANS, CYCLISTS AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT USERS;**
 - B. TRAFFIC ATTRACTION THROUGH RESIDENTIAL STREETS IS AVOIDED;**
 - C. THE CAR PARKING STANDARDS PURSUANT TO POLICY T24 SET OUT IN THE ANNEX TO CHAPTER 9 ARE COMPLIED WITH;**
 - D. NEIGHBOURING OCCUPIERS, AND THE AMENITIES OF ANY RURAL AREA, ARE PROTECTED FROM ADVERSE EFFECTS OF NOISE, OF GENERAL DISTURBANCE, AND OF FLOODLIGHTING; AND**
 - E. THE SITE IS WELL RELATED TO OTHER SPORTS FACILITIES.**
- 5.34 The Playing Pitch Strategy found that the outstanding need in Darlington is for an artificial pitch. The development of hockey, in particular, is constrained by the lack of a pitch, and football could benefit from an artificial surface for practice and five-a-side, taking pressure off grass pitches. Eastbourne School (Proposal R10) and John Dixon Lane (Proposal R21) are possible locations.

ACCESS FOR INFORMAL RECREATION

POLICY R12 - Access to Open Land and Countryside

PUBLIC ACCESS TO OPEN LAND AND THE COUNTRYSIDE WILL BE ENCOURAGED BY MAINTAINING AND EXTENDING THE EXISTING NETWORK OF PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY AND OTHER PATHS. RECREATION ROUTES WILL BE CREATED USING PARTS OF THE EXISTING NETWORK TOGETHER WITH NEW LINKS TO IMPROVE ACCESS FROM BUILT-UP AREAS FOR PEDESTRIANS, PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES, PEDAL CYCLISTS AND / OR HORSE-RIDERS.

- 5.35 Walking is the commonest form of recreation, and the public rights of way network is potentially the Borough's most important recreation asset. Cyclists and horse-riders also benefit from the network. The Council, as highway authority, is committed to safeguarding and improving rights of way. The Council is also committed to extending informal access opportunities, especially to open land in the urban area.
- 5.36 Despite the Borough's network of over 300km of rights of way, the local countryside is under-utilised for recreation. It is probable that many recreation trips to nearby National Parks and other areas of outstanding countryside could be made locally if people were aware of the access opportunities, and it is important that people are able to enjoy peace, space and nature in the vicinity of their own homes. Recreation routes provide clear, well-defined and signed paths with comfortable surfaces, created out of the existing rights of way network, disused railway trackbeds and other informal paths, which can be readily promoted and publicised. The emphasis in creating recreation routes will be on providing opportunities to gain access from

the built-up areas into the countryside.

- 5.37 The Council is making progress in the creation of recreation routes alongside the River Skerne in the urban area and along the Barnard Castle railway trackbed. The extension of the Skerneside path is continuing, and the Council is seeking to ensure that proposals for the construction of the Cross Town Route (Proposal T6.1) will enable recreation use of the Stockton and Darlington Railway trackbed to be safeguarded, and to be extended in association with residential development at Middleton St. George.
- 5.38 Other recreation route opportunities would use the rights of way network. Much has been done to improve the paths linking Darlington with Hurworth and the Teesdale Way long distance path. Patches Lane and paths in the Skerne valley / Ketton area have also been improved. These areas offer opportunities to build on these improvement works by creating and promoting selected recreation routes. In developing recreation routes using existing rights of way, it is important that the legal rights of all users, including vehicular rights and private as well as public rights, are recognised and accommodated in the improvement and signing of routes.
- 5.39 The Teesdale Way follows the course of the River Tees, currently utilising existing rights of way. It links with a similar route in the lower Tees valley to create a continuous walking route along the Tees from Teesmouth to Middleton-in-Teesdale. The Council will seek opportunities to improve the route by providing riverside paths along those stretches where existing rights of way are remote from the river, or where the existing route follows roads. Such improvements will only be achieved by negotiation and agreement and are not likely to be brought about in the near future. Within Darlington Borough the stretches where improvements are desirable include Blackwell Bridge to Oxneyfield Bridge; the Rockcliffe peninsula; Newbus Cottages to Neasham; and Neasham Hall to Sockburn Lane. The Teesdale Way will be a key recreation resource for local users as well as long distance walkers, and improvement works are currently in hand.

- 5.40 The former Croft railway trackbed and remaining sections of the Barnard Castle trackbed west of the A1(M), could provide very attractive recreation opportunities. Such prospects are long-term, however, because the trackbeds have passed into private ownership and there is no public access to them.

~~POLICY R13 - Recreation Routes and New Development~~

~~IN CONSIDERING DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS, THE COUNCIL WILL HAVE REGARD TO THE EXISTENCE OF OPPORTUNITIES TO LINK THEIR ASSOCIATED OPEN SPACE, FOOTPATH AND LANDSCAPE PROVISIONS WITH OTHERS ADJOINING AND, WHERE APPROPRIATE IN THE INTERESTS OF AMENITY, CONVENIENCE OR NATURE CONSERVATION, WILL PROMOTE THE CREATION OF INTERCONNECTING NETWORKS OF SUCH PATHS AND SPACES.~~

- ~~5.41 The extension and improvement of the network of open land in the urban area by large scale new development is a requirement of Policy E15. Such provision may also allow for the extension or creation of recreation routes, and for public access to open land for recreation, depending on the location and characteristics of the site, its relationship to existing paths and open land, and open land proposals within the site.~~

- ~~5.42 The design of footpath links within housing developments, particularly between houses and cul-de-sac heads, can cause security problems or be a source of nuisance to adjoining residents. Such links should be bounded on both sides by areas of public open space, where possible forming an integral part of a comprehensive open space, landscaping and footpath scheme for the whole development. This should take into account Policy E46 (safety and security) which requires developers to take account of security issues in the design of development.~~

RECREATION DEVELOPMENT IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

POLICY R14 - Recreation Development in the Countryside

DEVELOPMENT FOR COUNTRYSIDE-RELATED SPORTS OR RECREATION ACTIVITIES, OR DEVELOPMENT RELATED TO THE QUIET ENJOYMENT OF THE COUNTRYSIDE FOR INFORMAL RECREATION, WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THERE WOULD BE NO SIGNIFICANT HARM TO THE CHARACTER OR APPEARANCE OF THE COUNTRYSIDE, ASSESSED AGAINST THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:

1. IMPACT OF BUILDINGS, ROADS OR OTHER STRUCTURES, OR THE ACTIVITY ITSELF ON THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE COUNTRYSIDE, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT POLICIES E4, E7 AND E8;
2. IMPACT ON AGRICULTURAL LAND AND VIABILITY, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT POLICY E6;
3. EFFECT OF NOISE OR OTHER FORMS OF DISTURBANCE ON NEARBY RESIDENTS OR OTHER COUNTRYSIDE USERS ARISING FROM THE ACTIVITY OR FROM INCREASED TRAFFIC ON ACCESS ROADS;
4. IMPACT ON PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY AND OTHER RECREATION FACILITIES, IN TERMS OF PHYSICAL DAMAGE, DISTURBANCE OR DANGER;
5. IMPACT ON THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF RURAL ROADS ARISING FROM KERBING, THE CREATION OF VISIBILITY SPLAYS, SIGNING AND OTHER MEASURES NEEDED TO ACCOMMODATE INCREASED TRAFFIC FLOWS;
6. IMPACT ON FLORA AND FAUNA, WILDLIFE HABITATS AND WILDLIFE CORRIDORS.

IN CONSIDERING PROPOSALS FOR SITES IN THE AREA OF HIGH LANDSCAPE VALUE DEFINED IN POLICY E8 THE COUNCIL WILL HAVE PARTICULAR REGARD TO THE DESIRABILITY OF SAFEGUARDING THE QUIET ENJOYMENT OF THE AREA.

- 5.43 The countryside is the preferred location for many recreation and sporting pursuits apart from the 'access activities' of walking, cycling and horse-riding. Some are specialised aspects of simple enjoyment of the countryside, such as bird-watching, and pose no threat to its character or amenity. Others may be organised uses of land requiring planning permission and potentially damaging because of noise or other disturbance.
- 5.44 There are relatively few locations for organised recreation and sport in the Borough; many activities require physical conditions or features that are not present in the local countryside. However, watersports are provided for at Bishopton and Middleton St. George, woodlands are used for shooting and, increasingly, for paintball games, and fishing takes place in the lower Skerne, the Tees and in various ponds. There has been substantial growth in participation in golf in recent years, and in demands for facilities; specific policies for golf development are included below.
- 5.45 Countryside-related sports and recreation development is acceptable in principle outside development limits. Countryside-related development includes facilities to serve rural communities, and those sports and recreation activities which, by their nature, require or are appropriate to a countryside location. Proposals will be assessed against Policies E4, E5 and E6, relating generally to new development in the countryside, and Policy E7, relating to landscape conservation. Policy R14 reinforces this general policy framework specifically in relation to recreation development and, in accordance with the Plan's landscape policies, places particular emphasis on the protection of the Area of High Landscape Value (Policy E8). This approach is one of protecting the countryside for its own sake and discouraging activities which do not need to be located outside built-up areas. It is envisaged that the future recreation potential of the local countryside in the Plan area lies primarily in the quiet enjoyment of its environment.

POLICY R15 - Horse-Related Development

PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT RELATED TO THE KEEPING AND RIDING OF HORSES FOR RECREATIONAL AND / OR COMMERCIAL PURPOSES WILL BE PERMITTED IN THE COUNTRYSIDE PROVIDED THE DEVELOPMENT WOULD NOT DETRACT FROM THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE LOCALITY OR FROM THE AMENITY ENJOYED BY RESIDENTS OR PEOPLE USING THE AREA FOR OTHER RECREATION ACTIVITIES, AND WOULD NOT BE HARMFUL TO WILDLIFE.

- 5.46 Horse-riding is an increasingly popular recreation activity, and the keeping of horses, either privately or on a commercial basis, can have an impact on the appearance of the countryside. Utilitarian stable buildings and home-made jumps can appear intrusive and unkempt. However, the keeping of horses can be beneficial in providing a new use for unused or under-used farmland, particularly close to the urban area. Employment opportunities may also be provided.
- 5.47 The Plan's countryside and landscape policies (E4 to E8) provide the basis for considering development proposals in the countryside. Policy R15 reinforces that policy framework in relation to development for the keeping and riding of horses. The operation of sites can also have an impact on character and amenity, for example through erosion of vegetation and rights of way. The Council will have regard to recommended standards for the comfort and safety of horses in considering development proposals.

GOLF DEVELOPMENT

POLICY R16 - Stressholme Golf Centre

THE COUNCIL WILL CONTINUE TO DEVELOP THE EXISTING GOLF COURSE AT STRESSHOLME AS A GOLF CENTRE. PROPOSALS FOR NEW BUILDINGS OR OTHER INSTALLATIONS MUST BE DESIGNED TO MINIMISE THEIR IMPACT ON THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE COUNTRYSIDE, LANDSCAPE, WILDLIFE AND PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY. FUTURE TREE AND

SHRUB PLANTING SHOULD HAVE REGARD TO THE WIDER LANDSCAPE IN ITS FORM AND SPECIES.

- 5.48 The municipal golf course at Stressholme is an established and very popular ‘pay-as-you-play’ facility and it makes a strong contribution to the landscape character of the lower Skerne valley through its tree cover. A golf driving range has been constructed, and the Council’s intention is to continue the development of Stressholme as a golf centre, whilst making sure that any developments are not damaging to their surroundings. The provision of a ‘par-three’ golf facility is the subject of Policy R18.

~~POLICY R17 – Golf Course Development~~

~~PROPOSALS FOR GOLF COURSE DEVELOPMENT WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT:~~

- ~~A. THEY DO NOT HAVE A MATERIALLY ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE APPEARANCE OF THE COUNTRYSIDE IN GENERAL AND ON THEIR LOCAL LANDSCAPE SETTING IN PARTICULAR;~~**
- ~~B. THEY DO NOT RESULT IN THE PERMANENT LOSS TO AGRICULTURE OF THE BEST AND MOST VERSATILE AGRICULTURAL LAND;~~**
- ~~C. APPROPRIATE MEASURES ARE INCORPORATED TO SAFEGUARD OR TO CREATE WILDLIFE HABITATS OR PUBLIC RIGHTS OF ACCESS TO THE LAND;~~**
- ~~D. THE SITE IS ACCESSIBLE TO POTENTIAL USERS.~~**

~~PROPOSALS SHOULD BE SUBMITTED IN SUFFICIENT DETAIL TO ALLOW THESE MATTERS TO BE ASSESSED.~~

- ~~5.49 Existing golf courses are located at Blackwell, Haughton Grange, Dinsdale and Hall Garth, Coatham Mundeville. The Council’s intentions for Stressholme do not preclude the continuing development of these courses, provided that any proposals accord with the criteria set out in Policy R16 and with Policies E4 (new buildings in the countryside), E7 (landscape conservation) and E9 (protection of parklands). The Council encourages the enhancement and management of golf courses for their landscape, amenity and nature conservation value. Blackwell golf course, in particular, is important for its management of the prominent and attractive parkland landscape alongside a major road approach into Darlington.~~

- ~~5.50 The demand for golf facilities has outstripped the supply: although new courses have been provided in recent years, there is no sign that demand has been satisfied by these facilities. Golf courses can be a landscape, amenity and nature conservation asset. Equally, an insensitive design, concerned first and foremost with ‘playability’ rather than landscape, can be damaging and disruptive, particularly in parkland settings. It is essential that the Council is able to assess the impact of future proposals on landscape and wildlife, and full details of course design and construction will be sought at the outset.~~

~~POLICY R18 – Par Three Golf Course~~

~~PROPOSALS FOR THE PROVISION OF A PAR THREE GOLF COURSE WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT IN ITS LOCATION AND DESIGN IT SATISFIES THE REQUIREMENTS OF POLICY R17.~~

~~5.51 A ‘par three’ golf course provides an intermediate level facility between a park pitch and putt course and an eighteen hole course. Appealing primarily to beginners, it is appropriate that a par three course should be provided in the public sector, so that it is available to non club members. The Council’s intention is that a par three course should be provided as part of the Stretsholme golf centre, where maximum benefit can be derived for users from its proximity to the eighteen hole course, driving range, clubhouse, shop and other facilities.~~

~~5.52 A site has not been identified in the Plan. It is possible that land on the north side of the A66, adjoining Darlington Rugby Club’s ground, could be used, but it is relatively remote from the clubhouse. Land would need to be acquired to provide a par three course adjacent to the existing course. The Council will pursue the proposal as opportunities arise and resources allow.~~

~~ALLOTMENTS~~

~~POLICY R19 – Protection of Allotments~~

~~DEVELOPMENT INVOLVING THE LOSS OF ALLOTMENT GARDENS WILL NOT BE PERMITTED UNLESS:~~

- ~~1. A COMPENSATING AREA OF AN APPROPRIATE SIZE HAS BEEN PREPARED FOR USE IN A SUITABLE LOCATION; OR~~
- ~~2. IT CAN BE SHOWN THAT NO LOCAL DEMAND FOR ALLOTMENT GARDENS EXISTS.~~

~~PROPOSALS WILL BE CONSIDERED IN THE LIGHT OF POLICY E3.~~

~~5.53 All allotments in the urban area are identified as open land on the Proposals Map, and are therefore protected from loss to development by Policy E3. This protection is reinforced by Policy R19 in recognition of the valuable recreation resource which allotments provide, and to set out the circumstances in which development on allotment land may be permitted. Statutory allotments cannot be disposed of without the consent of the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport & the Regions under the terms of the Allotments Act 1925. The statutory allotments in the Borough are those at Sugar Hill, Cockerton (west side of West Beek); Hundens Lane (Allotment Association site only); Salters Lane North; and Barmpton Lane. Part of the Honeypot Lane allotment site is located within the Cross Town Route safeguarding corridor. The road should be aligned to avoid the allotment, or any loss of plots should be compensated by new provision in the vicinity.~~

~~5.54 Allotments which cease to be used may nevertheless be important as open land, in terms of amenity or potentially as open space, and development proposals affecting those within the urban area will be considered within the terms of Policy E3.~~

SPORTS, RECREATION AND LEISURE DEVELOPMENT

~~POLICY R20 – New Sports and Recreation Development~~

~~NEW SPORTS AND RECREATION DEVELOPMENTS WILL BE PERMITTED WITHIN BUILT UP AREAS WHERE THEIR IMPACT ON TRAFFIC AND RESIDENTIAL AMENITY IS ACCEPTABLE, WHERE SATISFACTORY CAR PARKING CAN BE PROVIDED, AND WHERE THEY ARE SITED IN LOCATIONS ACCESSIBLE TO PUBLIC TRANSPORT USERS, CYCLISTS AND PEDESTRIANS.~~

~~5.55 Darlington is well provided with indoor sports facilities. The Dolphin Centre is a venue of regional significance for swimming and a wide range of indoor sports and leisure activities. Other indoor venues include the Larchfield Street, Archer Street and Quaker Sports Centres, various community centres and village halls, the Morrison Indoor Bowls Centre, which hosts~~

~~national televised tournaments, and the Topspin Tennis Centre at Teesside Airport.~~

- ~~5.56 Outdoor sports are not so well provided for. The Playing Pitch Strategy identifies deficiencies for some team sports such as football and hockey. Most parks have well-maintained bowling greens, but their tennis courts are in need of improvement, with many being unplayable at the present time. The Borough's best tennis courts are provided by private clubs, at Blackwell, Brinkburn Road, High Coniscliffe and the Topspin Centre. Bowling greens are provided at the Woodlands Club and at BRSA's Brinkburn Road ground. Athletics provision is sub-standard. The only facility, the Longfield Road stadium, is not satisfactory by present day standards. Policy R22 refers specifically to athletics provision.~~

~~PROPOSAL R21 John Dixon Lane Sports and Recreation Development~~

~~6.0ha OF LAND AT JOHN DIXON LANE WILL BE RESERVED FOR FUTURE SPORTS, RECREATION AND LEISURE PROVISION. PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE LAND MUST INCLUDE THE PROVISION OF AN EQUIPPED CHILDREN'S PLAYGROUND TO SERVE THE ADJOINING RESIDENTIAL AREA. MEANWHILE, THE LAND WILL BE RETAINED AS OPEN LAND FOR INFORMAL RECREATION AND / OR WILDLIFE HABITAT.~~

- ~~5.57 The Council's Leisure Plan assesses the demand for a much broader range of sports, recreation and leisure facilities than the narrower team sports focus of the Playing Pitch Strategy. The findings of the strategy are reflected in Policies R9 and R11 and Proposal R10. The Leisure Plan concluded that Darlington lacks certain facilities for which a demand exists, including a modern athletics track (Policy R22). The John Dixon Lane site provides a satisfactory location for this and other sports and recreation facilities such as an artificial pitch (Policy R11). However, access and development will be dependent on the development of land to the north (Proposal EP4); there should be no vehicular access to the site from John Dixon Lane in order to safeguard the amenity of nearby houses.~~

~~POLICY R22 Synthetic Athletics Track~~

~~PROPOSALS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SYNTHETIC ATHLETICS TRACK WILL BE PERMITTED WITHIN THE DEVELOPMENT LIMITS FOR THE URBAN AREA, PROVIDED IT IS LOCATED WHERE ITS APPEARANCE, LIGHTING AND USE WILL NOT BE DETRIMENTAL TO RESIDENTIAL AMENITY, WHERE IT WILL BE ACCESSIBLE FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORT USERS, CYCLISTS AND PEDESTRIANS, AND WHERE SATISFACTORY CAR PARKING CAN BE PROVIDED.~~

- ~~5.58 The existing athletics facility at Longfield Road is not of a satisfactory standard or condition for modern training and competition requirements. Whilst a site is not identified in the Plan, a modern facility could be located on the land at John Dixon Lane (Proposal R21); this would be dependant on development of the land to the north for access. The land at Eastbourne School (Proposal R10) could also be suitable, although the priority there is for the provision of additional football pitches, followed by the artificial pitch (Policy R14). A third option would be to replace the existing track at Longfield Road, but that site is not in a particularly accessible location.~~

POLICY R23 - Off-Road Motorcycle Facility

PROPOSALS FOR THE PROVISION OF A SITE FOR ORGANISED AND SUPERVISED OFF-ROAD MOTORCYCLING ACTIVITIES WILL BE PERMITTED, ON A TEMPORARY OR PERMANENT BASIS AS APPROPRIATE, PROVIDED THAT IT IS LOCATED WHERE ITS APPEARANCE AND USE WILL NOT BE MATERIALLY DETRIMENTAL TO RESIDENTIAL AMENITY, OR THE CHARACTER AND ENJOYMENT OF OPEN LAND AND THE COUNTRYSIDE, AND WHERE IT IS ACCESSIBLE TO POTENTIAL USERS.

- 5.59 There is considerable demand, particularly from young people in the urban area, for access to open land for off-road motorcycling. This demand represents a legitimate recreation interest,

but most of the current activity is illegal and perceived as a serious problem which is no longer confined to just one or two areas of the town. Motorcycles are ridden in places where disturbance is caused to other people, in terms of noise and physical danger, and many bikes are unlicensed and in an unroadworthy condition, and the riders uninsured. Policing alone cannot be effective in dealing with these problems.

- 5.60 Experience elsewhere has shown that provision of a site for off-road motorcycling can engender an organised and responsible approach to the activity, which in turn can help to reverse its sporadic and anti-social aspects. Motor sport's governing bodies have an important role to play in supporting such projects, and they should be consulted in the development of proposals.
- 5.61 Provision of a site is only part of the solution. A multi-disciplinary approach, involving the Council, Police and Probation Officers, which overcomes the problem of insurance and liability, is required to respond satisfactorily to the existing problems. Such an approach resulted in the provision of a temporary facility at Firth Moor. The experiment was successful and permission has been granted for a more long term facility. The site is inside the development limits and sufficiently distant from dwellings and other buildings not to cause disturbance, but is on land allocated for employment development in the Plan.
- 5.62 The Firth Moor site can be used whilst it remains undeveloped for other purposes, subject to safeguards for users of adjoining rights of way, the agricultural tenant and for the adjacent Site of Nature Conservation Importance. However, an alternative site may be needed in future if employment development takes place, and other sites will be needed in other parts of the town, if similar projects are developed.
- 5.63 Finding suitable sites will be difficult. Priority must be given to the protection of dwellings from noise. It is also important that people using open land or the countryside for other recreation activities do not have their enjoyment impaired and that there is no harm to nature conservation interests. Proposals must be considered within the terms of Policies E3 and R14.

POLICY R24 ~~Leisure Facilities~~

~~THE COUNCIL WILL SAFEGUARD AND ENHANCE THE ROLE OF DARLINGTON, AND IN PARTICULAR DARLINGTON TOWN CENTRE, AS A FOCAL POINT FOR ARTS AND LEISURE FACILITIES SERVING THE SUB-REGION. PROPOSALS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF LEISURE FACILITIES WILL BE PERMITTED WITHIN OR ON THE EDGE OF THE TOWN CENTRE. PROPOSALS FOR MAJOR FACILITIES, ATTRACTING CUSTOMERS FROM A TOWN WIDE OR LARGER CATCHMENT AREA, WILL BE PERMITTED ELSEWHERE WITHIN THE URBAN AREA ONLY PROVIDED THAT:~~

- ~~A. THERE ARE NO SUITABLE SITES AVAILABLE IN OR ON THE EDGE OF THE TOWN CENTRE;~~
- ~~B. THERE WOULD BE NO DAMAGING IMPACT ON THE VITALITY AND VIABILITY OF THE TOWN CENTRE, INCLUDING THE EVENING ECONOMY;~~
- ~~C. THE SITE WOULD BE EASILY ACCESSIBLE BY A CHOICE OF MEANS OF TRANSPORT; AND,~~
- ~~D. THE DEVELOPMENT WOULD NOT ADD SIGNIFICANTLY TO OVERALL TRAVEL AND CAR USE.~~

~~FACILITIES SERVING A PURELY LOCAL CATCHMENT WILL BE PERMITTED IN OR ON THE EDGE OF THE DEFINED DISTRICT AND LOCAL CENTRES, SUBJECT TO THE SAME REQUIREMENTS AS FOR NEW SHOPPING DEVELOPMENT THERE (POLICY S11). WHERE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS INVOLVE THE DEMOLITION OF BUILDINGS PURPOSE DESIGNED AND USED, OR LAST USED, FOR LEISURE ACTIVITIES, THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK THE PROVISION OF REPLACEMENT FACILITIES WITHIN THE DEVELOPMENT.~~

- ~~5.64 Darlington provides a range of attractive and high quality arts and leisure facilities for both~~

~~local people and visitors. Major publicly owned provision includes the Civic Theatre, Arts Centre, Library and Art Gallery, Dolphin Centre and Railway Museum. Commercial facilities include pubs, nightclubs, bingo halls, snooker clubs and a cinema. The Council is keen to maintain and expand the town's role, in particular that of the town centre. Recent and proposed environmental enhancement works help make the centre a more attractive location for leisure uses, and improvements to car parking, security and personal safety encourage its extended use into the evening, bolstering the 'evening economy'.~~

- ~~5.65 Facilities which the Borough currently lacks, and which could attract commercial investment, include an ice rink, bowling alley and a modern multi screen cinema. Prospective developers of major leisure facilities such as these and large, 'new style', bingo clubs will be required to adopt a sequential approach to site selection, demonstrating that sites within and on the edge of the town centre have been thoroughly assessed before less central locations are put forward. The first preference should always be for a site within the centre. Away from the town centre, proposed developments will be need to be genuinely accessible to a significant proportion of customers and staff arriving by public transport, on foot and by bicycle, and the proposal will be expected not to lead to any material increase in overall travel, in particular car use. It is essential that any such developments do not detract from the town centre. Proposal EP4 provides for an element of leisure use at land off Haughton Road within a comprehensive development scheme, and carried out in conjunction with Proposal R21 (John Dixon Lane sports and recreation development).~~
- ~~5.66 Facilities serving a local catchment population will normally be appropriate in or adjoining district and local shopping centres, provided that they are physically integrated with, and have good pedestrian links to, the rest of the centre. Car parking spaces should be available for shared use with the shopping facilities. The maximum distance between facility entrances and incoming and outgoing bus stops should not exceed 200m where a level walk is involved, or 400m in any other situation. Planning permissions will be subject to conditions restricting the hours of operation, where residential amenity requires safeguarding.~~
- ~~5.67 Many existing leisure buildings, such as the cinema and theatre, are specially designed and represent a resource which, wherever possible, should be retained in leisure use.~~
- ~~5.68 Particular parts of the town attract concentrations of facilities, for example, restaurants in Northgate and activities centred on the theatre in Parkgate. Encouragement will be given within the town centre to the establishment of street activities such as pavement cafés and street entertainment.~~

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

~~POLICY R25 Provision of Community Facilities and Services~~

~~**PROPOSALS FOR NEW BUILDINGS OR CHANGE OF USE AND CONVERSION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS FOR COMMUNITY PURPOSES, INCLUDING COMMUNITY AND YOUTH CENTRES, CHURCHES AND CHURCH HALLS, EDUCATION AND HEALTH FACILITIES, LIBRARY SERVICES, EMERGENCY SERVICES AND LOCAL SHOPS WILL BE ENCOURAGED, HAVING REGARD TO THE NEED TO SAFEGUARD RESIDENTIAL AMENITY, THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE SURROUNDINGS AND HIGHWAY SAFETY.**~~

- ~~5.69 The Council is keen to ensure that the existing range of facilities provided to satisfy community needs within the Borough is retained and where appropriate expanded. The services which are provided include sub post offices, doctor's and dentist's surgeries, and places of worship. Child day care centres also provide an important local service for young families, and public houses are a vital element of a community allowing for both socialising and providing meeting rooms for community based groups. The varied nature of these facilities means that the operational hours and conditions may be outside normally accepted times; for example the use of religious buildings depends on the religion and its customs to determine the days and hours of use. Similarly the need for parking may occur away from peak times, as for a Sunday church~~

~~service.~~

- ~~5.70 Due to the variety of operating hours and conditions, applications for uses which will function at off peak times, or uses which create noise at abnormal hours, may be granted permission on a temporary basis at the outset, to establish their impact on residential amenity. Where appropriate, restrictions may also be imposed on the hours of operation. The current expansion of day care nursery provision warrants particular attention: proposals are usually located in residential areas and care must be taken to ensure that noise and disturbance arising from parents delivering and picking up children is not detrimental to residential amenity.~~

~~POLICY R26 - Protection of Community Facilities~~

~~THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO RETAIN COMMUNITY FACILITIES, WHERE PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT WOULD RESULT IN THE LOSS OF BUILDINGS OR LAND WHICH SERVE COMMUNITY PURPOSES, THE COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE THE PROVISION OF ALTERNATIVE FACILITIES TO SERVE THOSE PURPOSES IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE DEVELOPMENT, PROVIDED THAT THERE IS A CONTINUING NEED FOR SUCH FACILITIES.~~

- ~~5.71 Where a development proposal would result in the loss of a service or facility for which there is a continuing need, the Council will encourage, by negotiation, the provision of replacement facilities to satisfy the need. The new facility should be sited close by, to retain the local range of services within easy access to the community.~~
- ~~5.72 In cases where the need for a particular service has ceased and there is no future requirement for that service in the locality then the re-use of the site for other purposes will be considered.~~

POLICY R27 - Sites for New Community Facilities

THE COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE DEVELOPERS TO RESERVE LAND FOR THE PROVISION OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES IN MAJOR NEW HOUSING SITES.

- 5.73 Where a major site is proposed for housing there can be an opportunity to provide space for community facilities, to enable residents to benefit from a similar level of provision to existing residential areas and help maintain service and facility levels for the residents of surrounding areas.
- 5.74 The provision to be sought will be based on an estimate of demand in the locality, and will be outlined in planning briefs which will be prepared to provide detailed guidance. Appropriate legal agreements will be sought to ensure that, unless developed earlier for an approved purpose, the land is reserved throughout the period of the major site's development.

PROPOSAL R28 - School Provision at Brinkburn

2.45ha OF LAND WILL BE RESERVED FOR A PRIMARY SCHOOL TO THE NORTH OF BRINKBURN ROAD.

- 5.75 The Council holds land to the north of Brinkburn Road, as shown on the Proposals Map, with access from Bellburn Lane, for the development of a new primary school.
- 5.76 The site has been grassed for use in part as playing fields by the existing Reid Street School pending the construction of the new school.

POLICY R29 - Village Community Halls

THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW VILLAGE COMMUNITY HALLS OR THE IMPROVEMENT OF EXISTING HALLS WILL BE PERMITTED WITHIN THE DEVELOPMENT LIMITS, PROVIDED THAT THE PROPOSAL:

- 1. RESPECTS THE SCALE AND CHARACTER OF ITS SURROUNDINGS;**
- 2. DOES NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE AMENITY OF THE AREA;**

3. INCORPORATES SATISFACTORY ACCESS AND PARKING PROVISION.

- 5.77 Community halls play an important part in the life of a village particularly in meeting the needs of children, the elderly, and people with disabilities, and appropriate proposals to extend and enhance the availability of such assets are encouraged by the Council. In any scheme for extension or reconstruction regard must be paid to the setting of the building and its existing character and proposals should respect the visual amenity of the village.

PROPOSAL R30 - West Cemetery Extension

4.6ha OF LAND IS RESERVED FOR AN EXTENSION TO WEST CEMETERY.

- 5.78 This proposal is made to enable the Council to continue to meet its statutory obligation to provide consecrated ground for burials. At West Cemetery limited space now remains for new graves. The land available for burials in West, North and East cemeteries together will be filled within an estimated ten years. The extension provides for anticipated needs to beyond the period of the Plan.

CHAPTER 6:

EMPLOYMENT

BACKGROUND

OBJECTIVES

Policies and Proposals:

EMPLOYMENT PROVISION

EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT

OFFICES

DEVELOPMENT OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT AREAS

SPECIALIST EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT

CHAPTER 6: EMPLOYMENT

BACKGROUND

- 6.1 Darlington serves as an employment centre for an area extending well beyond the Borough boundaries. It is able to provide employment within its boundaries for approximately 75% of its working population, and there is a significant net inflow of workers from South Durham and North Yorkshire (1991 Census).
- 6.2 Employment in the Borough has been increasing in recent years, primarily in female and part-time jobs in the service industries, with a loss in full-time male employment in manufacturing industries.
- 6.3 Unemployment is similar to that in Durham City, which is higher than Teesdale and the adjacent North Yorkshire districts, but lower than in Teesside, Tyne and Wear and large parts of County Durham.
- 6.4 Employment in the Borough is concentrated in the town centre, the older mixed housing and industrial areas of inner Darlington, the industrial estates at Faverdale and Yarm Road, and small areas at Middleton St. George and Teesside Airport. There is also a spread of employment throughout the Borough in local services such as schools, shops, pubs and hotels, and, in the rural area, agriculture.
- 6.5 Employment in manufacturing industry in inner Darlington has declined significantly in recent years. Several major employers have ceased operation and their sites have been cleared and / or redeveloped for housing (e.g. Coles Cranes, Whessoe, Phoenix Tubeman), although other sites (e.g. Darlington Forge) are being redeveloped as employment areas.
- 6.6 Darlington Travel-to-Work Area (which includes most of Teesdale District and part of Richmondshire but excludes Heighington Parish) is now classified as a non-Assisted Area. Only minimum central government funding to encourage employment and employment related initiatives is available. This is less than that for the adjacent Travel-to-Work Areas to the east and north which continue to benefit from Assisted Area status.
- 6.7 These areas include Newton Aycliffe and Teesside, the latter having benefited from Teesside Development Corporation and City Challenge investment. Whilst this seriously detracts from Darlington's competitive position, these areas are in close proximity and are able to provide employment for Darlington residents.
- 6.8 The loss of Assisted Area status, and in particular the Regional Selective Assistance grant, acts as a severe disincentive for business expansion and inward investment, which is exacerbated as neighbouring parts of the region have maintained their designated status. Grant aid for reclamation and infrastructure improvements have been further reduced, leaving the Borough dependent on other sources of funding, particularly cross-subsidisation through mixed employment and other development.
- 6.9 At a sub-regional and regional level, Darlington's location on the principal north-south and east-west transport routes has nevertheless helped it to attract inward investment. It is at the southern point of entry to the North-East's 'central corridor', adjacent to the main London-Edinburgh railway line and A1(M) Motorway, extending through or close to Newton Aycliffe, Spennymoor, Durham and the Tyneside conurbation. The corridor has generally been more successful than other parts of the region in attracting inward investment.

- 6.10 The Council's Economic Development Strategy identifies Darlington's excellent location in the communication network as a key element in attracting inward investors, and supports improvements to the transport infrastructure. It also highlights a shortage of fully-serviced industrial land.
- 6.11 For the purposes of the Plan, employment uses are those within Part B of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987.

OBJECTIVES

- 6.12 The Council's objectives for employment, to be pursued through the policies and proposals of the Plan, are:
- i) To provide for and sustain a robust and diverse local economy;
 - ii) To provide conditions conducive to the retention and expansion of existing employment and economic activity, the stimulation of new local business and the attraction of inward investment;
 - iii) To encourage the formation and development of small businesses;
 - iv) To encourage investment in research and development and high technology industries and services;
 - v) To provide for and sustain a wide range of employment opportunities for the inhabitants of the Borough and the surrounding area;
 - vi) To encourage employment in locations readily accessible to local people, by public transport, cycling or walking;
 - vii) To allocate sufficient land and buildings to provide for development of a wide variety of employment providing uses;
 - viii) To ensure that adequate fully serviced industrial land is available at all times;
 - ix) To maintain the importance of the town centre;
 - x) To promote the Yarm Road and Faverdale industrial areas as employment centres;
 - xi) To assist the efficient distribution of goods and services with minimum environmental impact.

Policies and Proposals:

~~EMPLOYMENT PROVISION~~

~~POLICY EP1 – Land Supply for Employment~~

~~PROVISION WILL BE MADE FOR A CONTINUOUS SUPPLY OF LAND SUITABLE FOR A WIDE RANGE OF EMPLOYMENT PROVIDING ACTIVITIES TO ATTRACT NEW EMPLOYERS AND MEET THE EMPLOYMENT NEEDS OF DARLINGTON AND THE SURROUNDING AREA. THIS SHOULD BE EASILY ACCESSIBLE BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT, CYCLING OR WALKING.~~

- ~~6.13 There will continue to be a need to allocate land to attract inward investment, provide for the expansion of existing activity and provide additional employment opportunities to compensate for losses in established areas and provide for the changing employment needs of people in Darlington and the surrounding area.~~

~~6.14 Activities for which provision needs to be made include:~~

- ~~i) office, research and development and light industrial activities seeking locations with high standards of amenity and accessibility (e.g. office / business parks);~~
- ~~ii) other industrial activities with similar requirements (e.g. 'prestige' industry);~~
- ~~iii) single large industrial users;~~
- ~~iv) other industrial, storage and distribution uses;~~
- ~~v) activities requiring special transport facilities (e.g. heavy goods, rail, air); and,~~
- ~~vi) small businesses.~~

~~6.15 Provision also needs to be made for employment development to be located so as to:~~

- ~~i) minimise dependence on the motor car for home to work and other business related journeys;~~
- ~~ii) minimise the environmental and amenity impact of the road traffic it generates;~~
- ~~iii) cater for local employment needs, in the villages and rural area as well as in the town;~~
- ~~iv) be attractive to inward investment.~~

~~6.16 It is considered that these needs can best be met by concentrating new development in the town centre, and the Faverdale and Yarm Road industrial areas, and by retaining employment in inner Darlington.~~

EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT

POLICY EP2 - Employment Areas

PERMISSION WILL BE GRANTED FOR BUSINESS (USE CLASS B1) USES WITHIN THE FOLLOWING EXISTING EMPLOYMENT AREAS:

- 1. VALLEY STREET;**
- 2. CLEVELAND STREET / THE FORGE;**
- 3. ALBERT HILL / DODSWORTH STREET;**
- 4. BLACKETT ROAD / RED BARNES WAY;**
- 5. BANKS ROAD;**
- 6. YARM ROAD INDUSTRIAL AREA;**
- 7. FAVERDALE INDUSTRIAL AREA;**
- 8. WHESOE ROAD;**
- 9. AYCLIFFE INDUSTRIAL ESTATE;**
- 10. BOROUGH ROAD.**

GENERAL INDUSTRIAL (USE CLASS B2) AND WAREHOUSING (USE CLASS B8) USES WILL BE PERMITTED WHERE THEY DO NOT HARM THE AMENITY OF THE AREA OR NEARBY RESIDENTIAL AREAS. DEVELOPMENT WILL NOT BE PERMITTED IF ITS ACCESS IS VIA A RESIDENTIAL STREET AND IT WILL HAVE A MATERIAL ADVERSE IMPACT ON RESIDENTIAL AMENITY. WHERE PRACTICABLE, ACCESS SHOULD BE OBTAINED FROM STREETS NOT IN RESIDENTIAL USE.

- 6.17 Most of these areas are well established or include land with planning permission, and have good access to the existing or proposed main road network. Also most abut or are in close proximity to the proposed Cross Town Route. Policy H15 applies to development which would adversely affect residential amenity. Policy T40 applies to development which would be likely to result in a significant increase in the number and size of heavy goods and other large vehicles.

- 6.18 Industrial and other business uses already predominate. These areas are normally separated from residential areas by physical features such as areas of open space and roads, and it is important that this separation is maintained and enhanced. Part of Yarm Road industrial area is defined as a prestige employment area (Policy EP6).
- 6.19 The Council seeks improvements in the appearance of these areas through improved design and landscaping of development, particularly on sites close to their boundaries, visible from residential development, adjacent to the main road and rail routes, and adjacent to the River Skerne (Policies E14, E16, E18 and E29). Where necessary vacant and derelict sites will be reclaimed to enable them to be brought back into use (Policy E17). Where appropriate, planning briefs will be prepared for the guidance of landowners and developers.

PROPOSAL EP3 - New Employment Areas

LAND WILL BE PROVIDED FOR NEW EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT (USE CLASSES B1, B2 AND B8) IN THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS:

- 1. McMULLEN ROAD (WEST) (6ha);**
- 2. McMULLEN ROAD (EAST) (6ha);**
- 3. YARM ROAD INDUSTRIAL AREA (56ha);**
- 5. FAVERDALE INDUSTRIAL AREA (49ha);**
- 6. HEIGHINGTON LANE BUSINESS PARK EXTENSION (14ha).**

- 6.20 These areas are proposed in pursuance of Policy EP1 to ensure that a wide range of sites is available to meet opportunities as they arise throughout the Plan period. (Note that there is no site EP3.4.) They have good road access to the A1(M) motorway and the main road network (Policy T40), and have good public transport links with Darlington and other major population centres. They are capable of accommodating a wide variety of uses, including offices, research and development, light industry, prestige industry, general industry and warehousing. Policy EP6 identifies areas to be developed for prestige employment and Policy EP7 identifies areas where office / business park development (use class B1) will be encouraged.
- 6.21 The site at Faverdale (EP3.5) is an extension to the existing industrial area. It has been provided with drainage infrastructure, has good road access to the Cross Town Route and A1(M) motorway, and has potential for rail access. Substantial advance structure planting will be required on the northern edge of the site (Policy E14).
- 6.22 The site at Yarm Road (EP3.3) is adjacent to the existing industrial estate, can be easily serviced, has good road access to the A66(T) and has potential for rail access.
- 6.23 The site at McMullen Road (East) (EP3.2) is adjacent to the existing industrial development and will have good road access to the Cross Town Route via a proposed junction at McMullen Road. The site at McMullen Road (West) (EP3.1) is already allocated in the Inner Darlington Local Plan, is on tipped land, is adjacent to existing industrial development and will have good road access to the Cross Town Route via a proposed junction at Blackett Road.
- 6.24 The site at Heighington Lane (EP3.6) is an extension to a site proposed as a prestige business area by the adjoining local authority, Sedgefield Borough Council. It is intended that it will be developed as an integral part of that site, which has good road access and potential for rail access, and that it will gain access from it. Advance planting and landscape works will be required on the western edge of the site.
- 6.25 Substantial structural landscaping and a high standard of design will be required, paying particular attention to views from main travel routes (Policy E16) and the retention of tree belts, hedgerows and other natural features (Policy E12).

PROPOSAL EP4 - Haughton Road

10ha OF LAND OFF HAUGHTON ROAD WILL BE RESERVED FOR BUSINESS (USE CLASS B1), LEISURE OR RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, TO BE UNDERTAKEN COMPREHENSIVELY AND IN CONJUNCTION WITH PROPOSAL R21.

- 6.26 This area is prominently located adjacent to the main railway line and close to the town centre, and is easily accessible by all means of transport from the town and the surrounding area. It is therefore considered to be suitable for a range of uses such as research and development, light industry, exhibition / hotel / conference, entertainment (subject to the provisions of Policy R24), or sports grounds.
- 6.27 It comprises former railway land and the Council's depot at Vicarage Road. Reclamation is likely to be required, together with major improvements to off-site drainage facilities which will need to be secured by an appropriate legal agreement. Design and landscaping will need to take account of the area's proximity to housing and the main railway line. Access will need to be taken from Haughton Road.
- 6.28 Opportunities exist to rationalise the Council's depot operation, and secure environmental improvements in conjunction with development of the former railway land.
- 6.29 Comprehensive development of the site, in conjunction with Proposal R21 is necessary to assist in the implementation of the latter to overcome the constraints referred to above, and to maximise the opportunities provided by its large site and its proximity to the centre of the town. This should conform to a planning brief setting out in particular the broad disposition of land uses, access details and landscaping. Outline approval for development - to include leisure, petrol filling station, fast food restaurant, non-food retail, offices and recreation facilities on an area including this site - was granted in 1996, with details being approved in May 1997.

~~POLICY EP5 - Other Uses in Employment Areas~~

~~DEVELOPMENT OTHER THAN FOR B1, B2 AND B8 EMPLOYMENT PURPOSES WILL BE PERMITTED IN THE AREAS IDENTIFIED IN POLICY EP2 AND PROPOSALS EP3 AND EP4 (OTHER THAN THOSE TO WHICH POLICY EP6 APPLIES) ONLY TO THE EXTENT THAT IT ACCORDS WITH THE POLICIES APPLICABLE TO IT AND FORMS PART OF COMPREHENSIVE PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT OR REDEVELOPMENT WITHIN USE CLASSES B1, B2 AND / OR B8 OR (IN THE CASE OF PROPOSAL EP4) FOR LEISURE AND RECREATIONAL PURPOSES. EXCEPTIONS MAY, SUBJECT TO THE OTHER PROVISIONS OF POLICY EP2, BE MADE IN THE CASE OF DISUSED LAND THE SUBJECT OF THAT POLICY WHICH IT IS IMPRACTICAL TO INTEGRATE INTO COMPREHENSIVE REDEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS.~~

- ~~6.30 These areas are intended to provide specifically for a broad base of economic activity and employment, and other uses will not normally be acceptable. Possible exceptions might include other uses which in view of their physical and locational characteristics, and their contribution to the provision of employment infrastructure, might appropriately be located in employment areas (other than prestige employment areas).~~

POLICY EP6 - Prestige Employment

THE FOLLOWING AREAS OF EMPLOYMENT LAND WILL NORMALLY ONLY BE DEVELOPED FOR PRESTIGE EMPLOYMENT SITES:

- 1. YARM ROAD INDUSTRIAL AREA;**
- 2. FAVERDALE INDUSTRIAL AREA;**
- 3. HEIGHINGTON LANE BUSINESS PARK EXTENSION.**

DEVELOPMENT WILL BE REQUIRED TO ACHIEVE A HIGH STANDARD OF DESIGN AND LANDSCAPING. ONLY USE CLASSES B1, B2 AND EXCEPTIONALLY B8 WILL BE CONSIDERED.

- 6.31 Prestige employment development requires locations which offer the opportunity to provide a high profile appearance, attractive and prominent settings, and good access to the main road network and A1(M). Site requirements are sometimes extensive, with the need to accommodate, for example, large buildings set in extensive grounds. Because of the scarce nature of prestige quality land only use classes B1, B2 and exceptionally B8 are appropriate.
- 6.32 The identified areas may also be considered for office / business parks (Policy EP7).
- 6.33 The boundaries within the employment areas indicate the general areas to be reserved. Detailed boundaries will be determined when there are firm development proposals.
- 6.34 The policy includes areas within established (Policy EP2) and proposed (Proposal EP3) employment areas, to help safeguard and enhance established prestige frontages, for example Yarm Road.

POLICY EP7 - Office / Business Park Development

OFFICE / BUSINESS PARK DEVELOPMENT (USE CLASS B1) WILL NORMALLY BE PERMITTED IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS OF EMPLOYMENT LAND:

- 1. McMULLEN ROAD (EAST)**
- 2. YARM ROAD INDUSTRIAL AREA**
- 4. FAVERDALE INDUSTRIAL AREA**
- 5. HAUGHTON ROAD**
- 6. HEIGHINGTON LANE BUSINESS PARK EXTENSION.**

- 6.35 This type of development includes offices, research and development and other similar activities in use class B1, having similar environmental and locational requirements to those of prestige industry.
- 6.36 The areas within which this type of development is considered to be most appropriately located are those reserved for prestige industry at Yarm Road and Faverdale and Heighington Lane Business Park extension, together with McMullen Road and Haughton Road. Other uses for these areas are not precluded, nor is the development of office / business parks in other locations proposed for employment development and which are well served by public transport. (Note that there is no site EP7.3).

POLICY EP8 - Reserve Employment Site

LAND NORTH OF FAVERDALE CLOSE TO THE A1(M)-A68 JUNCTION WILL BE RESERVED FOR DEVELOPMENT BY LARGE INDUSTRIAL USERS.

- 6.37 A site of approximately 120 hectares which already has planning permission for industrial development is to be held in reserve for development by up to two single major industrial users. It will not be developed on a piecemeal basis by smaller users, for whom provision is made elsewhere.
- 6.38 The site is strategically located, close to and visible from the junction of the A1(M) and A68. It is being promoted as a location for inward investment of sub-regional importance, with the potential for bringing major economic and employment benefits to the Darlington sub-region.

- 6.39 High standards of landscaping and design, particularly in respect of views from the A1(M) and A68 at Burtree, will be sought. Wherever possible, existing landscape features should be retained and enhanced as part of the development. Road access will be obtained from the Cross Town Route, and rail access from the Faverdale road / rail freight depot (Proposal T47) should be safeguarded.
- 6.40 The site's reserve status is reflected in its exclusion from the development limit for the town, and in the terms and conditions of the existing planning permission. It is not available for the wider range of employment uses covered by Policy EP2 and Proposal EP3.

POLICY EP9 - Teesside Airport Employment Land - North

DEVELOPMENT REQUIRING A LOCATION AT OR ADJACENT TO AN AIRPORT WILL BE PERMITTED AT TEESSIDE AIRPORT TO THE NORTH OF THE MAIN RUNWAY IN THE VICINITY OF THE AIRPORT TERMINAL

POLICY EP10 - Teesside Airport Employment Land - South

LAND TO THE SOUTH OF THE MAIN RUNWAY WILL BE SAFEGUARDED FOR DEVELOPMENT WHICH REQUIRES A LOCATION AT OR ADJACENT TO AN AIRPORT AND WHICH:

- 1. CANNOT BE LOCATED TO THE NORTH OF THE MAIN RUNWAY IN THE VICINITY OF THE AIRPORT TERMINAL; AND**
 - 2. FORMS PART OF A COMPREHENSIVE SCHEME PROVIDING FOR ACCESS TO, AND THE ORDERLY DEVELOPMENT OF, THE WHOLE OF THE AREA TO THE SOUTH OF THE MAIN RUNWAY, TOGETHER WITH LAND IN THE ADJOINING LOCAL AUTHORITY AREA; AND**
 - 3. INCORPORATES ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS WHICH DO NOT INTERFERE WITH THE OPERATION OF THE AIRPORT; AND**
 - 4. PROVIDES FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE AREA OF HIGH LANDSCAPE VALUE TO THE SOUTH OF THE AIRPORT.**
- 6.41 The Council wishes to maximise the economic development opportunities provided by Teesside Airport's unique combination of physical capacity to support further development, location close to Darlington, Teesside and the Tees estuary, and excellent road and rail links. Development should be limited to that requiring a location at or near an airport, rather than development which would be more appropriately located in Darlington or Teesside, to enable that potential to be realised. Adequate land for development which does not need to be located adjacent to the airport is available nearby in Darlington and Teesside. Such development at the airport would result in excessive and unnecessary commuting, unnecessary strain on inadequate infrastructure and unnecessary intrusion into the countryside.
- 6.42 The area occupied by former Ministry of Defence buildings and roads between the terminal area, the Darlington - Middlesbrough branch railway line and the A67 road offers the greatest potential for development and redevelopment. It has good access to the airport terminal and related facilities, and to the main road (Policy T40) and passenger rail (Policy T44) networks.
- 6.43 It is, however, occupied by a number of buildings and under-used sites whose appearance would benefit from improvement. Upgrading and / or renewal of the existing road and drainage infrastructure is also desirable and should accompany any development or redevelopment proposals. Development in the vicinity of the terminal should not prejudice the future expansion of the latter.

- 6.44 Existing uses which require a location at or adjacent to an airport include fire training school, car hire facilities, aviation personnel training, aircraft engineering and servicing, flight servicing and hotel. Acceptable new uses may include air freight handling and storage, airport-related road transport, travel agency, mail / parcels handling and sorting, and conference accommodation.
- 6.45 The future development potential of the airport, and adjoining land, is being investigated by the airport operator and the local authorities. The Borough Council considers that land to the south-east of the main runway, within the airport perimeter, may, notwithstanding its countryside location, have potential for development which requires a location at or near an airport. As this land cannot be accessed other than through the adjacent land to the east within the area of the adjoining local authority, Stockton Borough Council, it can only be developed in conjunction with the development of that land. Additionally the form of development must provide for the protection of the character and appearance of the Tees Valley landscape to the south (Policy E8), including, for example, advance structural planting.

OFFICES

PROPOSAL EP11 - Central Area Development Sites

CLASS B1 OFFICE DEVELOPMENT WILL BE PERMITTED AT THE FOLLOWING CENTRAL AREA DEVELOPMENT SITES:

- 1. CROWN STREET (0.6ha);**
- 3. BEAUMONT STREET (0.9ha);**
- 4. BEAUMONT STREET WEST (0.1ha);**
- 5. COMMERCIAL STREET (0.8ha).**

DEVELOPMENT AT CROWN STREET, BEAUMONT STREET AND COMMERCIAL STREET WILL BE UNDERTAKEN IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE CONSTRUCTION OF MULTI-STOREY CAR PARKING (PROPOSAL T19). OTHER TRAVEL INTENSIVE USES FOR WHICH A TOWN CENTRE LOCATION IS APPROPRIATE AND WHICH ACCORD WITH THE PLAN MAY ALSO BE PERMITTED.

- 6.46 All but one of these sites are currently used as surface public car parks and adequate alternative provision must be made as part of or in conjunction with any redevelopment proposed. Class B1 office use is identified in the first instance as this is normally travel intensive and can help to enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre. Other possible uses for some of the sites include shopping (Policy S1), leisure facilities (Policy R24), and hotels (Policy TO4) where these accord with other policies in the Plan. (Note that there is no site EP11.2.)

POLICY EP12 - Office Development Limits

CLASS B1 OFFICE DEVELOPMENT WILL BE PERMITTED ELSEWHERE WITHIN THE CENTRAL AREA OFFICE DEVELOPMENT LIMIT, THE NORTHGATE FRINGE SHOPPING AREA, EMPLOYMENT AREAS AND DISTRICT CENTRES UNLESS OTHER USES ARE PROPOSED OR SAFEGUARDED.

- 6.47 Further office development in and in close proximity to the town centre will help to enhance the latter's vitality and viability, and encourage the use of public transport. Suitable sites exist which are either unused or in temporary use, together with a stock of buildings, or unused upper floors of buildings, suitable for conversion.
- 6.48 Office / business parks and free standing offices which require surrounding grounds to accommodate, for example, landscaping or car parking may be located within employment areas and in particular at the locations specified in Policy EP7.

~~POLICY EP13 - Office Development Elsewhere~~

~~CLASS B1 OFFICE DEVELOPMENT OUTSIDE THE AREAS COVERED BY~~

~~POLICY EP12 WILL BE PERMITTED WHERE IT IS WELL SERVED, OR HAS THE CLEAR POTENTIAL TO BE WELL SERVED, BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT AND INVOLVES:~~

- ~~1. EXTENSIONS TO EXISTING OFFICES WHICH DO NOT HAVE A MATERIAL ADVERSE IMPACT ON THEIR SURROUNDINGS; OR~~
- ~~2. PROPOSALS FOR OFFICES ANCILLARY TO THE MAIN USE OF THE PREMISES; OR~~
- ~~3. THE CHANGE OF USE OF AN EXISTING BUILDING WHERE THERE IS NO MATERIAL ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE APPEARANCE OF THE BUILDING, ON HIGHWAY SAFETY OR THE AMENITIES OF THE SURROUNDING AREA.~~

~~6.49 Outside the areas referred to in EP12 there are sites and buildings in established office use where extensions may not have adverse impact on their surroundings.~~

~~6.50 These exceptions should only be made, however, where the site is well served by public transport, as offices can be travel intensive and generate excessive additional car borne traffic.~~

~~6.51 Listed buildings or other buildings of historic or architectural interest, houses set in extensive grounds, or former industrial buildings, whose existing or previous use may no longer be viable, may be suitable for use as offices, particularly where improvements to the buildings and surroundings can be incorporated. Proposals must comply with other policies in the Plan.~~

~~DEVELOPMENT OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT AREAS~~

~~POLICY EP14 Existing Employment Development~~

~~PLANNING PERMISSION WILL NOT NORMALLY BE GRANTED FOR REDEVELOPMENT OR CHANGE OF USE FOR OTHER PURPOSES OF EXISTING EMPLOYMENT SITES WHICH ARE LOCATED OUTSIDE THE AREAS DEFINED IN POLICY EP2. EXCEPTIONS MAY BE MADE WHERE:~~

- ~~1. THE COUNCIL CONSIDERS THAT THE IMPACT OF THE PROPOSAL ON THE SUPPLY OF LAND AND BUILDINGS FOR EMPLOYMENT USE WILL BE ACCEPTABLE; AND~~
- ~~2. THE PROPOSAL WILL RESULT IN MATERIAL IMPROVEMENTS TO THE AMENITIES OF THE SURROUNDING AREA; AND~~
- ~~3. THE PROPOSAL WILL SATISFY LOCALLY ARISING DEMANDS FOR DEVELOPMENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH OTHER PLAN POLICIES NOT PROVIDED FOR BY SPECIFIC ALLOCATIONS.~~

~~6.52 The Plan envisages that existing employment uses will continue to make a substantial contribution to employment and economic activity, and the purpose of this policy is to maintain the stock of sites and buildings. Where buildings and sites become vacant they should normally continue in employment use unless this would conflict with other policies in the Plan and another use might be more appropriate. The circumstances in which continued employment use would not be desirable will frequently be where the use adversely affects residential amenity in the older mixed use areas of the town close to the town centre and district centres and with good public transport provision. These locations are often well suited, in whole or in part, for making provision for specialist housing, community facilities or open space.~~

~~POLICY EP15 - Development Outside Employment Areas~~

~~OUTSIDE THE AREAS DEFINED UNDER POLICIES EP2, EP8 AND EP9 AND PROPOSALS EP3 AND EP4, DEVELOPMENT WITHIN USE CLASSES B1, B2 AND B8 WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT ANY MATERIALLY ADVERSE EFFECT ON THE AMENITIES ENJOYED BY NEIGHBOURING OCCUPIERS AND ON HIGHWAY SAFETY IS AVOIDED, AND:~~

- ~~1. SUCH DEVELOPMENT IS PROVIDED FOR IN EP11, EP12, OR EP13; OR~~
- ~~2. IT INVOLVES THE ALTERATION OR SMALL SCALE EXTENSION OF AN AUTHORISED OR ESTABLISHED ACTIVITY; OR~~
- ~~3. IT IS SO RELATED TO AGRICULTURE OR TO OTHER RURAL ACTIVITY THAT ITS LOCATION IN THE COUNTRYSIDE OR IN A VILLAGE IS REASONABLY REQUIRED; OR~~
- ~~4. IT INVOLVES THE CONVERSION OR CHANGE OF USE OF AN EXISTING BUILDING IN THE COUNTRYSIDE, AND THE CHARACTER OF THE SURROUNDINGS IS NOT IMPAIRED.~~

~~6.53 Employment development which adversely affects residential amenity, or is located in the countryside, will not normally be acceptable.~~

~~6.54 Exceptions may be made where alterations and extensions improve the appearance of a development and ameliorate other environmental and traffic problems e.g. noise attenuation or other forms of pollution control, access, parking and servicing.~~

~~6.55 Agricultural or land based activities include horticulture, forestry, countryside recreational uses (Policy R14), some horse related activities (Policy R15), countryside and farm based tourism (Policies TO1, TO5 and TO6), and other forms of farm diversification appropriate to the countryside.~~

SPECIALIST EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT

~~POLICY EP16 - Hazardous Industry~~

~~STRICT CONTROL WILL BE EXERCISED OVER HAZARDOUS, OR POTENTIALLY HAZARDOUS, INSTALLATIONS AND OVER DEVELOPMENT IN THEIR VICINITY. DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD PLACE LARGE NUMBERS OF PEOPLE POTENTIALLY AT RISK WILL BE PERMITTED ONLY EXCEPTIONALLY. OTHER DEVELOPMENT WILL BE PERMITTED ONLY IF, AFTER CONSULTATION WITH THE RELEVANT AGENCIES, THE LEVEL OF RISK IS CONSIDERED TO BE ACCEPTABLE.~~

~~6.56 Because hazardous uses are extremely diverse in their locational and other characteristics it is not considered appropriate to make specific land allocations in the Plan. Proposals will be considered having regard to the particular characteristics of the process(es) involved. Any application will be required to be accompanied by a justification for the proposed location.~~

POLICY EP17 - Waste Material Storage, Processing and Transfer

PREMISES FOR THE STORAGE AND PROCESSING OF RECLAIMED OR SCRAP MATERIALS OR FOR THE DISMANTLING OF MOTOR VEHICLES AND OTHER MACHINERY MAY BE PERMITTED WITHIN THE EMPLOYMENT AREAS COVERED BY POLICY EP2 AND PROPOSAL EP3 (EXCLUDING AREAS COVERED BY POLICIES EP6 AND EP7) WHERE:

1. THERE ARE NO ADJACENT CLASS B1 USES;
2. THE STORAGE OR PROCESSING OF ANY MATERIAL IN THE OPEN IS NOT VISIBLE FROM THE MAIN OR BRANCH LINE RAILWAYS, THE MAIN ROAD NETWORK, THE LINE OF THE CROSS TOWN ROUTE, OR RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY;
3. THERE IS ADEQUATE SCREENING OF THE SITE BY A FENCE, WALL OR OTHER MEANS OF ENCLOSURE;

4. THERE IS NO MATERIAL ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE AMENITY OF THE SURROUNDING AREAS.

- 6.57 The Plan encourages the recycling of materials and components and it is important that provision is made for the accommodation of the necessary processing and transfer activities.
- 6.58 The policy provides guidance on the location, appearance and operation of activities which are generally unsightly, and can cause problems even in industrial areas.

CHAPTER 7:

SHOPPING

BACKGROUND

OBJECTIVES

Policies and Proposals:

GENERAL LOCATION

TOWN CENTRE

TOWN CENTRE FRINGES

DISTRICT AND LOCAL CENTRES

OTHER MAJOR NEW SHOPPING DEVELOPMENT

LOCAL SHOPS

OTHER RETAIL POLICIES

CHAPTER 7: SHOPPING

BACKGROUND

- 7.1 Darlington has been an important market town for at least eight centuries and retailing remains the main economic activity in the town centre today. The town centre is the fifth-largest shopping centre in the North East. It serves a wide sub-region of South Durham and North Yorkshire, encompassing a catchment population of over 275,000. Within the centre are some 500 retail units of all kinds, including around 350 class A1 shops and almost 100,000m² of gross retail floorspace.
- 7.2 In character, the central shopping area is essentially compact and traditional, arranged mainly along the historic street pattern within the inner ring road. The privately-owned, enclosed, Cornmill shopping centre, which opened in 1992, injected a substantial element of modern retailing floorspace into the town centre, but because of strong links into the existing main streets did so without detracting from this basic character.
- 7.3 Shopping in the town centre supports, and is supported by, a full range of ancillary activities. Some, such as cafes, banks and building societies, are more appropriately found inter-mixed in shopping frontages with shops than others, such as offices. Most depend for their long-term health on the continuing success of shopping in attracting people to the centre.
- 7.4 At one time the town centre met most of the shopping needs of the residents of Darlington. Greater disposable incomes and increased car ownership has led to growing competition for household spending between shopping centres in the region - both 'traditional' centres such as Newcastle, Middlesbrough and Stockton and newer out-of-town developments such as the MetroCentre and Teesside Park - and Darlington must continually look to improve its attractiveness in order to compete successfully. At a time when most major centres contain the same national multiple retailers it is particularly important that Darlington retains and enhances the unique aspects of its character.
- 7.5 Increased mobility has also brought about a growth in shopping facilities outside the town centre, in the form of food superstores, supermarkets and retail warehouses. These developments have been intended to complement the town centre, by concentrating on everyday items and major household goods, rather than compete with it. The food stores mainly support district and local centres which are accessible to all sectors of the population - those travelling on foot or bicycle or by public transport as well as by car.
- 7.6 At the lowest level of the shopping hierarchy are small local shops, serving neighbourhoods or villages. Around 200 of these survive in the Borough, often providing an invaluable service in the face of competition from larger stores.

OBJECTIVES

- 7.7 The Council's objectives for shopping, to be pursued through the policies and proposals of the Plan, are:
- i) To ensure that the shopping needs of the residents of Darlington and surrounding area can be met as much as possible from within the town itself, without the requirement to travel regularly to other centres.
 - ii) To ensure that the town centre continues to thrive and develop as an attractive and efficient market town and sub-regional shopping centre.
 - iii) To ensure that shopping remains the principal economic activity of the town centre, underpinning a full range of complementary activities without being displaced by them.
 - iv) To ensure that any retail development which needs to take place outside the town centre does so without threat to the vitality and viability of the centre.

- v) To ensure that the everyday shopping needs of residents can be met conveniently close to their homes from attractive and efficient district and local centres and from small local shops.

Policies and Proposals:

~~GENERAL LOCATION~~

~~POLICY S1 – New Shopping Development~~

~~SHOPPING DEVELOPMENT WILL BE PERMITTED WITHIN THE TOWN CENTRE, PROVIDED IT IS NOT OF A FORM WHICH WOULD UNDERMINE ITS VITALITY AND VIABILITY. SHOPPING DEVELOPMENT ELSEWHERE IN THE BOROUGH WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE IT ACCORDS WITH POLICIES S2 AND S9 TO S23 BELOW.~~

- ~~7.8 The Borough Council will continue to direct all appropriate retail development, particularly class A1 shops, to the town centre, as defined on the Proposals Map. Sufficient land and buildings exist within the area to meet the likely demands for town centre shopping growth during the Plan period. It needs to be acknowledged, however, that not all kinds of shopping development will always be acceptable in the town centre, for instance if there is conflict with other policies (such as design or traffic considerations) or if a development would be at the expense of other town centre uses which it is desirable to retain. The aim is to protect not existing town centre retail interests per se, but rather the wide range of uses which contribute to the diversity of the town centre, and thus to its vitality and viability. Development outside the centre will be considered only in the circumstances set out in the rest of this chapter.~~

TOWN CENTRE

~~POLICY S2 – Safeguarding the Town Centre~~

~~THE COUNCIL WILL SAFEGUARD AND ENHANCE THE VITALITY AND VIABILITY OF THE TOWN CENTRE. RETAIL DEVELOPMENTS OUTSIDE THE TOWN CENTRE WHICH WHEN TAKEN WITH OTHER RECENT AND PROPOSED DEVELOPMENTS WOULD UNDERMINE THAT VITALITY AND VIABILITY WILL NOT BE PERMITTED.~~

- ~~7.9 The vitality and viability of the town centre does not depend solely on a healthy retail sector but this is the single most important activity, underpinning many others, and the Council will resist any proposals which might jeopardise it. The long established traditional open and covered market is an important particular component of retail provision, contributing greatly to the character and vitality of the town, and the Council will resist development which would adversely affect it. At the same time the Council will pursue, and support, initiatives which will enhance the town centre, including environmental improvements, town centre management and promotion.~~

PROPOSAL S3 - Abbott's Yard Development

LAND AT ABBOTT'S YARD AND THE ADJACENT BARCLAY'S BANK CAR PARK WILL BE RESERVED FOR NEW SHOPPING DEVELOPMENT OF A SCALE AND CHARACTER WHICH ENHANCES BOTH THE DISTINCTIVE RETAIL ATTRACTIVENESS OF THE TOWN CENTRE AND THE SITE'S SETTING WITHIN THE CONSERVATION AREA. IN PARTICULAR, THE DEVELOPMENT WILL BE EXPECTED TO PROVIDE A RANGE OF MAINLY SMALL UNITS IN A HIGH QUALITY DESIGN WHICH PAYS REGARD TO THE TRADITIONAL FORM OF DARLINGTON'S TOWN CENTRE YARDS. THE DEVELOPMENT WILL BE REQUIRED TO ACCORD WITH AN APPROVED PLANNING BRIEF FOR THE SITE.

- 7.10 As shoppers become increasingly more mobile, able to choose between different shopping centres, it becomes more important than ever to capitalise upon the distinctive character of Darlington as somewhere unique to shop. One of the town's special characteristics is its historic street pattern, including the narrow yards between High Row and Skinnergate. The yards south of Post House Wynd have survived largely intact (see Policy S7) but much of the area between Post House Wynd and Bondgate was cleared some years ago and serves today as the Abbott's Yard car park. Car parking was always intended as a temporary use pending redevelopment, and the Council now considers that appropriate development should be carried out during the Plan period.
- 7.11 The car park is well used but both access and egress are unsatisfactory, bringing vehicles into what are otherwise pedestrian-priority areas in Bondgate and Skinnergate. The site is too valuable and too centrally-located to continue as a permanent car park and would contribute far more to the town centre, both economically and visually, if developed.
- 7.12 Any redevelopment scheme will need to take into account factors such as the site's location in the Town Centre Conservation Area, the proximity of listed buildings, the typical traditional form of the town centre yards and the pedestrianisation scheme in operation in the adjoining streets. There may be an opportunity to provide a new small open space as a focal point of the development. The need for parking for people with disabilities will be considered. The Council will prepare a planning brief for the site providing guidance on these and other relevant factors. The precise timing of the redevelopment will depend on the rate of progress in providing alternative car parking (Proposals T19 and T20).

POLICY S4 - Town Centre Service Uses

THE LOSS, BY CHANGE OF USE OR REDEVELOPMENT, OF GROUND FLOOR CLASS A1 SHOPS IN THE PRIMARY SHOPPING FRONTAGES OF THE TOWN CENTRE TO BANKS, BUILDING SOCIETIES, ESTATE AGENTS, BETTING OFFICES AND OTHER CLASS A2 SERVICE USES WILL NOT BE PERMITTED. ADDITIONAL A2 USES WILL BE PERMITTED IN THE SECONDARY SHOPPING FRONTAGES PROVIDED THAT THE OVERALL CONCENTRATION OF NON-SHOP USES IN A PARTICULAR LENGTH OF FRONTAGE WOULD NOT BE SUCH AS TO UNDERMINE ITS CHARACTER OR VITALITY AS A SHOPPING FRONTAGE. A2 USES WILL BE PERMITTED ELSEWHERE WITHIN THE TOWN CENTRE.

POLICY S5 - Town Centre Food and Drink Uses

THE LOSS, BY CHANGE OF USE OR REDEVELOPMENT, OF GROUND FLOOR CLASS A1 SHOPS IN THE PRIMARY SHOPPING FRONTAGES OF THE TOWN CENTRE TO RESTAURANTS, CAFES, HOT FOOD TAKE-AWAYS, PUBLIC HOUSES AND OTHER CLASS A3 USES WILL NOT BE PERMITTED. ADDITIONAL A3 USES WILL BE PERMITTED IN THE SECONDARY SHOPPING FRONTAGES PROVIDED THAT THE OVERALL CONCENTRATION OF NON-SHOP USES IN A PARTICULAR LENGTH OF FRONTAGE WOULD NOT BE SUCH AS TO UNDERMINE ITS CHARACTER OR VITALITY AS A SHOPPING FRONTAGE. ELSEWHERE WITHIN THE TOWN CENTRE, A3 USES WILL BE

PERMITTED PROVIDED THERE WILL BE NO MATERIAL ADVERSE EFFECT ON RESIDENTIAL AMENITIES.

POLICY S6 - Non-Retail Uses

USES WHICH ARE NON-CLASS A1, A2, A3 OR AMUSEMENT CENTRES WILL NOT BE PERMITTED ON GROUND FLOORS IN THE PRIMARY OR SECONDARY SHOPPING FRONTAGES OF THE TOWN CENTRE.

- 7.13 A number of uses other than shops are traditionally found in the town centre and these can serve valuable functions. However, ancillary uses should not be allowed to displace the main shopping uses from the most important streets, nor to detract from the shopping character of a particular length of frontage. Class A2 uses differ from class A1 uses generally in that visits are ancillary to visits to shops and other uses, and are not made by children or families, whilst their frontages generally lack interest, with little variety in display. Whilst visits to class A3 uses are also generally ancillary, these uses can also function as attractions, particularly where they cater for specialist demands or operate outside main shopping hours. The Proposals Map identifies the primary shopping frontages of the town centre, where the further loss of any ground floor shop units to non-shop use (defined as uses falling outside class A1 of the Use Classes Order 1987) will normally be resisted. These streets, with the exception of High Row, are occupied almost entirely by shops and it is important to the economic well-being of the town centre that they remain so.
- 7.14 High Row, with a number of long-established banks and building societies, has reached a critical balance between shop and non-shop uses: further breaks in the shopping frontage could jeopardise the shopping function not only of the street itself, but also of much of the southern part of the town centre which is dependent on high pedestrian flows along High Row. Northgate is the principal outdoor shopping street in the town centre, with a large proportion of modern shop units with rear-servicing which meet a demand which is not provided for elsewhere. It remains almost entirely in shop use, continues to attract substantial investment from property owners and shop operators, and contains a number of national retailers. It is important that this role is maintained. Considerable efforts have been made, and will continue to be made, in these streets as elsewhere in the centre, to improve conditions for shoppers (Proposal T15).
- 7.15 Also identified on the Proposals Map are the secondary shopping frontages, where ancillary class A2 and A3 retail activities such as building societies and restaurants will normally be acceptable, intermixed with shops, provided that they do not over-concentrate to the detriment of the shopping function. Some of the secondary frontages, such as Post House Wynd and Blackwellgate, are particularly important as links to the more peripheral shopping streets such as Skinnergate and Grange Road.
- 7.16 Activities not generally found in shopping areas and not serving visiting members of the public will not normally be acceptable in ground floor units in either the primary or secondary shopping frontages. There are adequate opportunities for these uses, such as offices, to locate elsewhere in the town centre, including on upper floors of buildings in the main shopping streets. Policy S19 below gives specific guidance on the location of amusement centres.
- 7.17 The main exception to Policies S4, S5 and S6 is within the area of Mechanics', Clark's and Buckton's Yards, where the following policy applies.

POLICY S7 - Mechanics', Clark's and Buckton's Yards

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SMALL SHOPS, RESTAURANTS AND CAFES WILL BE ENCOURAGED WITHIN MECHANICS', CLARK'S AND BUCKTON'S YARDS. IN THE INTERESTS OF SAFEGUARDING THE SPECIAL CHARACTER OF THE YARDS, USES OTHER THAN THOSE WITHIN CLASSES A1 AND A3 WILL NOT BE PERMITTED IN GROUND FLOOR FRONTAGES, AND THE LATE OPENING OF ANY ADDITIONAL PREMISES TAKEN INTO CLASS A3 USE WILL BE RESTRICTED.

- 7.18 These three narrow yards running between High Row and Skinnergate are the subject of a continuing scheme of environmental improvement aimed at enhancing their special architectural and historic character. Their location close to busy shopping streets has helped them evolve in recent years as havens for small, specialist, independent shops and cafes, complementing the major retailers elsewhere in the town centre and contributing to the distinctiveness of Darlington as a shopping venue. The retail uses are now important elements of the character of the yards which the Council does not wish to see undermined by conflicting uses such as offices (including class A2 offices) or pubs. A small area of cleared land in Clark's Yard is being made available by the Council for new small-scale retail development.

POLICY S8 - Window Displays

ON DEVELOPMENT, REDEVELOPMENT OR CHANGE OF USE AFFECTING THE GROUND FLOOR OF PREMISES IN THE PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SHOPPING FRONTAGES, THE PROVISION AND MAINTENANCE OF WINDOW DISPLAYS WILL BE REQUIRED BY CONDITION, UNLESS THE ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER OF THE BUILDING MAKES THEM INAPPROPRIATE, IN ORDER TO MINIMISE OR TO AVOID THE INTERRUPTION OF CONTINUOUS SHOP FACADES.

- 7.19 Shops, in their own interest, normally maintain window displays, but this is not necessarily the case with other kinds of development commonly found in the main shopping streets. The loss of window displays can disrupt an otherwise continuous shopping frontage and lead to a decline in the interest and attractiveness of a street. Uses establishing themselves in the main shopping streets will normally be required to retain existing window space or, where this does not already exist, to provide and maintain adequate displays. Exceptions may be made in the case of listed buildings with frontages unsuited to display windows, or where such displays would otherwise be inappropriate, such as on public houses, where appropriate architectural interest will be sought instead.

TOWN CENTRE FRINGES

POLICY S9 - Fringe Shopping Areas

SMALL NEW SHOPS, LIMITED EXTENSIONS TO EXISTING SHOPS, AND CLASS A2 SERVICE USES WILL BE PERMITTED IN THE DEFINED FRINGE SHOPPING AREAS.

- 7.20 On the fringe of the town centre, radiating out for short distances, are five small shopping areas containing both local shops and services and some businesses serving the town as a whole. Traders here have the advantage of relatively central locations without the higher rents of the town centre and many provide a useful specialist service to shoppers. The areas, along Northgate, Parkgate, Victoria Road, Duke Street and Bondgate, are defined on the Proposals Map. Generally, any significant new retail development should be directed to the town centre rather than here, in order to maintain the compactness of the centre. However, small-scale development which does not conflict with other policies of the Plan will be permitted in order to ensure that the buildings remain in efficient use, and to assist in the retention of a wide range of retailing in the town. A 'small' shop is defined here as one with up to 100m² gross floorspace, and 'limited extensions' as being those of 10% or less of gross floorspace. Policies S18 and S19 below provide guidance on the establishment in these areas of food and drink uses and amusement centres.

DISTRICT AND LOCAL CENTRES

POLICY S10 - Safeguarding the District and Local Centres

THE COUNCIL WILL SAFEGUARD AND ENHANCE THE VITALITY AND VIABILITY OF THE DISTRICT CENTRES AT NORTH ROAD AND COCKERTON, AND THE LOCAL CENTRES AT YARM ROAD, NEASHAM ROAD, WHINFIELD AND MOWDEN, AND IN PARTICULAR WILL SAFEGUARD THEIR ROLE FOR FOOD SHOPPING. DEVELOPMENT WHICH WHEN TAKEN WITH OTHER RECENT AND PROPOSED DEVELOPMENTS WOULD UNDERMINE THAT VITALITY AND VIABILITY WILL NOT BE PERMITTED.

POLICY S11 - New Development in the District and Local Centres

SHOPPING DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING (SUBJECT TO THE IMPACT PROVISIONS OF POLICY S12) NEW FOOD SUPERMARKETS UP TO 2500m² GROSS FLOORSPACE, AND CLASS A2 SERVICE USES WILL BE PERMITTED WITHIN AND IMMEDIATELY ADJACENT TO THE DEFINED DISTRICT AND LOCAL CENTRES PROVIDED THAT THEY ARE PHYSICALLY INTEGRATED WITH AND HAVE GOOD PEDESTRIAN LINKS WITH THE REST OF THE CENTRE. CAR PARKING SPACES SHOULD BE AVAILABLE FOR SHARED USE BY THE PUBLIC. THE MAXIMUM DISTANCE BETWEEN SHOP ENTRANCES AND INCOMING AND OUTGOING BUS STOPS SHOULD NOT EXCEED 200m WHERE A LEVEL WALK IS INVOLVED, OR 100m IN ANY OTHER SITUATION. PLANNING PERMISSION WILL BE SUBJECT TO A CONDITION RESTRICTING THE HOURS OF OPERATION WHERE RESIDENTIAL AMENITY REQUIRES SAFEGUARDING.

- 7.21 The district and local centres of the town are identified on the Proposals Map. All have supermarkets or superstores at their heart and over recent years they have taken over increasingly from the town centre as the main providers of everyday shopping items, especially food. They benefit from having large areas of car parking available, but are also positioned so as to be accessible to non-car users in their particular part of town. The centres have up to forty other shops and services, in addition to the large stores. The degree to which the food stores underpin the district and local centres varies, but the Council will view unfavourably any proposals which might jeopardise this essential role of any of the centres, and thus the future health of the centres themselves. Proposals to improve and expand retail facilities at the district and local centres will be welcomed provided that they do not in turn adversely affect other district and local centres or the town centre, nor detract from residential amenity. Conditions will be attached limiting opening hours and times for servicing where appropriate in the context of Policies E48 and H15. Policies S18 and S19 below give guidance on the establishment in the district and local centres of food and drink uses and amusement centres respectively.
- 7.22 It is important that new shops and other developments are sited so that the public can safely and conveniently walk between them and existing parts of the centre, including bus stops and car parks. The district and local centres have social, community, health or education activities in or near them, which adds to their attractiveness, and thus the public can combine a number of visits in one trip.

OTHER MAJOR NEW SHOPPING DEVELOPMENT

- 7.23 Food supermarkets and superstores, retail warehouses dealing in specified ranges of goods, and businesses selling large items such as caravans, timber and building materials can be capable of development without detriment to the vitality or viability of the town centre. Existing retail sites, and schemes with planning permission, together provide sufficient overall floorspace to meet likely demand for the foreseeable future. The Plan therefore does not identify any additional sites for retail development outside existing centres but, rather, sets out in policies the criteria against which any future proposals will be assessed.

~~POLICY S12 – New Food Stores~~

~~NEW FOOD SUPERSTORES OR SUPERMARKETS WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THERE WOULD BE NO DAMAGING IMPACT ON THE VITALITY AND VIABILITY OF ANY OF THE DEFINED TOWN, DISTRICT OR LOCAL CENTRES. PROPOSALS FOR STORES EXCEEDING 2500m² GROSS FLOORSPACE SHOULD BE SUPPORTED BY AN ASSESSMENT OF THEIR INDIVIDUAL AND / OR CUMULATIVE IMPACTS ON ANY OF THESE CENTRES. PROPOSALS FOR SUPERSTORES OR SUPERMARKETS OUTSIDE THE EXISTING CENTRES WILL BE PERMITTED ONLY WHERE:~~

- ~~A. THERE ARE NO SUITABLE SITES AVAILABLE WITHIN, OR ON THE EDGE OF, THESE CENTRES;~~
~~B. THE SITE WOULD BE EASILY ACCESSIBLE BY A CHOICE OF MEANS OF TRANSPORT; AND,~~
~~C. THE DEVELOPMENT WOULD NOT ADD SIGNIFICANTLY TO OVERALL TRAVEL AND CAR USE.~~

~~PLANNING PERMISSION WILL BE SUBJECT TO A CONDITION RESTRICTING THE HOURS OF OPERATION WHERE RESIDENTIAL AMENITY REQUIRES SAFEGUARDING.~~

~~POLICY S13 – Retail Warehouses~~

~~NEW RETAIL WAREHOUSES WILL BE PERMITTED WITHIN OR ON THE EDGE OF THE DEFINED TOWN, DISTRICT OR LOCAL CENTRES AND FRINGE SHOPPING AREAS. PROPOSALS WILL BE PERMITTED ELSEWHERE ONLY PROVIDED THAT:~~

- ~~A. THERE ARE NO SUITABLE SITES AVAILABLE IN THE ABOVE LOCATIONS;~~
~~B. THEY ARE COMBINED WITH AN EXISTING OUT OF CENTRE RETAIL DEVELOPMENT, OR ARE WITHIN A PROPOSED RETAIL PARK;~~
~~C. THERE WOULD BE NO DAMAGING IMPACT ON THE VITALITY AND VIABILITY OF ANY OF THE DEFINED CENTRES;~~
~~D. THE SITE WOULD BE EASILY ACCESSIBLE BY A CHOICE OF MEANS OF TRANSPORT; AND,~~
~~E. THE DEVELOPMENT WOULD NOT ADD SIGNIFICANTLY TO OVERALL TRAVEL AND CAR USE.~~

~~PLANNING PERMISSION FOR PROPOSALS OTHER THAN WITHIN THE TOWN CENTRE WILL BE SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS:~~

- ~~1. PREVENTING THE SUB-DIVISION OF THE WAREHOUSES INTO A LARGER NUMBER OF SMALLER SHOPS;~~
~~2. PROHIBITING THE SALE OF SPECIFIED MAIN RANGES OF GOODS, NORMALLY FOOD AND DRINK, FASHION ITEMS, BOOKS, STATIONERY, TOYS, GAMES, HANDBAGS, LUGGAGE, MUSIC, SPORTS GOODS, JEWELLERY, PERFUME AND TOILETRIES; AND,~~
~~3. RESTRICTING THE HOURS OF OPERATION WHERE RESIDENTIAL AMENITY REQUIRES SAFEGUARDING.~~

- ~~7.24 Food superstores exist within the North Road, Whinfield and Neasham Road district and local centres and further superstores have opened recently at Victoria Road (on the edge of the town centre) and at Morton Park. A Food Shopping Study carried out for the Council in 1994 concluded that no further superstore permissions should be granted until the impact of recent developments could be measured. The practicability of evaluating effects on the vitality and~~

~~viability of the existing shopping centres may, for a few years, be affected by the continuing impact of the newer stores. The situation will be kept under continuous review by the Council with the aim of making and publicising a re-assessment as soon as it is realistic to do so.~~

~~7.25 In the meantime, the Council will expect any superstore proposal to be supported by an impact assessment which takes the on-going effects of recent developments into account. Prospective developers of any supermarket or superstore will also be required to adopt a 'sequential' approach to site selection, demonstrating that sites within and on the edge of existing shopping centres have been thoroughly assessed before less central locations are put forward. The first preference should always be for sites within existing centres. Even outside existing centres, proposed development sites will need to be genuinely accessible to a significant proportion of customers and staff arriving by public transport, on foot and by bicycle, and the proposal will be expected not to lead to any material increase in overall travel, in particular car use.~~

~~7.26 Retail warehouses are large, single-level stores specialising in the sale of household goods (such as carpets, furniture and electrical goods) and bulky DIY items including gardening equipment. They cater mainly for the car-borne trade but also sell many small items and often have home-delivery services so it is important that they are also accessible for non-car users. Developers will again be expected to adopt a sequential approach to site selection, with first preference being given to locations in existing centres. The sporadic siting of retail warehouses away from centres should be avoided. Conditions prohibiting the sale of goods which are normally found in the town centre, and preventing subdivision into smaller units, will be attached to any permissions to protect the centre's vitality and viability. Out-of-centre proposals will need to be in accessible locations, and to have no significant adverse impact on overall travel and car use.~~

~~7.27 All major new shopping developments must accord with the Council's policies and standards for parking (Policies T24 to T26) and access (Policies T8 and T13).~~

~~7.28 New retail developments will not normally be acceptable outside the development limits for the town (Policy E2), on open land (Policy E3) or on sites allocated for other purposes. Development should not detract from residential amenity. Where appropriate in the context of Policies E48 and H15, conditions will be attached limiting opening hours and times for servicing.~~

~~7.29 Separate policies below apply to the retailing of specific large items such as cars (Policy S20) and goods sold in garden centres (Policy S22).~~

POLICY S14 - Recycling Facilities

PLANNING PERMISSIONS TO BUILD OR EXTEND LARGE NEW FOOD STORES OR RETAIL WAREHOUSES WILL BE SUBJECT TO A CONDITION REQUIRING THE PROVISION OF PUBLIC WASTE RECYCLING FACILITIES, UNLESS ADEQUATE FACILITIES ALREADY EXIST IN THE VICINITY.

7.30 Large retail developments are suitable locations for the stationing of recycling receptacles for glass, cans, newspapers etc. They are accessible, regularly visited, have extensive surface car parking and are responsible for generating much of the initial material. Food stores in particular will normally be expected to incorporate provision for such facilities into their design. The recycling schemes are managed by the Borough Council.

POLICY S15 - Shopping Trolleys

PLANNING PERMISSIONS TO BUILD OR EXTEND LARGE NEW FOOD STORES OR RETAIL WAREHOUSES WILL BE SUBJECT TO A CONDITION REQUIRING ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE RETURN OF SHOPPING TROLLEYS TO A SUITABLE POINT OR POINTS WITHIN THE APPLICATION AREA.

7.31 The Council has been concerned in recent years to minimise the environmental and road safety nuisance of shopping trolleys belonging to stores being discarded around the town. Future

developments utilising a trolley system will be expected to operate schemes to prevent their misuse, for example a coin deposit scheme.

~~LOCAL SHOPS~~

~~POLICY S16 – Small Local Shops~~

~~LOCAL SHOPS OF UP TO 100m² GROSS FLOORSPACE, AND EXTENSIONS TO EXISTING SMALL SHOPS WHICH DO NOT AS EXTENDED EXCEED THAT LIMIT, WILL BE PERMITTED IN OR ADJOINING THE RESIDENTIAL AREAS PROVIDED THAT THERE WILL BE NO MATERIAL ADVERSE EFFECT ON RESIDENTIAL AMENITIES OR ON HIGHWAY SAFETY.~~

~~POLICY S17 – Shops in New Housing Developments~~

~~SITES SHOULD BE RESERVED FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SMALL SHOP OF UP TO 100m² GROSS FLOORSPACE ON THE HOUSING SITE AT HARROWGATE FARM (PROPOSAL H5.11). IN THE EVENT OF THERE BEING NO COMMERCIAL DEMAND ON COMPLETION OF THE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT, THE SHOP SITE MAY BE MADE AVAILABLE FOR RESIDENTIAL USE.~~

~~7.32 Individual corner shops and village shops, and small concentrations of traders in shopping parades or groups, still have a part to play in meeting residents' shopping needs and providing a focus for community identity. The Council will support the retention of existing small local shops and the development of new ones where there will be no adverse effects on amenity. A reasonable walking distance is considered here to be 400m. The intention is that the new or expanded shops will help meet the everyday needs of residents living within a reasonable walking distance. A 'small' shop is defined as one up to 100m² gross floorspace. The housing site listed above, when developed would result in some residents living more than 400m from an existing local shop if provision were not made.~~

OTHER RETAIL POLICIES

~~POLICY S18 – Food and Drink Uses Outside the Town Centre~~

~~RESTAURANTS, CAFES, HOT FOOD TAKE AWAYS, PUBLIC HOUSES AND OTHER CLASS A3 USES WILL BE PERMITTED IN THE DEFINED FRINGE SHOPPING AREAS, DISTRICT AND LOCAL CENTRES, WITHIN SMALLER ESTABLISHED GROUPS OF SHOPS AND IN ASSOCIATION WITH OTHER RETAIL, EMPLOYMENT OR LEISURE/RECREATION DEVELOPMENT ON SITES WHICH ARE EASILY ACCESSIBLE BY FOOT, CYCLE AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT, PROVIDED THAT THERE WILL BE NO ADVERSE EFFECT ON RESIDENTIAL AMENITIES OR ON HIGHWAY SAFETY. PLANNING PERMISSION WILL BE SUBJECT TO A CONDITION RESTRICTING THE HOURS OF OPERATION WHERE RESIDENTIAL AMENITY REQUIRES SAFEGUARDING.~~

~~7.33 Food and drink uses such as pubs and take aways are traditionally found in shopping areas and these are generally the most appropriate locations. Other suitable locations can be in conjunction with food superstores, retail parks, or leisure / recreation developments, where proposals can provide opportunities for the public to make linked trips and are accessible by a choice of means of transport, or employment areas, where the proposals provide for the needs of local employees. However, many of these areas are close to housing, and the Council will need to be satisfied that new proposals will not cause undue disturbance to residents by virtue of noise, cooking smells, litter, car parking etc. Proposed developments alongside main roads will not be acceptable if they could cause traffic problems.~~

POLICY S19 - Amusement Centres

AMUSEMENT CENTRES WILL BE PERMITTED IN THE TOWN CENTRE OTHER THAN IN PRIMARY SHOPPING FRONTAGES, AND IN THE DEFINED FRINGE SHOPPING AREAS, DISTRICT AND LOCAL CENTRES AND SMALLER ESTABLISHED GROUPS OF SHOPS, PROVIDED THAT:

- A. THE AMENITIES ENJOYED BY NEIGHBOURING OCCUPIERS ARE PROTECTED AGAINST NOISE, UNSIGHTLINESS OR GENERAL DISTURBANCE; AND,**
- B. THE OVERALL CONCENTRATION OF NON-SHOP USES WOULD NOT BE SUCH AS TO UNDERMINE THE CHARACTER OR VITALITY OF ANY SHOPPING AREA OR LENGTH OF SHOPPING FRONTAGE.**

PLANNING PERMISSION WILL BE SUBJECT TO A CONDITION RESTRICTING THE HOURS OF OPERATION WHERE RESIDENTIAL AMENITY REQUIRES SAFEGUARDING.

- 7.34 Certain kinds of amusement centres, in particular those providing amusement-with-prizes machines, are now accepted as being appropriate ancillary uses in some shopping areas. The Council will normally resist such uses in the primary frontages of the town centre, where it considers the retention of retail shops to be essential to the well-being of the town centre. They are more appropriate in secondary frontages or in lower-order shopping areas where a mix of retail and service uses are often found, provided that there is no detrimental impact on the area. They will not normally be permitted where they will detract from the amenity of nearby dwellings, schools, churches, hospitals or hotels, nor from the character or appearance of a conservation area.

POLICY S20 - Sale of Large Items

DEVELOPMENTS PRIMARILY INVOLVING THE SALE OR DISPLAY OF CARS, CARAVANS, GARDEN SHEDS, GREENHOUSES, TIMBER, BUILDING MATERIALS AND SIMILAR LARGE ITEMS WILL BE PERMITTED WITHIN THE DEVELOPMENT LIMITS PROVIDED THAT THERE WILL BE NO MATERIAL ADVERSE EFFECT ON AMENITIES ENJOYED BY NEIGHBOURING OCCUPIERS OR VISUAL AMENITY OR ON HIGHWAY SAFETY. PLANNING PERMISSION WILL BE SUBJECT TO A CONDITION RESTRICTING THE RETAIL USE TO SUCH ITEMS.

- 7.35 Car sales, and the retailing of certain other very bulky goods, are not normally possible from within shopping areas and are presently found in a variety of locations in the town and some larger villages. In some instances the style of marketing and display can be detrimental to the appearance or character of an area, particularly near housing, and can cause problems for users of adjacent roads. The Council will pay particular attention to these aspects. General retailing will not normally be appropriate from these locations and will be restricted accordingly. For the avoidance of doubt, this policy does not apply to the development of retail warehouses, which normally sell a wider range of items (including some smaller items) and are more appropriately sited in accessible retail locations; retail warehouses are the subject of Policy S13 above.

POLICY S21 - Petrol Filling Stations

THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW PETROL FILLING STATIONS AND RELATED ROADSIDE SERVICES WILL BE PERMITTED WITHIN THE DEVELOPMENT LIMITS PROVIDED THAT THERE WILL BE NO MATERIAL ADVERSE EFFECT ON RESIDENTIAL AMENITIES OR ON HIGHWAY SAFETY. THEY WILL NOT NORMALLY BE PERMITTED ELSEWHERE.

- 7.36 Filling stations can be brash, discordant features in the countryside and, when established, can lead to pressure for further related development on-site such as restaurants and hotels. The Council considers that future filling station requirements can be adequately met from existing rural sites or from new sites within settlements. Within the town and villages filling stations can sometimes fulfil a useful subsidiary role as 'local shops' for nearby residents.

POLICY S22 - Garden Centres

THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW GARDEN CENTRES, AND THE EXTENSION OF EXISTING CENTRES, WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT THERE WILL BE NO ADVERSE EFFECT ON THE RESIDENTIAL AMENITIES, THE CHARACTER OR APPEARANCE OF THE COUNTRYSIDE OR ON HIGHWAY SAFETY.

- 7.37 Garden centres are best sited close to the population they serve, in order to minimise the need to travel and to make them accessible to non-car users as well as car users, but other appropriate locations may be considered.

POLICY S23 - Sales from Factories

RETAILING FROM FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS OF PRODUCTS MANUFACTURED ON THE PREMISES WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED IN FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS OF UP TO 100m² GROSS FLOORSPACE.

- 7.38 Some retail activities on industrial premises are incidental to the main operations and do not require planning permission. Otherwise retailing from factories and industrial units is inappropriate except for small units, e.g. craft workshops. (Policy EP5 considers more fully the circumstances under which uses other than those within classes B1, B2 and B8 may be permitted in employment areas.)

CHAPTER 8:

TOURISM

BACKGROUND

OBJECTIVES

Policies and Proposals:

TOURIST FACILITIES AND ATTRACTIONS

VISITOR ACCOMMODATION

DARLINGTON RAILWAY CENTRE AND MUSEUM

CHAPTER 8: TOURISM

BACKGROUND

- 8.1 Darlington is well located to act as a base for nearby tourist destinations such as the Yorkshire and Durham Dales and the North York Moors. Whilst the Borough primarily provides a stopover location for tourists it is also linked to a network of regional attractions following the 'Cradle of the Railways', 'Land of the Prince Bishops' and 'Christian Heritage' themes. These themes have been developed at a regional and county level by the Northumbria Tourist Board and Durham County Council and play an important part in the region's tourist industry. Darlington's good location on major transport routes within easy reach of the Tyneside and Teesside conurbations also make it an ideal location for conference venues and business-related tourism.
- 8.2 The Borough has a number of tourist attractions catering for visitors with a variety of interests. Its industrial heritage is represented by the nationally important Railway Centre and Museum based at North Road Station on the original Stockton and Darlington Railway line, and by the Tees Cottage pumping station. The history of Darlington is illustrated at the Town Museum in Tubwell Row, and at Piercebridge a Roman Fort and Bridge have been excavated showing the importance of Dere Street and the small village during the Roman occupation. A variety of smaller attractions can also be found, for example, Elly Hill Herb Centre and Hurworth Crafts. Excellent opportunities also exist for walking and cycling in the Borough.
- 8.3 Continued investment in shopping, leisure and environmental improvements in the town centre, further interpretative development of the Borough's railway, industrial, religious and Roman heritage, protection of the character of the surrounding countryside, and further improvements to transport links can potentially enhance Darlington's tourism role.
- 8.4 At present, the variety of accommodation for tourists is limited, with a good range of hotels but poorer provision for campsites and caravans, self-catering and budget accommodation. It is important that a good choice of both style and price of visitor accommodation is available to suit all requirements. There is also a need to provide a range of eating establishments catering for different tastes and different budgets.
- 8.5 The Council provides a full time Tourist Information Centre in Horsemarket and promotes the Borough on both a regional and national level to outlines given in the Darlington Tourism Annual Report. The Plan will provide the land use framework for a proposed tourism strategy.

OBJECTIVES

- 8.6 The Council's objectives for tourism, to be pursued through the policies and proposals of the Plan, are:
- i) To assist in the promotion of the Borough's railway, industrial, religious and Roman heritage as a tourism resource.
 - ii) To protect and enhance existing attractions and encourage appropriate new attractions within the Borough.
 - iii) To ensure that tourism activities and developments should respect the scale, nature and character of their surroundings.
 - iv) To encourage appropriate provision for tourists and other visitors without undue detriment to amenity and conservation interests.

Policies and Proposals:

~~TOURIST FACILITIES AND ATTRACTIONS~~

~~POLICY TO1 – Tourist Attractions~~

~~PROPOSALS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURIST ATTRACTIONS WILL BE ASSESSED HAVING REGARD TO:~~

- ~~1. THEIR IMPACT ON THE EXISTING CHARACTER OF THE LOCALITY;~~
- ~~2. THEIR IMPACT ON RESIDENTIAL AMENITY;~~
- ~~3. THE CAPACITY OF THE TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE TO ACCOMMODATE THE ADDITIONAL TRAFFIC CREATED BY THE DEVELOPMENT;~~
- ~~4. WHETHER THEY CAN BE ACCESSED BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT;~~
- ~~5. THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO THE INTERPRETATION OF THE BOROUGH'S RAILWAY, INDUSTRIAL, RELIGIOUS AND ROMAN HERITAGE.~~

~~8.7 Proposals for new tourist attractions will be considered having regard to policies elsewhere in the Plan, particularly those relating to the environment and transport. Such proposals could assist in promoting the town as a tourist centre and provide income generating employment. The development of such an attraction must however respect the existing character of the Borough.~~

~~8.8 Darlington has several tourist attractions of both local and national significance which encompass the 'Cradle of the Railways', 'Roman History' and 'Christian Heritage' themes. With a modest base for a tourist industry the Council wishes to encourage visitors in order to promote the Borough and bring the benefits of an expanding tourist industry. The Borough's railway heritage, the Darlington to Weardale railway line and the town centre are considered to have potential as bases for further tourist development.~~

~~8.9 Proposals for tourist development in the countryside and villages will be assessed according to other policies, particularly those for the environment, and must not result in damage to the character of the area. They will not normally be acceptable in the Area of High Landscape Value (Policy E8). Scope may exist for farm based projects or the re use of redundant buildings.~~

~~POLICY TO2 – Borough Heritage~~

~~THE COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE THE CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION OF BUILDINGS AND SITES WHICH ARE IMPORTANT TO THE INDUSTRIAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE OF THE BOROUGH.~~

~~POLICY TO3 – Access to Sites of Interest~~

~~WHERE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS AFFECT BUILDINGS AND SITES WHICH ARE IMPORTANT TO THE INDUSTRIAL OR CULTURAL HERITAGE OF THE BOROUGH, PROVISION SHOULD BE MADE TO RETAIN EXISTING PUBLIC ACCESS. WHERE APPROPRIATE, INCREASED PUBLIC ACCESS WILL BE SOUGHT AND THE INCORPORATION OF INTERPRETATIVE FACILITIES WILL BE ENCOURAGED.~~

~~8.10 The industrial heritage of the Borough provides a distinctive context for the development of tourist facilities. The railway theme is an important part of the Borough's tourist potential and so the damage to sites or loss of buildings and other features relating to it should be resisted. The trackbed of the Stockton and Darlington Railway (S&DR) is an important monument to the growth of the railways and improvement of the environs of the Skerne Bridge, one of the oldest railway bridges in the world, can complement the development of the Railway Centre and Museum (Proposals TO8 and TO9). The Council will seek conservation in the broadest sense to encompass not only stations and railway lines, but also buildings and structures associated with the early railways and the establishment of engineering in the town.~~

~~8.11 Darlington's cultural heritage plays as important a role as the railways, particularly the strong~~

~~Quaker traditions of the town which helped shape much of the town's distinctive architecture, and opportunities should not be lost to enhance this aspect of the Borough's history. The prominence of the Pease family in the town as industrialists and Quakers and their role in the development of Darlington will also be promoted.~~

- ~~8.12 There are many other aspects to the Borough's heritage which will be protected and enhanced where possible. These range from the Roman connection with Piercebridge and Dere Street through the Borough's Christian heritage, instanced by St. Cuthbert's Church, to the natural heritage of the Skerne Valley and Tees Valley. The Borough also has literary links with Lewis Carroll who spent his youth near Darlington.~~

~~VISITOR ACCOMMODATION~~

~~POLICY TO4 Hotels and Guest Houses~~

~~HOTELS AND GUEST HOUSES WILL BE PERMITTED WITHIN THE DEVELOPMENT LIMITS, PROVIDED THAT IN SIZE AND IN THE FORESEEABLE INTENSITY OF THEIR USE THEY:~~

- ~~1. DO NOT DETRACT MATERIALLY FROM RESIDENTIAL AMENITY; AND~~
- ~~2. DO NOT DETRACT MATERIALLY FROM THE CHARACTER OF THE SURROUNDING AREA.~~

~~HOTELS REQUIRING A LOCATION AT OR ADJACENT TO AN AIRPORT WILL ALSO BE PERMITTED AT TEESIDE AIRPORT WITHIN THE AREAS IDENTIFIED IN POLICIES EP9 AND EP10.~~

- ~~8.13 The provision of visitor accommodation is of acknowledged importance to the tourist industry of the Borough. It is, however, important that it does not adversely affect the character of the area in which it is situated. This can happen, for example, through the vehicular and other activities associated with hotel development, or the establishment of a concentration of guest houses.~~

- ~~8.14 The provision of hotels within the town centre encourages visitors to make longer stays in the town thus bringing greater economic and employment benefits to the Borough. It is essential therefore that sufficient facilities are available to cater for demand. The town centre development sites such as at Beaumont Street and Commercial Street are considered suitable for hotel use as well as office or other business uses (Policy EP11).~~

- ~~8.15 Within Darlington there is a shortage of budget hotels and further provision may also be appropriate in the business hotel market to cater for conferences. Proposals for conference venues linked to hotel developments will be encouraged. A balance must be struck between these two types of hotel in order that a range of provision for various market sectors can be provided. The employment areas at Faverdale, Yarm Road, Haughton Road and Teesside Airport provide scope for a variety of accommodation (Policies / Proposals EP2, EP3, EP4, EP9).~~

- ~~8.16 Away from the town centre and employment areas there may be scope for smaller establishments within the urban built up area and the villages, provided that they comply with other policies in the Plan.~~

~~POLICY TO5 Accommodation in the Countryside~~

~~HOTELS AND OTHER VISITOR ACCOMMODATION FORMED BY CONVERTING EXISTING BUILDINGS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT:~~

- ~~1. THERE IS NO MATERIAL ADVERSE EFFECT ON THE CHARACTER OR APPEARANCE OF THE BUILDINGS OR OF THEIR SETTING;~~
- ~~2. ADEQUATE AND SUITABLE ARRANGEMENTS ARE MADE FOR ACCOMMODATING TRAFFIC; AND~~
- ~~3. UNDUE DISTURBANCE AFFECTING NEIGHBOURING OCCUPIERS IS AVOIDED.~~

~~8.17 The development of new build hotels in the countryside is rarely acceptable because of their impact on the landscape and distance from other amenities and public transport. Any development proposals for hotels in the countryside will be assessed with particular reference to Policies E4 to E6 in order that the character and amenity of the area is preserved.~~

~~8.18 The retention of historic buildings in the countryside is desirable and their conversion to provide visitor accommodation may be acceptable as long as the architectural or historic integrity of the building or grounds is maintained and / or enhanced as part of the conversion.~~

~~8.19 Other buildings in the countryside may be suitable for conversion to visitor accommodation, but extensive rebuilding or additions to small properties to make the development viable would not be permitted. In all cases it is essential not to detract from the character of the site.~~

~~8.20 The conversion of buildings to holiday cottage or camping barn use may be acceptable as long as the character of the property is retained and the buildings are occupied solely as short stay holiday accommodation. The granting of permission will, where necessary, be subject to appropriate legal agreements limiting the period of let of such properties.~~

~~POLICY TO6 Camping and Caravans~~

~~THE DEVELOPMENT OF SITES IN THE COUNTRYSIDE FOR CHALETs, CAMPING, TOURING AND STATIC HOLIDAY CARAVANS AND CARAVAN STORAGE WILL NORMALLY BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT ALL OF THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA ARE MET:~~

- ~~1. THE SITE IS NOT PROMINENT EITHER IN THE COUNTRYSIDE OR THE AREA OF HIGH LANDSCAPE VALUE NOR OF ACKNOWLEDGED NATURE CONSERVATION VALUE;~~
- ~~2. THE SCHEME DOES NOT, EITHER BY ITSELF OR TOGETHER WITH OTHER EXISTING OR PERMITTED SIMILAR SCHEMES, MATERIALLY DETRACT FROM THE LANDSCAPE, NATURE CONSERVATION INTERESTS OR THE AMENITIES OF NEIGHBOURING OCCUPIERS;~~
- ~~3. THE SCHEME IS COMPREHENSIVELY PLANNED ON A SITE WHERE TREES OR OTHER SCREENING COMPATIBLE WITH THE LANDSCAPE ADEQUATELY CONCEAL PERMANENT DEVELOPMENT THROUGHOUT THE YEAR. WHERE THE TREE COVER GIVES EFFECTIVE SCREENING ONLY WHEN IN LEAF, TOURING CARAVANS, TENTS AND ASSOCIATED FACILITIES MAY BE ACCEPTABLE PROVIDED THAT THEY ARE REMOVED AT THE END OF EACH SUMMER SEASON;~~
- ~~4. FREESTANDING CHALETs, CARAVANS OR TENTS ARE CONCEALED IN WOODLAND OR WITHIN ESTABLISHED GROUPS OF BUILDINGS;~~
- ~~5. THE DESIGN, MATERIALS AND COLOUR OF CHALETs AND STATIC CARAVANS ARE CHOSEN TO MERGE WITH THE SURROUNDINGS.~~

~~8.21 Further diversity in accommodation can be achieved through the provision of caravan and campsites within the Borough. There is at present a shortage of such provision, especially touring sites.~~

~~8.22 It is essential that any development is carefully sited in order that the attractive nature of the countryside, so often the primary reason for visits to the Borough, is not spoilt thus losing one of Darlington's prime assets. Sites should be compact and unobtrusive.~~

~~8.23 Any development proposals for camping and caravan sites will be assessed with particular regard to Policies E4, E5, E6, E23, T12 and T13.~~

~~8.24 Much screening can be achieved through the use of trees although the loss of leaf cover may expose to view otherwise prominent sites. Due to the loss of leaf cover during winter, sites which rely extensively on summer only tree screening will be expected to remove vans to other storage areas to preserve the visual amenity of the area throughout the year. Static caravan sites and permanent chalet developments will be expected to provide year round screening appropriate to the locality (Policies E4, E7 and E14).~~

~~POLICY TO7 Laybys, Picnic and Rest Areas~~

~~THE PROVISION OF LAYBYS, PICNIC AND REST AREAS MAY BE PERMITTED IN UNOBTUSIVE LOCATIONS ON OR ADJACENT TO THE MAIN ROAD NETWORK IN THE RURAL AREA WHERE THIS IS ACHIEVABLE WITHOUT DETRIMENT TO RESIDENTIAL AMENITY, LANDSCAPE QUALITY OR NATURE CONSERVATION INTERESTS.~~

~~8.25 A number of main roads through the Borough, particularly the A68, are important tourist routes, and the provision of modest roadside facilities may be acceptable in unobtrusive locations. The provision of laybys and rest areas may also be appropriate close to buildings and sites which are important to the industrial and cultural heritage of the Borough, such as the Stockton and Darlington Railway trackbed. Highway improvements often provide suitable opportunities for this provision on areas of discarded carriageway.~~

~~8.26 The facilities envisaged may include tourist information boards, interpretative maps and information relating to items of interest in the immediate area.~~

~~DARLINGTON RAILWAY CENTRE AND MUSEUM~~

~~PROPOSAL TO8 Darlington Railway Centre and Museum~~

~~LAND AND BUILDINGS AT NORTH ROAD STATION WILL CONTINUE TO BE DEVELOPED FOR DARLINGTON RAILWAY CENTRE AND MUSEUM USES AND OTHER USES RELATED TO THE RAILWAY AND INDUSTRIAL HISTORY OF THE AREA.~~

~~8.27 The site at North Road is of national railway importance and has been developed to provide a railway museum within the train shed and building of the old station. The Skerne Bridge (a scheduled ancient monument) and the Stockton and Darlington Railway trackbed (now recognised nationally) are in the immediate vicinity. The existing passenger rail service uses a platform adjacent to the museum also within the original station train shed. There is a proposal to provide a replacement platform outside the station building to enable further development of the museum (Proposal T46)~~

~~8.28 Several substantial S&DR structures exist within the grounds of the station. One is currently in use as a workshop for overhauling preserved rolling stock. Another, the Stockton and Darlington Railway Carriage Works, provides a headquarters and workshops for the A1 Steam Locomotive Trust, which is building the first mainline steam locomotive in Britain since 1960.~~

~~**PROPOSAL T09 Darlington Railway Centre Trackbed**~~

~~**THE TRACKBED OF THE FORMER BARNARD CASTLE BRANCH LINE WILL BE SAFEGUARDED BETWEEN DARLINGTON RAILWAY CENTRE AND WEST AUCKLAND ROAD TO ENABLE THE REINSTATEMENT OF TRACK AND THE RUNNING OF TRAINS OVER A LENGTH OF DEMONSTRATION LINE.**~~

~~8.29 Railway track remains in existence as far as the site of the former UKF depot, and a siding exists between the current running lines and the former Whessoe site off Brinkburn Road. Although the trackbed from the former UKF siding to the West Auckland Road coal depot is used exclusively as a footpath at present, there is sufficient space to accommodate a railway track in addition. There is also sufficient space at West Auckland Road for a small terminus station and car park.~~

CHAPTER 9:

TRAFFIC, TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

BACKGROUND

OBJECTIVES

Policies and Proposals:

NEW ROADS

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

NEW DEVELOPMENT

TRAFFIC IN THE TOWN CENTRE

CAR PARKING

BUSES

TAXIS

PEDAL CYCLING

PEDESTRIANS

LORRIES

RAIL

AIRPORT

TRANSMISSION LINES, PIPELINES AND UNDERGROUND SERVICES

CHAPTER 9: TRAFFIC, TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

BACKGROUND

- 9.1 Darlington occupies an important position on national and regional communications networks (Figure 9.1). It is at the junction of two major road routes which bypass the town. The north-south A1 motorway links eastern Scotland and Tyneside with the rest of England, and the east-west A66 Trunk Road links Teesside with the M6, north Lancashire, Cumbria and western Scotland. Locally, the traditional road pattern radiates to Bishop Auckland (A68 / A6072), Barnard Castle (A67), Richmond (A66 / A6108), Northallerton (A167), Yarm and south Teesside (A67), and Newton Aycliffe (A167). These are linked by the inner ring road which allows the town centre to be free of through-traffic.
- 9.2 The bus station in Feethams is served by the national express coach network. Services to nearby towns, the surrounding rural areas and a comprehensive network of town routes all converge on the town centre streets.
- 9.3 Darlington's position as an inter-city station on the main east coast rail line is strengthened by direct branch line connections to Teesside and Bishop Auckland. Teesside International Airport is on the eastern edge of the Borough. Teesport, the second largest commercial seaport in Britain is about 30km (20 miles) to the east of the town.
- 9.4 The Local Plan will provide the background for the more detailed highway, traffic and transport proposals of other Council documents, namely the Transport Policies and Programme (TPP) and the Road Safety Plan.
- 9.5 Households in the Borough have the use of over 33,000 cars (1991 Census). This represents 0.34 cars for each resident. However, 38% of households have no car. The Department of Transport (now the DETR) has forecast that the number of cars nationally will double by 2010, but regional estimates are lower. However, the town shows signs of traffic saturation already at occasional peak times, with delays on the main radial roads and difficulty in finding parking places near the town centre. Some residential streets are fully occupied by cars belonging to residents and their visitors who have inadequate or no space to park their cars off the highway.
- 9.6 Congestion and delay wastes fuel and results in increased emissions of carbon dioxide and other pollutants which, if growth is not checked, will irreversibly damage the environment and the health of residents. Emergency services will take longer to reach their destinations; public transport becomes less reliable; essential delivery and business traffic is impeded; people with disabilities or without cars become less mobile; and road and pedestrian safety deteriorates.
- 9.7 The environmental and financial consequences of fully meeting the demand for more road and parking space are not acceptable. Instead, the Plan provides for future travel needs by siting new developments in locations which minimise the need for private car travel, by making them accessible by other means, and giving priority to the transport needs of others on existing roads.
- 9.8 The A1 motorway, A66 trunk road, other A class roads and most B class roads in the Borough form part of the Durham County Strategic Route Network. This provides the framework for assessing the need for new roads and improvements. The Darlington Cross Town Route and its extension to Teesside Airport is the major highway proposal for the Borough, and its route is safeguarded in Proposal T6.1 below.

Figure 9.1 Main Road Network and Railway Lines



- 9.9 The A68 is identified as an important tourist route to Weardale, Northumberland and Scotland. The network also forms the basis for lorry routes, but these are not defined in the urban area. Durham County Council and the Borough Council are promoting the development of a rail freight depot at Faverdale industrial estate and a site is allocated in Proposal T47 below.

OBJECTIVES

- 9.10 The Council's objectives for traffic, transport and infrastructure, to be pursued through the policies and proposals of the Plan, are:
- i) To minimise day-to-day travel needs.
 - ii) To reduce the dependency on the private motor car.
 - iii) To improve conditions for public transport and to promote its use.
 - iv) To improve conditions for pedestrians, pedal cyclists and people with disabilities.
 - v) To improve access to the town centre for shoppers.
 - vi) To eliminate non-essential traffic from the town centre.
 - vii) To make the most efficient use of existing main roads.
 - viii) To reduce the damaging impact of motor vehicles on the environment.
 - ix) To minimise the impact of new road construction on the environment.
 - x) To improve road safety.
 - xi) To reduce excessive vehicle speeds in built-up areas.
 - xii) To improve access between the major employment areas of the town and the national

transport network.

- xiii) To improve access to the A1, A66, Teesside International Airport and Teesport.
- xiv) To encourage the transport of bulk materials by rail.
- xv) To minimise the impact of transmission lines, pipelines and underground services.

Policies and Proposals:

NEW ROADS

~~POLICY T1 Highway and Transport Management Existing Resources~~

~~THE COUNCIL WILL MAKE THE BEST USE OF EXISTING ROADS AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT BEFORE CONSTRUCTING NEW ROADS.~~

~~POLICY T2 Highway and Transport Management New Development~~

~~THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK THE LOCATION OF NEW DEVELOPMENT SO AS TO MINIMISE DAY TO DAY TRAVEL NEEDS.~~

~~9.11 The Durham County Structure Plan forecasts traffic to increase between 32% and 54% by 2006, and it will be neither financially nor environmentally possible to build new roads to meet this demand. Existing roads in the town and the villages in the Borough were not designed for today's traffic and it is not proposed to demolish any buildings to widen them. Public transport makes more efficient use of motorised transport and road space than does the private car. Pedal cycling and walking are more energy efficient means of making short journeys. The Local Plan generally seeks to conserve energy resources and to minimise pollution; it is not desirable to build more roads simply to bring more motor vehicles into the town. Darlington is a compact town and most new development will be located within or on the edge of it. Many land uses are most conveniently located near the town centre, where they are most accessible. Even those uses which are used most by people in cars, such as food superstores, should be located where they are also accessible by others.~~

~~POLICY T3 Justification for Major Road Schemes~~

~~THE COUNCIL WILL SUPPORT PROPOSALS FOR NEW ROADS AND THE IMPROVEMENT OF EXISTING ROADS WITHIN THE BOROUGH WHICH:~~

- ~~1. ASSIST THE ECONOMIC PROSPERITY OF THE BOROUGH;~~
- ~~2. REMOVE THROUGH TRAFFIC FROM RESIDENTIAL AND OTHER ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS;~~
- ~~3. IMPROVE LINKS WITH THE A1(M), A167, A66, TEESSIDE AIRPORT AND TEESPORT;~~
- ~~4. IMPROVE OVERALL ROAD SAFETY CONDITIONS;~~
- ~~5. HAVE MINIMAL ADVERSE EFFECTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT OF THE LOCALITY.~~

~~POLICY T4 - Route and Design of Major Road Schemes~~

~~IN THE SELECTION OF THE ROUTE AND THE DESIGN OF NEW ROADS, AND IMPROVEMENTS TO EXISTING ROADS, THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO ACHIEVE:~~

- ~~1. SAFE AND PROPER PROVISION FOR THE MOVEMENT OF BUSES, BUS USERS, PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES, PEDESTRIANS, PEDAL CYCLISTS, EQUESTRIANS AND WILDLIFE;~~
- ~~2. LANDSCAPING AND OTHER MEASURES TO PROTECT AND ENHANCE THE APPEARANCE OF THE LOCALITY;~~
- ~~3. CO ORDINATION OF THE APPEARANCE OF CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS, TRAFFIC SIGNS, LIGHTING COLUMNS AND OTHER HIGHWAY FURNITURE AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE DESIGN OF THE ROAD;~~
- ~~4. THE EFFICIENT USE OF LAND AND MINIMAL DISRUPTION TO LOCAL AGRICULTURE.~~

~~THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO AVOID:~~

- ~~5. THE PHYSICAL OR SOCIAL SEVERANCE OF COMMUNITIES;~~
- ~~6. HARMFUL IMPACT ON RESIDENTIAL AMENITY, INCLUDING NOISE, EXHAUST POLLUTION, VIBRATION, HEADLAMP GLARE AND ROAD LIGHTING;~~
- ~~7. HARMFUL IMPACT ON THE LANDSCAPE AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT;~~
- ~~8. HARMFUL IMPACT ON PLANT LIFE, WILDLIFE AND GEOLOGICAL FEATURES.~~

POLICY T5 - Environmental Appraisal of Major Road Schemes

THE COUNCIL WILL PREPARE ENVIRONMENTAL APPRAISALS TO ACCOMPANY ITS PROPOSALS FOR NEW OR IMPROVED ROADS.

PROPOSAL T6 - Safeguarding Major Road Schemes

LAND WILL BE SAFEGUARDED FOR THE FOLLOWING NEW ROADS AND IMPROVEMENTS TO EXISTING ROADS:

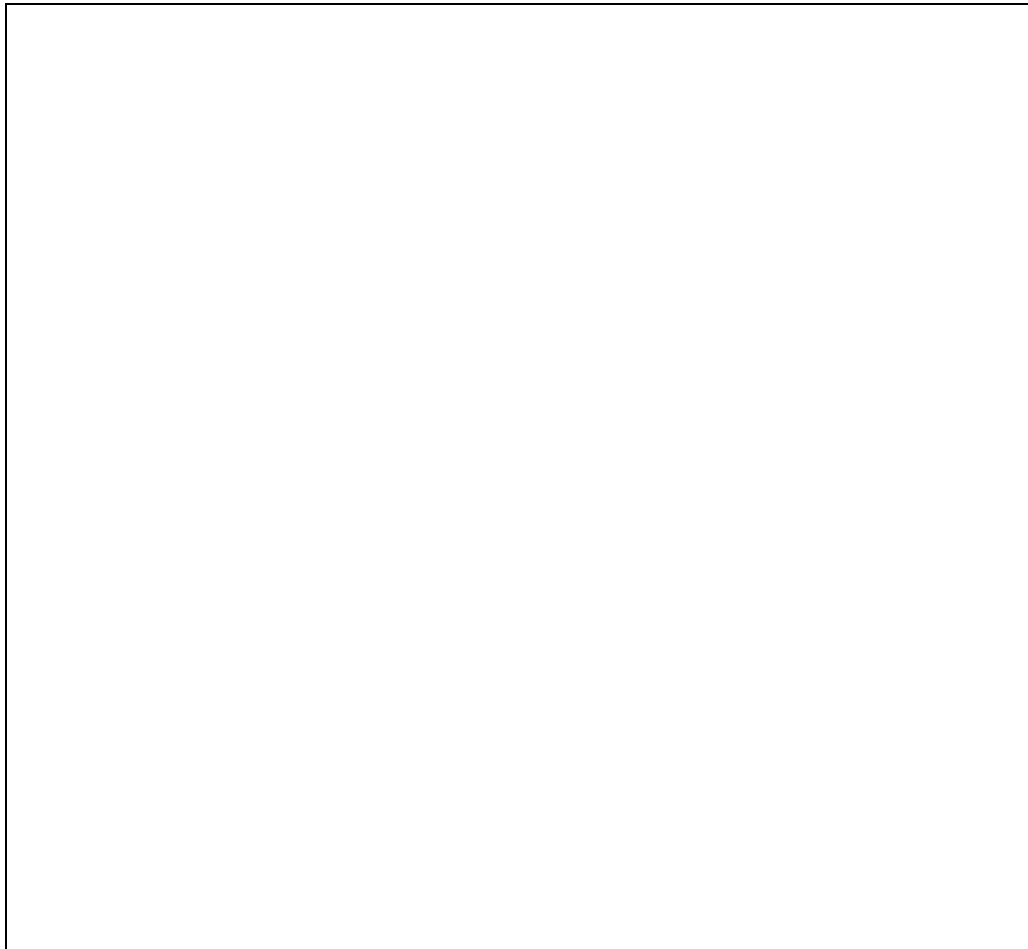
1. DARLINGTON CROSS TOWN ROUTE AND ITS EXTENSION TO THE A67 TEESIDE AND AIRPORT LINK;
2. A6072 SWAN HOUSE TO HEIGHINGTON BYPASS IMPROVEMENT;
3. A66(T) BYPASS WIDENING BETWEEN LITTLE BURDON AND YARM ROAD.

- 9.12 Some road building can be justified and the Department of the Environment, Transport & the Regions (DETR) and the Council maintain and implement a programme of major schemes. New and improved roads are needed to link industrial areas to the national and regional network and these can also have safety and environmental benefits. It is equally important that these roads are carefully located and designed so that they fit in with their surroundings as much as possible. The appearance of standardised road design and materials can be out of character with the locality; the Council will apply similar standards to those it applies to other forms of development. Legislation requires environmental assessments for some new roads, but even modest widening can affect the local environment. The environmental impacts of schemes should be appraised before they proceed; the authority will advise, if asked, on the matters requiring evaluation in any particular case.

The Cross Town Route

- 9.13 The A68 Darlington Cross Town Route is a strategic proposal of the Durham County Structure Plan and the Local Plan shows land being safeguarded for its detailed alignment. The road will connect the A1(M) near its junction with the A68 at Faverdale and the A66(T) bypass at a new

Figure 9.2 The Cross Town Route



junction east of Red Hall (Figure 9.2). It is also planned to continue the route eastwards to improve access to Teesside Airport. The route will improve access to the major industrial areas in Darlington, which at present use existing roads in the town. Traffic generated by industrial development at Faverdale and Whessoe Road must cross the town to reach the A66(T) eastwards. Traffic from Yarm Road industrial estate and Morton Park must do likewise to reach the A1(M) and A167 northwards. Industrial areas at Albert Hill and Cleveland Street have inadequate access from all directions.

- 9.14 Through-traffic on the A66(T) bypass has no access to the northbound carriageway of the A1(M) (and vice-versa) without using existing town roads; the Cross Town Route will provide a convenient alternative.
- 9.15 The Route will be constructed in stages, the first two of which will be at each end and will enable major development to proceed. Planning permission has been granted for Stage 1, between the A66 bypass and McMullen Road. Stage 2, between West Auckland Road and Faverdale Industrial Estate has already been completed, in conjunction with housing and industrial development. The completion of the Route will provide improvements for residential amenity on many roads which suffer from through-traffic in the north-east part of the town (e.g. Haughton Green) and in the west (e.g. Carmel Road). The new road will be a single carriageway road and it will have intermediate junctions at Faverdale industrial estate, North Road, Cleveland Street, Blackett Road, McMullen Road and Yarm Road industrial estate. It will occupy land which is mostly unused and it will follow, but largely avoid, the trackbed of the former Stockton and Darlington Railway. Access to the trackbed for pedestrians and pedal cyclists will be improved (Policy R12) and the opportunity will be provided to improve interpretation of the history of the railway. There will be minimal property demolition and the Route will provide the opportunity to maintain a green corridor across the town (Policy E3). Appropriate measures will be taken to protect nearby dwellings from noise, vehicle light glare

and exhaust fumes. Safe and convenient crossing facilities for pedestrians will be provided. The design of the road will include access to the British Steel Special Sections (formerly DSRM) works.

Other Road Proposals

- 9.16 The A6072 scheme will improve road safety and complete recent improvements to the important links between Darlington and south west Durham. The junction of Stage 1 of the Cross Town Route with the A66(T) bypass involves improving part of the bypass to a dual carriageway. The DETR will complete the dualling of the bypass between Little Burdon and Yarm Road.
- 9.17 The Council considers that the rest of the A66(T) bypass should be upgraded to a dual carriageway in view of the local, regional, national and international importance of the road from coast to coast. Similarly, the Council supports the widening of the A1 motorway to improve communications between the region and the rest of England. However, neither proposal is included in the DETR's trunk road programme.
- 9.18 The Council also considers that the DETR should improve access between the A66(M) and the A1(M) by providing a full flow junction where the two motorways merge near Cleasby in North Yorkshire. This would create a bypass to the south and west of Darlington, removing more through-traffic, especially heavy goods vehicles, from the town's roads.

Motorway Service Areas

- 9.19 The Government considers that motorway service areas should not be less than 24km (15 miles) apart. It is unlikely that a need for closer spacing would be sufficient to outweigh objections on road safety or traffic management grounds. There are service areas on the A1(M) at junction 61 at Bowburn, to the north, and adjacent to junction 59 with A167 at Newton Aycliffe, some 19km south of Bowburn. A site for a third is allocated in the Richmondshire Local Plan at Barton quarry, about a further 15km to the south. Accordingly no provision is made for another motorway service area in the present Plan.

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

POLICY T7 - Traffic Management and Main Roads

THE COUNCIL WILL INTRODUCE TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT MEASURES TO IMPROVE TRAFFIC FLOW WHERE NECESSARY ON THE MAIN ROAD NETWORK OF THE BOROUGH. ATTENTION WILL ALSO BE GIVEN TO IMPROVING CONDITIONS FOR BUSES, PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES, PEDESTRIANS AND PEDAL CYCLISTS.

- 9.20 The main road network of the Borough comprises part of the A1 Motorway, parts of the Durham County primary route network and other important radial and link roads in the urban area. They are illustrated in Figure 9.1. These are the roads most used to gain access to other towns in the region and to cross the town from one part of the Borough to another. It is important to keep traffic moving as freely as possible on these roads, particularly public transport. It is also essential to ensure that non-motorists can cross and use these roads safely particularly in the district and local shopping centres (Policy S10) and the town centre fringe shopping areas (Policy S9). Measures to be introduced will include traffic signals, pedestrian crossings, peak period clearway orders, bus priority orders, and restrictions on access to and from side roads.
- 9.21 The reduction of traffic on existing roads following the building of the Cross Town Route will mean that some roads can be removed from the main road network. Such roads will no longer need to be designed to carry existing traffic flows and changes to them can take place as various phases of the Route are completed.

POLICY T8 - Access to Main Roads

PROPOSALS INVOLVING THE FORMATION OF ACCESS TO THE MAIN ROAD NETWORK WILL BE REQUIRED TO:

- 1. MINIMISE THE NUMBER OF DIRECT ACCESS POINTS;**
- 2. WHEREVER PRACTICABLE USE, AND IF NECESSARY IMPROVE, EXISTING ACCESSES;**
- 3. PROVIDE REAR ACCESS SERVICING FOR FRONTAGE DEVELOPMENT; AND**
- 4. AVOID NON-ESSENTIAL ACCESS TO BYPASSES OR OTHER RELIEF ROADS.**

- 9.22 Adding new junctions and accesses can reduce the capacity of main roads, particularly in the urban area. Road safety can also be impaired. New roads will have any necessary junctions included in their design. New accesses onto bypasses or other relief roads will be approved where they can be safely accommodated and where no other suitable access to the development is available.

POLICY T9 - Traffic Management and Road Safety

THE COUNCIL WILL ENSURE THAT ALL TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SCHEMES INTENDED TO IMPROVE TRAFFIC FLOW ARE ALSO DESIGNED TO ENSURE SAFE AND ACCEPTABLE VEHICLE SPEED.

- 9.23 Undue congestion and delay on the main roads will be eased wherever possible and minor traffic management measures will be introduced on other roads, but it is not otherwise acceptable to introduce traffic management measure simply to increase vehicle speed. Similarly, removing parking or creating one-way streets can encourage drivers to increase speed beyond safe limits.

POLICY T10 - Traffic Calming - Existing Roads

THE COUNCIL WILL INTRODUCE TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES IN RESIDENTIAL AND OTHER AREAS WITH POOR ROAD SAFETY RECORDS AND IN AREAS WHERE THROUGH-TRAFFIC HAS BEEN REMOVED BY THE CONSTRUCTION OF BYPASSES AND THE CROSS TOWN ROUTE.

POLICY T11 - Traffic Calming - New Development

NEW RESIDENTIAL AND OTHER DEVELOPMENT WILL BE REQUIRED TO INCORPORATE TRAFFIC CALMING FEATURES ON ACCESS ROADS, WHEREVER IT IS APPROPRIATE TO RESTRICT THE SPEED OF MOTOR VEHICLES.

- 9.24 Comprehensive schemes in residential areas and elsewhere with pedestrians and youngsters can be designed to reduce vehicle speed and discourage through-traffic. Measures include altering the geometry and layout of roads in existing and new development, for example installing road humps, speed humps, carriageway narrowing, rumble strips, mini-roundabouts, bollards and other street furniture. Tree planting and other landscaping can be incorporated. The presence of parked cars also assists. It may be necessary to reduce traffic to little more than walking speed in places, in order to provide a safer environment. Schemes should be designed to ensure safe and convenient access for buses and pedal cyclists. Areas which have benefited from such schemes include Skerne Park and Hundens Lane. Other areas will be considered having regard to their existing road safety record and potential for accidents. The bypassed villages of Heighington, Middleton St. George and Haughton-le-Skerne (after construction of part of the Cross Town Route) would also benefit.
- 9.25 Similar features should be designed into new development such as housing estates, retail and business parks. The Council issues guidance for developers.

~~NEW DEVELOPMENT~~

~~POLICY T12 New Development Road Capacity~~

~~TRAFFIC GENERATED BY NEW DEVELOPMENT MUST BE ABLE TO BE ACCOMMODATED WITHIN THE CAPACITIES OF SURROUNDING ROADS IN A SAFE AND ENVIRONMENTALLY SATISFACTORY WAY.~~

~~POLICY T13 New Development Standards~~

~~ALL NEW DEVELOPMENT SHOULD INCORPORATE ADEQUATE PROVISION FOR ACCESS AND CIRCULATION BY BOTH VEHICLES AND PEDESTRIANS. ROADS AND FOOTPATHS WITHIN NEW DEVELOPMENT INTENDED FOR PUBLIC USE WILL BE REQUIRED TO BE CONSTRUCTED TO STANDARDS SUITABLE FOR ADOPTION AS PUBLIC HIGHWAY.~~

~~9.26 Highways considerations are interests of acknowledged importance in making planning decisions. Existing roads giving access to proposed development should not be overloaded. In some circumstances it may be necessary to require the developer to provide for improvements to roads outside the site, and where necessary, before development begins or is occupied, through 'Grampian' conditions and legal or other agreements. Traffic generated by new development should not have a harmful impact on residential amenity (Policy H15) and the landscape, plant life, wildlife and geological features (Policy E23). Planning applications for larger developments may need to be accompanied by traffic impact assessments in order that they can be considered acceptable. Planning permissions must ensure that new development has safe access to and from the highway.~~

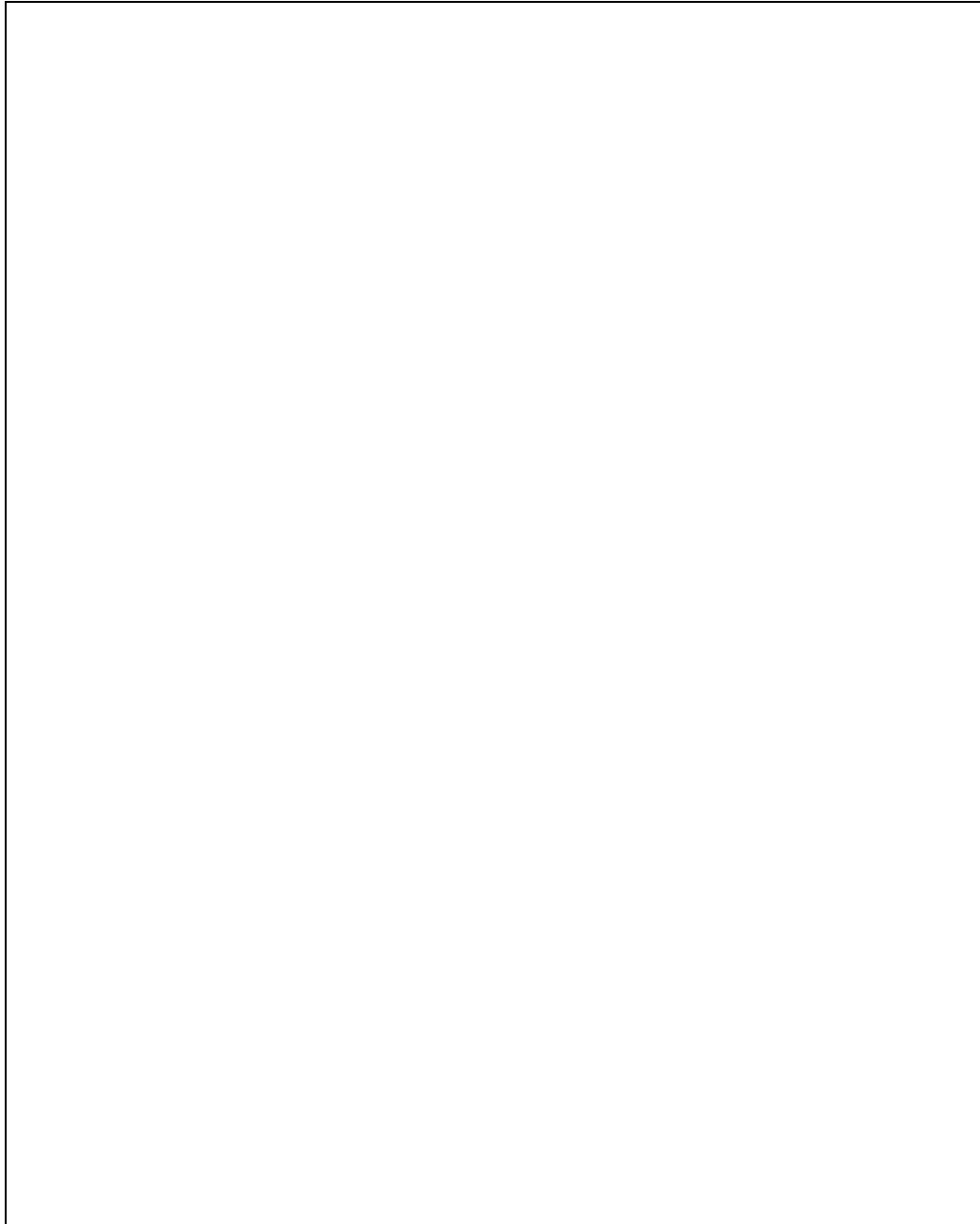
~~9.27 The Council issues guidance on the layout, design and construction of roads and footpaths. The Council will only take over responsibility to maintain new roads and footpaths if they are constructed to its own standards.~~

TRAFFIC IN THE TOWN CENTRE

9.28 The inner ring road links all the radial roads and has removed the need for traffic to pass through town centre streets. The proposal to build the final western section was abandoned and it can not be justified because of the severe physical environmental damage it would cause to historic and residential areas. Access is gained to the town centre by a series of loop roads connecting ring road roundabouts (Figure 9.3). Traffic restrictions have been introduced to most of the shopping streets and the Council is working towards the comprehensive pedestrianisation of them.

9.29 A daytime survey of pedestrians in the town centre in August 1992 showed that 71% lived in the town: 52% had travelled in by car, 30% by bus and 16% had walked. This was very similar to the 1981 Census, which showed that 68% of people working in Central Ward lived in the town, with 49% travelling by car, 30% by bus and 16% on foot. Of those living outside the town, 71% travelled by car and 22% by bus. Other, more recent, surveys show broadly similar results.

Figure 9.3 Town Centre Highways and Car Parks



POLICY T14 - Private Car Access to Town Centre

DURING THE WORKING DAY, PRIVATE CARS WILL ONLY HAVE ACCESS WITHIN THE INNER RING ROAD TO THOSE STREETS GIVING ACCESS TO PUBLIC CAR PARKING. ACCESS ACROSS THE TOWN CENTRE WILL NOT BE PERMITTED.

- 9.30 It is neither desirable nor essential for private motorists to drive through town centre streets to reach their destination. Most car parks are located close to ring road roundabouts and there are adequate opportunities to set down and collect passengers on the edge of the town centre and at times when access restrictions do not apply.

PROPOSAL T15 - Improvements for Pedestrians

CONDITIONS FOR PEDESTRIANS WILL BE IMPROVED BY INTRODUCING TRAFFIC-FREE AREAS DURING MAIN SHOPPING PERIODS AND BY REDUCING BUS CONGESTION. FURTHER IMPROVEMENTS WILL BE

INTRODUCED, PARTICULARLY IN HIGH ROW, NORTHGATE, PREBEND ROW, PRIESTGATE, TUBWELL ROW, BONDGATE AND BLACKWELLGATE. ROUTES INTO THE TOWN CENTRE WILL BE IMPROVED.

- 9.31 The purpose built shopping centres at the Cornmill and Queen Street are attractive and successful because they are entirely traffic-free. Measures are necessary to improve conditions for pedestrians elsewhere by removing as much traffic as possible and by repaving and landscaping the streets (Policy E37). These make the town centre generally a safer, quieter and more attractive place and provide additional space for seating, litter bins, public telephones, direction signs and information points. They also provide appropriate settings for distinctive traditional features such as Pease's statue, High Row railings, the Tub Well and the Market Cross. Traffic restrictions may be introduced initially on an experimental basis. Routes from residential areas and car parks outside the inner ring road must be safe, properly lit, attractive, avoid detours and be well signposted. Improvements will be carried out as part of town centre management initiatives and will be drawn up in consultation with local businesses and the general public.

~~POLICY T16 - Access for Deliveries, Buses, Cyclists, Taxis and People With Disabilities~~

~~PROPOSALS TO IMPROVE CONDITIONS FOR PEDESTRIANS WILL ALSO ENSURE THAT ADEQUATE ACCESS IS AVAILABLE TO THE TOWN CENTRE FOR DELIVERY VEHICLES, BUSES, PEDAL CYCLISTS, TAXIS AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES.~~

- ~~9.32 These groups have special justification to be allowed access to the town centre and their needs must be taken into account when introducing pedestrianisation schemes. However, shops and other businesses do not need vehicular access for deliveries for the whole of the day, except for emergencies. Existing restrictions in Northgate, Skinnergate and High Row show that adequate time for deliveries can be provided before and after the busier parts of the day.~~
- ~~9.33 On the other hand, it is essential that buses have good access to the town centre throughout the shopping day in order to maintain their attractiveness over the private car. However, many routes converge on the town centre, where congestion and physical danger has occurred in the past, with noise and exhaust fumes creating unpleasant conditions for pedestrians. Agreements have been reached with the operators on speeds and safety. Any proposals to achieve environmental and safety improvements which may involve diverting buses into other streets must ensure adequate access to the town centre for passengers.~~
- ~~9.34 Pedal cyclists require access across the town centre to avoid dangers to them on the inner ring road and to reach the cycle parking stands in shopping streets. It is appropriate for them to use bus only lanes, but they should dismount in streets free of all motor traffic.~~
- ~~9.35 The use of taxis is to be encouraged as an alternative method of travel to the private car and they need access to ranks located close to the main shopping streets. However, there is no other justification to exempt taxis from traffic prohibitions or to allow them unrestricted access across the town centre in bus only lanes.~~
- ~~9.36 People with disabilities benefit particularly from traffic free areas, but their mobility is limited when they leave their vehicle. Space is reserved for 'orange badge' holders in car parks and in town centre streets, and exemptions from some traffic orders are needed to allow drivers to reach these spaces.~~

POLICY T17 - Rear Servicing

NEW DEVELOPMENT IN THE TOWN CENTRE AREA WILL NORMALLY BE REQUIRED TO MAKE PROVISION FOR REAR SERVICING. REAR ACCESS TO EXISTING BUILDINGS WILL BE IMPROVED WHERE NECESSARY.

- 9.37 It is not intended to provide rear access roads to all properties as this would be expensive and would require the demolition of a substantial number of attractive and historic buildings.

However, full use should be made of those roads which do exist and the maximum opportunity to use them should be made when designing redevelopment schemes.

PROPOSAL T18 - Collection / Distribution Centre

A SITE OUTSIDE THE TOWN CENTRE WILL BE SOUGHT FOR THE PROVISION OF A COLLECTION AND DISTRIBUTION CENTRE FOR HEAVY GOODS VEHICLES WHICH:

- 1. DOES NOT MATERIALLY ADVERSELY AFFECT RESIDENTIAL OR RURAL AMENITY;**
- 2. IS LOCATED CONVENIENTLY FOR ACCESS TO THE A1(M), A66, A68, A67 TEESIDE AIRPORT LINK AND PROPOSED CROSS TOWN ROUTE.**

- 9.38 A substantial amount of goods are delivered by articulated and other large heavy goods vehicles designed primarily for travel on motorways. They are not suited to the town centre and they frequently deliver only a small proportion of the load. The damage and congestion they cause and the carriageway width they need could be reduced if the goods were delivered to a reception centre located near to roads on the County lorry route network and transferred to smaller vehicles for local delivery. The centre should not be located near residential areas where lorries can cause nuisance in terms of noise, fumes and vibration (Policy H15). The Council will investigate the establishment and management of such a centre.

CAR PARKING

- 9.39 There is only one purpose-built town centre public car park, the multi-storey at East Street. Most car parks are on land which has been acquired by the Council for development and cleared of buildings. Others are owned privately but are available for public use. Approximately 2,800 spaces are available in all central car parks. Only 1,250 of these are inside the inner ring road. A considerable amount of on-street parking is available for the public, mainly in the terraced residential areas which surround the town centre.
- 9.40 Annual surveys of the Central Parking Zone (Figure 9.4) show gradually increasing numbers of cars visiting the town centre (Figure 9.5). The supply of suitable spaces for shoppers is unable to meet demand on some days, particularly in the period before Christmas, when special additional arrangements now need to be made. Demand will continue to increase with growth in car use. Furthermore, some of the car parks are small, difficult to find and not ideally located for the shopper. Searching for a space adds to congestion. Some car parks are proposed for development and the prominent location of others detracts from the appearance of the town centre. Residents complain about parking in their streets.
- 9.41 Ideally, there should be a smaller number of larger, centrally-located, car parks for shoppers, with peripheral car parks for them on days of peak demand and for commuters. Parking should be reduced in residential areas. 'Park-and-Ride' may become appropriate on days of peak demand, but investigations have shown that it would not be successful at present.

Figure 9.4 Central Parking Zone

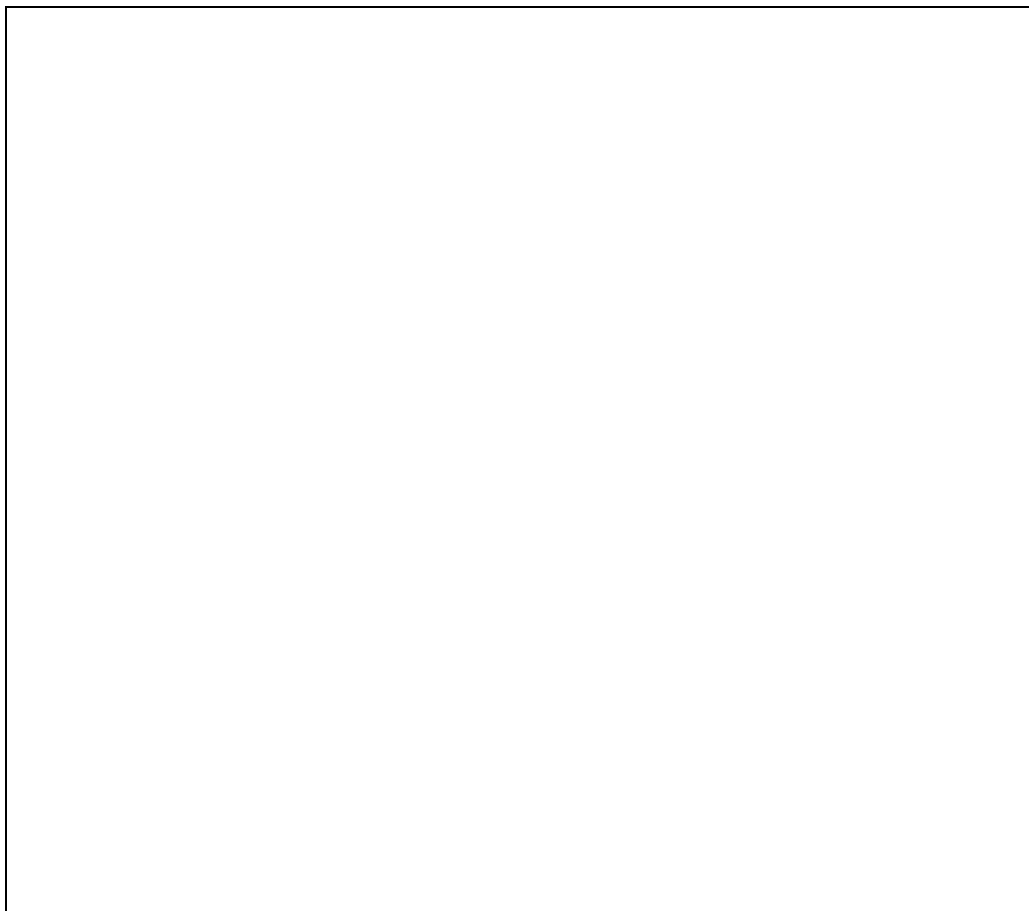
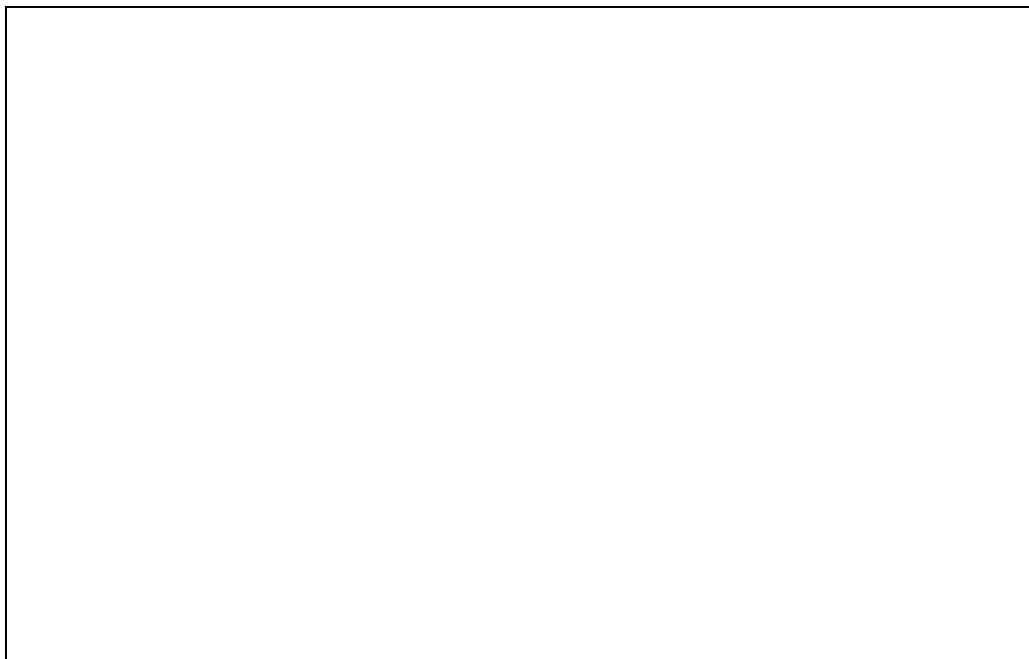


Figure 9.5 Town Centre Car Parking



- 9.42 The Council considers that there should be approximately 2,000 parking spaces available for public use during the week inside the inner ring road with at least a further 1,000 spaces in car parks outside it. Additional spaces should be made available on Saturdays and just before Christmas. There is a limit on the number of cars which can be physically accommodated in the town centre without damaging it or its approaches and it is not intended to provide a parking space for all drivers who would prefer to use their cars, especially commuters. The Council will have regard to the economic health of the town centre in considering the level of provision to be maintained.

PROPOSAL T19 - Multi-Storey Car Parks

LAND FOR MULTI-STOREY CAR PARKS WILL BE SAFEGUARDED AT: BEAUMONT STREET; COMMERCIAL STREET; CROWN STREET. A MULTI-STOREY CAR PARK WILL BE RETAINED AT EAST STREET.

- 9.43 The most efficient way in land use terms to increase the physical number of parking spaces is by building multi-storey car parks. The alternative is to demolish more buildings, but this is neither financially nor environmentally desirable. The sites listed above have good access from the inner ring road and well designed buildings will replace the existing open tarmac areas. Their design will need to pay particular attention to appearance, ease of use and safety. They could be built in conjunction with development for commercial uses in accordance with other policies and proposals. The exact number of spaces will depend on their detailed design, but it is estimated that these car parks, together with the existing car parks at East Street can provide the desired 2,000 spaces within the inner ring road. The capacity of East Street car park will be increased when its upper deck is brought back into use.

PROPOSAL T20 - Town Centre Surface Car Parks

SURFACE CAR PARKS WILL BE RETAINED FOR PUBLIC USE IN AND ADJACENT TO THE TOWN CENTRE AT:

**ARCHER STREET;
BARNARD STREET;
CHESNUT STREET;
HIRD STREET;
GARDEN STREET;
KENDREW STREET (EAST);
NORTHUMBERLAND STREET;
PARKGATE;
PARK PLACE (EAST & WEST);
RUSSELL STREET;
TOWN HALL.**

- 9.44 Many of the existing surface car parks will still be needed even when all the multi-storey car parks are built. Development has taken place at Russell Street and about 150 spaces are still available for public use. More space will be available for the public at Park Place (West) when the cattle market at Clifton Road closes. The appearance from the main roads of the more visually prominent surface car parks will be improved (Policy E16). Proposal T20 will provide the desired 1,000 spaces outside the inner ring road. The Town Hall staff car park will continue to be available for the public on Saturdays and Bank Holidays. The car park at the Safeway superstore in Victoria Road provides additional space.
- 9.45 Figure 9.3 shows the location of the multi-storey and surface car parks and the Table overpage sets out their capacities. In addition, secure places for motor cycles will be provided.

- 9.46 The other existing surface car parks are the subject of development or other proposals: Abbott's Yard (Proposal S3), Beaumont Street West (EP11), Park Lane ('Clifton Road', H5.8), Victoria Road (H5.14) and Kendrew Street west (H5.16). The timing of their release may depend on the rate of progress in constructing replacement spaces in multi-storey car parks or will have to await the closure of the cattle market.

Table - Public Car Park Capacities

Multi-Storey Car Parks:	Capacity:
<i>East Street</i>	350
<i>Commercial Street</i>	650 *
<i>Beaumont Street</i>	550 *
<i>Crown Street</i>	450 *
<i>Total multi-storey car parks</i>	<i>2,000 *</i>
Surface Car Parks:	Capacity:
<i>Archer Street</i>	80
<i>Barnard Street</i>	115
<i>Chesnut Street</i>	180
<i>Hird Street</i>	25
<i>Kendrew Street (East)</i>	95
<i>Garden Street</i>	85
<i>Northumberland Street</i>	25
<i>Parkgate</i>	20
<i>Park Place</i>	225
<i>Russell Street</i>	150 *
<i>Town Hall</i>	85
<i>Total surface car parks</i>	<i>1,085</i>
Total All Car Parks	3,085 *

* Estimate for proposed multi-storey car parks and remaining section of Russell Street surface car park

All capacities are approximate for Mondays to Fridays.

POLICY T21 - Public Use of Private Car Parks

THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO MAKE PRIVATE CAR PARKS AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC USE BY AGREEMENT WITH THEIR OWNERS WHERE NECESSARY AT TIMES OF EXCESSIVE PARKING DEMAND. PUBLICITY WILL BE GIVEN TO THEIR AVAILABILITY.

- 9.47 Bank Holidays, the shopping period before Christmas and major sporting events at Feethams football and cricket ground generate car parking demands which cannot be met in the public car parks. The temporary use of private car parks helps cater for extra demand and reduces problems in residential streets.

POLICY T22 - Priority in Central Car Parks

THE MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC CAR PARKS SERVING THE TOWN CENTRE WILL GIVE PRIORITY TO SHORT-STAY PARKING.

- 9.48 The more centrally-located car parks, especially those inside the inner ring road are already reserved for the short-stay needs of shoppers and other visitors. Commuters are encouraged to use the more peripheral car parks which are still within a reasonable walking distance of places of work. The Council ensures this by setting charges for car parks at different rates. Charges may vary on different days according to demand. Conditions or legal or other agreements will be used to achieve this in new privately-operated car parks. Similar agreements will be sought with existing privately-controlled car park operators. The objective is to ensure that the overall level of parking provision in the central area supports the town centre's vitality and viability whilst affording encouragement to the use of public transport in conformity with the Plan's strategic aims and objectives.

PROPOSAL T23 - Albert Road Car Park

A PUBLICLY AVAILABLE CAR PARK WILL BE PROVIDED AT ALBERT ROAD.

- 9.49 Commercial uses on the east side of North Road generate a substantial amount of parking. Inadequate space exists within these premises and drivers use residential streets instead. This vacant site lies within the safeguarded area for the Cross Town Route (Proposal T6.1), but there is sufficient space to design the road in this area and incorporate a replacement car park.
- 9.50 The Council maintains public car parks at Peel Street (off Yarm Road) and Cockerton. Consideration will be given to providing others where sufficient need exists and suitable sites can be found.

~~POLICY T24 – Parking and Servicing Requirements for New Development~~

~~NEW DEVELOPMENT WILL NORMALLY BE REQUIRED TO PROVIDE SAFE SPACE FOR VEHICLE PARKING AND SERVICING WITHIN THE SITE. PROVISION SHOULD BE MADE FOR DELIVERIES, RESIDENTS, EMPLOYEES, CUSTOMERS, VISITORS AND OTHERS WHO MAY VISIT THE PREMISES INCLUDING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES. THE NUMBER OF SPACES TO BE PROVIDED SHALL HAVE REGARD TO THE EXPECTED LIFE OF THE PROPERTY AND THE ULTIMATE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE. PERMISSION WILL NORMALLY ONLY BE GRANTED WHERE THE PROPOSALS SATISFY THE STANDARDS SET OUT IN THE ATTACHED ANNEX.~~

- ~~9.51 The Annex to this chapter sets out car parking standards approved by Durham Council early in 1994; these have been subsequently modified and adopted by the Borough Council. The standards are here expressed as maxima designed to ensure that adequate off-street parking is ordinarily provided throughout the foreseeable life of a development, whilst avoiding any over provision likely to encourage the use of private cars in preference to available alternatives. They will be applied flexibly in the light of particular circumstances, account being taken, in the town centre of the need to provide no more space overall than is required to maintain its vitality and viability and, elsewhere, of the need to avoid duplicating car parking provisions where premises are so grouped that car parks can be shared or multi-purpose car trips be undertaken. Where standards for any proposed land use are not prescribed, individual assessments will be based on the requirements imposed on the most closely comparable uses.~~

- ~~9.52 Proper on site provision for all forms of parking and servicing, including motor cycles, pedal cycles and access for taxis, avoids problems on surrounding roads and it is important to allow for expected increases in demand for parking during the life of the buildings. Parking spaces for people with disabilities should be provided close to building entrances. Parking areas should be designed to minimise the danger of theft and personal attack and should be suitably landscaped to avoid visual intrusion.~~

~~POLICY T25 – Parking and Servicing Requirements for New Development in the Town Centre~~

~~IN THE TOWN CENTRE, OPERATIONAL PARKING SPACE WILL BE REQUIRED TO BE PROVIDED WITHIN ITS CURTILAGE UNLESS THE COUNCIL HAS BEEN SATISFIED THAT DEVELOPMENT IS OF A SMALL SCALE WHICH CAN BE SAFELY AND CONVENIENTLY SERVICED FROM A POSITION WITHIN THE HIGHWAY. NON OPERATIONAL PARKING SPACE WILL BE PERMITTED ONLY WHERE IT IS COMPATIBLE WITH THE TOTALITY OF THE PROVISIONS OF POLICIES T19 T20, THAT IT IS GENERALLY AVAILABLE, AND THAT PRIORITY IS GIVEN TO SHORT STAY PARKING.~~

- ~~9.53 Operational parking spaces are required for vehicles regularly and necessarily involved in the operation of the business, including commercial vehicles which deliver or collect goods and service the buildings. Exceptions could be made for small scale infill developments and changes of use which have servicing requirements which can be safely met from nearby highways. Non operational parking spaces are for vehicles which do not need to park or wait at the premises, including cars belonging to employees, shoppers, business callers or sightseers. Provision for these is made in publicly controlled car parks which are managed so as to differentiate between short stay and long stay demand. The town centre is defined on the Proposals Map as the area bounded by the inner ring road and Raby Terrace.~~

POLICY T26 - Town Centre Fringe Parking

PARKING STANDARDS MAY BE RELAXED OUTSIDE THE TOWN CENTRE BUT WITHIN THE OFFICE DEVELOPMENT LIMIT AND THE NORTHGATE FRINGE SHOPPING AREA WHERE A SIGNIFICANT PROPORTION OF EMPLOYEES ARE ABLE TO USE PUBLIC TRANSPORT OR TO ENSURE THE RETENTION OF AN EXISTING BUILDING.

- 9.54 A more flexible approach in applying standards is desirable in the commercial streets outside the town centre. Proposals to use existing buildings or to redevelop sites are frequently unable to achieve the full parking or servicing standards. Reasons include the shortage of space available, the need for the scale of the building to fit in with its surroundings and for the proposal to be economically viable. Furthermore, larger developments, such as major offices, in this area can take advantage of public transport and should minimise the number of employees commuting by private car. On the other hand it is important that development in this area does not add to existing parking congestion or environmental problems in surrounding residential streets. It is also essential that the proposal does not impair road safety. Existing on-site space already used or otherwise suitable for parking and servicing should normally be retained and any new retail development permitted in this area will normally be required to include full parking space for customers and for servicing.

POLICY T27 - On-Street Parking Control

THE COUNCIL WILL REMOVE ON-STREET PARKING WHERE THIS CAUSES ROAD SAFETY HAZARDS, IMPEDES BUS OPERATIONS OR CAUSES UNACCEPTABLE DISTURBANCE TO RESIDENTS. REGARD WILL BE PAID TO THE IMPACT OF DISPLACED VEHICLES ELSEWHERE.

- 9.55 It is necessary to prohibit waiting by vehicles at junctions and elsewhere in order to assist buses, road safety or residential amenity. However, it is important that such measures do not simply move the problem to other streets or encourage drivers to speed (Policy T9).

POLICY T28 - Residents' Parking Schemes

THE COUNCIL WILL INTRODUCE RESIDENTS' PARKING SCHEMES WHERE RESIDENTS ARE SEVERELY INCONVENIENCED BY OTHERS' PARKED VEHICLES.

- 9.56 The older terraced housing which surrounds the town centre has inadequate car parking or garaging and many residents rely on the front streets for parking places. Commuters and shoppers also park in these streets during the day and this is likely to continue. The Council has introduced a pilot scheme in the Larchfield Street area, to the west of the town centre, in order to test the effectiveness of such measures. When introduced with traffic calming proposals (Policy T10) such schemes can significantly improve the amenity of older residential areas.

POLICY T29 - On-Street Short Stay Parking

ON-STREET PARKING AREAS FOR NON-RESIDENTS WITHIN AND ADJACENT TO THE TOWN CENTRE AND OTHER SHOPPING CENTRES WILL BE CONTROLLED TO GIVE PRIORITY TO SHOPPERS AND OTHER SHORT STAY VISITORS INCLUDING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH DEMAND WHICH CAN NOT BE MET WITHIN PUBLIC CAR PARKS.

- 9.57 The availability of on-street parking contributes towards the attractiveness and accessibility of the town centre and some other shopping areas in the older parts of town. Restrictions can be introduced to ensure that convenient spaces are not occupied by all-day commuter parking.

BUSES

~~POLICY T30 - Use of Public Transport~~

~~THE COUNCIL WILL PROMOTE THE USE OF BUSES WITHIN THE BOROUGH AND TO OTHER DESTINATIONS.~~

- ~~9.58 Many people depend on buses for their travel needs and there are also significant environmental benefits in maintaining and improving services as an alternative to using the private car in the town. The bus operators require the support of the local authorities to ensure that services within the town, to the villages in the Borough and to other destinations, are convenient and reliable. Traffic orders can give priority for buses in busy roads and maintain easy access to stops. Policies T4 and T7 ensure that the needs of buses and bus users are taken into account as appropriate in the design of new roads, improved roads and traffic management schemes. The Council issues concessionary tokens to the elderly and people with disabilities in order to assist their mobility.~~

POLICY T31 - New Development and Public Transport

~~THE LOCATION AND LAYOUT OF NEW DEVELOPMENTS SHOULD BE SUCH THAT THEY CAN BE CONVENIENTLY AND EFFICIENTLY SERVED BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT. THE MAXIMUM WALKING DISTANCE TO THE NEAREST BUS STOP SHOULD NOT EXCEED 400m.~~

- ~~9.59 Most new development should be located close to existing bus routes in order to encourage and make the best use of public transport, as well as to be accessible to non-car users. The internal layout of larger housing developments and industrial estates should be designed to be easily accessible and make provision for buses to stop and turn safely. Layouts should include footpath links to bus stops either within or adjacent to the site. A maximum walking distance of 400 metres to the nearest bus stop reflects current national guidance found in paragraph 4.3 of Circular 82/73 and supplementary policy advice contained in the emerging County Durham Structure Plan Review. Policy H11 requires shorter walking distances to bus stops from new housing development for the elderly and mobility handicapped.~~
- ~~9.60 The town centre is the hub of local bus routes and it makes sense to locate most retail, recreation, entertainment and leisure development there. Out of centre retail stores, provided mainly for car users, should also be located where they can be served by buses to and from a range of destinations. Policy S11 requires shorter walking distances to bus stops in shopping centres.~~

POLICY T32 - Feethams Bus Station

THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO IMPROVE OR REPLACE FACILITIES FOR PASSENGERS AT FEETHAMS BUS AND COACH STATION WITH THE CO-OPERATION OF THE OPERATOR.

- 9.61 The bus station in the town centre currently presents a poor image of Darlington to many visitors to the town. It was built in the early 1960s and is noisy, smelly and visually unappealing. There is no toilet (other than for people with disabilities), or refreshment provision and it is now much larger than is needed for the operator's requirements. A proposal is being considered to redevelop the bus station, together with the adjoining Beaumont Street site, for a mixture of uses, including a bus and coach point.

POLICY T33 - Provision for Waiting Passengers

~~SAFE AND CONVENIENT WAITING FACILITIES WILL BE PROVIDED FOR PASSENGERS AT ROADSIDE BUS STOPS IN ACCORDANCE WITH DEMAND.~~

~~9.62 Bus shelters are provided for waiting passengers by the Council and sometimes by agreement with others, including developers. Some of those in the town centre will need to be replaced if proposals to re-route some services (Proposal T15 and Policy T16) are implemented. Others need to be replaced by more attractive shelters in keeping with other environmental improvements (Proposal E37) being carried out. Timetable and other information is displayed. Many shelters need to be regularly repaired because of vandalism and graffiti. Facilities should be convenient to use as well as attractive in appearance. They should accommodate the needs of people with disabilities.~~

TAXIS

~~POLICY T34 - Taxi Ranks~~

~~PROVISION FOR HACKNEY CARRIAGE RANKS WILL BE MAINTAINED AT CONVENIENT LOCATIONS IN THE TOWN CENTRE, AT FEETHAMS BUS STATION, DARLINGTON RAILWAY STATION AND IN MAJOR SHOPPING AREAS OUTSIDE THE TOWN CENTRE.~~

~~9.63 Taxis provide an important service as part of the transport network. Improved provision is needed to collect and set down passengers at the bus and railway stations. Shoppers in the town centre need ranks close to the pedestrianised streets. Policy T24 requires new development such as retail, hotel and recreation uses to provide waiting and setting down areas for taxis.~~

POLICY T35 - Taxi Offices

TAXI OFFICES WILL ONLY BE APPROVED IN LOCATIONS WHICH DO NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT RESIDENTIAL AMENITY OR ROAD SAFETY.

9.64 Taxi offices need to be conveniently located for customers and require good road access. Consequently, they seek to locate on the edge of the town centre. Noise from vehicles, drivers, customers and radio equipment can be disturbing to residents, particularly at night. Drivers should only wait or rest at those offices which have satisfactory on-street or off-street parking spaces available.

PEDAL CYCLING

PROPOSAL T36 - Cycle Route Network

FURTHER LINKS IN THE CYCLE ROUTE NETWORK WILL BE PROVIDED. PRIORITY WILL BE GIVEN TO PROVIDING CROSSINGS OF THE INNER RING ROAD AND OTHER MAIN ROADS. SUBSTANTIALLY COMPLETED ROUTES WILL BE WAYMARKED AND PUBLICISED.

9.65 The Council attaches particular importance to pedal cycling, both as a means of travel to work and for recreation. A network has been identified in the town which will provide safe and convenient routes for pedal cyclists and it is shown on the Proposals Map. These avoid busy roads and link residential areas with the town centre, industrial areas, district and local shopping centres, major open spaces and the countryside. A cycle path is being provided in the Skerne Valley linear park. The network makes use of paths and quiet streets, but special provision is needed to cross the inner ring road and other busy roads. Only one controlled crossing has been provided to date and the Council will include others in future programmes. Other links have been provided as part of new development or by creating special paths in parks and open spaces. Signposting and publicity assists their use.

9.66 Pedal cycling takes place not just on the formally identified network. For many cyclists' journeys it is not possible to avoid the busier roads and there are other locations which will be identified for improvements. Policies T4 and T7 ensure that the needs of cyclists are taken into account in the design of new roads, improved roads and traffic management schemes.

~~POLICY T37 - Cycle Routes in New Developments~~

~~NEW DEVELOPMENT WHERE ADDITIONAL PEDAL CYCLE JOURNEYS ARE POSSIBLE WILL BE REQUIRED TO INCLUDE ROUTES FOR PEDAL CYCLING, ESPECIALLY WHERE IT IS LOCATED ON OR ADJACENT TO THE CYCLE ROUTE NETWORK.~~

- ~~9.67 The layout of roads in new housing, industrial, shopping and other developments with public access should take the needs of cyclists into account and avoid conflict with motor vehicles and pedestrians. Some paths can be shared with pedestrians but others need to be separated and detailed guidance will be issued. It is important that cycle routes avoid isolation and undue separation from other routes in order for them to be safe and attractive to use. Purpose designed links forming part of or giving access to the cycle route network will normally be adopted as public highway.~~

PROPOSAL T38 Public Cycle Parking

~~PUBLIC FACILITIES FOR PARKING PEDAL CYCLES WILL BE PROVIDED AND MAINTAINED IN THE TOWN CENTRE AND AT OTHER APPROPRIATE LOCATIONS.~~

- ~~9.68 The Council has provided stands for cycle parking throughout the town centre and at shopping and recreation facilities elsewhere in the town. More will be provided at appropriate locations to cater for increasing demand. Cycle parking in new development is required by Policy T24.~~

PEDESTRIANS

POLICY T39 Conditions for Pedestrians

~~FOOTPATHS AND OTHER AREAS FOR PEDESTRIANS SHOULD BE DESIGNED:~~

- ~~1. TO BE SAFE FROM MOTOR VEHICLES;~~
- ~~2. TO ENSURE PERSONAL SECURITY AND AVOID FEAR OF ATTACK;~~
- ~~3. TO PROVIDE A CONVENIENT AND DIRECT ROUTE TO DESTINATION;~~
- ~~4. TO PROVIDE ATTRACTIVE SURROUNDINGS INCLUDING PLANTING;~~
- ~~5. TO A REASONABLE WIDTH AND WITH A COMFORTABLE SURFACE;~~
- ~~6. TO ASSIST THE MOBILITY OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES.~~

~~THE COUNCIL WILL TAKE MEASURES TO COMBAT THE PERSISTENT AND INCREASING ENCROACHMENT BY MOTOR VEHICLES OF SPACE FOR AND ON THE AMENITY OF PEDESTRIANS.~~

- ~~9.69 People walk by choice and by necessity, at different speeds and sometimes in small groups. They carry shopping, wheel pushchairs and supervise small children. They share space with young people at play, often on wheels at speed. It is therefore important that conditions for all pedestrians should be as safe and pleasant as possible. Footpaths should incorporate dropped or flush kerbs with tactile paving to help people with disabilities, pushchairs, etc to cross roads. The Plan seeks to encourage walking as a means of transport or leisure exercise and detailed guidance on the design of areas for pedestrian circulation will be issued.~~

- ~~9.70 Many drivers unnecessarily park or stand their vehicles for their own convenience on footways and other areas not intended for them, without regard for the safety or amenity of pedestrians or the damage being caused to the surface. Sometimes this is an attempt to evade waiting or other restrictions. Similarly, many drivers disregard access prohibitions designed to give priority to pedestrians in the town centre. Measures will include supervising Council owned land, issuing instructions to Council employees and contractors, preparing publicity, and requesting the Police to give greater priority to enforcing traffic and highway law.~~

- ~~9.71 The needs of pedestrians are provided for in several other policies, including, the design of major road schemes (T4), traffic management (T7), traffic calming (T10 and T11), highway design and new development (T12 and T13) and improvements in the town centre (T15).~~

LORRIES

POLICY T40 - New Development and Lorries

DEVELOPMENT LIKELY TO RESULT IN A SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN THE NUMBER AND SIZE OF HEAVY GOODS AND OTHER LARGE VEHICLES WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED ON INDUSTRIAL SITES LOCATED CONVENIENTLY FOR ACCESS TO THE A1(M), A66, A68 CROSS TOWN ROUTE AND A67 TEESIDE AIRPORT LINK.

- 9.72 The trend towards larger lorries designed for long distance travel at high speeds on motorways means that existing town roads are not suitable for them. Industrial areas at Faverdale, Yarm Road and Teesside Airport are located close to roads on the County lorry route network and access to them will be improved by constructing the Cross Town Route (Proposal T6.1). New development in employment areas (EP2, EP3, EP8, EP9 and EP10) must be considered in relation to the likely increase in the number and size of heavy goods and other large vehicles. Advisory routes will be signposted.

PROPOSAL T41 - Overnight Parking at Chestnut Street

THE COUNCIL WILL MAINTAIN AN OVERNIGHT LORRY AND COACH PARK AT CHESNUT STREET.

POLICY T42 - Lorry Parks

LORRY PARKS WILL BE PERMITTED IN EMPLOYMENT AREAS PROVIDED THAT THE REQUIREMENTS OF POLICY T40 ARE MET.

- 9.73 The Chesnut Street lorry park is conveniently located for drivers' overnight accommodation and town centre evening amenities. It has space for 60 vehicles which avoids the need for vehicles to park on streets overnight. Consideration will be given to improving its security. Lorry parks will also be permitted in suitable industrial areas listed in Policies EP2, EP3, and EP9.

POLICY T43 - Residential Areas and Lorries

THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK THE REDIRECTION, TO SUITABLE ALTERNATIVE ROUTES OR PARKING AREAS, OF HEAVY GOODS AND OTHER LARGE VEHICLES CAUSING ROAD SAFETY PROBLEMS OR UNDUE DISTURBANCE TO THE AMENITY OF AREAS OF A PREDOMINANTLY RESIDENTIAL CHARACTER.

- 9.74 Lorries need to use some minor roads to gain access to their destinations in the Borough, but they can cause nuisance in terms of damage, noise, fumes, vibration and congestion. They are already prohibited from certain roads in the town and consideration will be given to further restrictions as stages of the Cross Town Route are constructed (Proposal T6.1).

RAIL

POLICY T44 - Passenger Railways

THE COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE THE USE OF RAIL PASSENGER SERVICES INCLUDING THE PROMOTION OF SERVICES ON THE BRANCH LINES TO BISHOP AUCKLAND, HARTLEPOOL, MIDDLESBROUGH, SALTBURN AND WHITBY.

- 9.75 Freight services have been withdrawn from the branch line to Weardale, and the Council considers passenger services to Aycliffe industrial estate and Bishop Auckland to be in doubt in the long term. Services to Teesside and beyond continue to be at risk. The economic prosperity of Darlington depends on its excellent communications with the rest of the country, but the loss of branch line services could result in fewer inter-city trains stopping here. The Council will also seek to retain the branch line stations within the Borough at North Road, Dinsdale and

Teesside Airport and those elsewhere along the line. The branch lines have the potential for greater importance in the local transport strategy and provide alternative means of transport to the private car. Furthermore, improvements are needed for people with disabilities and the carriage of pushchairs and pedal cycles.

- 9.76 The tourism potential of the branch lines' associations with the historic Stockton and Darlington Railway will be explored in conjunction with the development of North Road Railway Museum and Centre (Policies TO8 and TO9). The Council will seek the retention of the track and structures on the line to Weardale in the event of public passenger services being withdrawn.

~~POLICY T45 - Darlington Railway Station~~

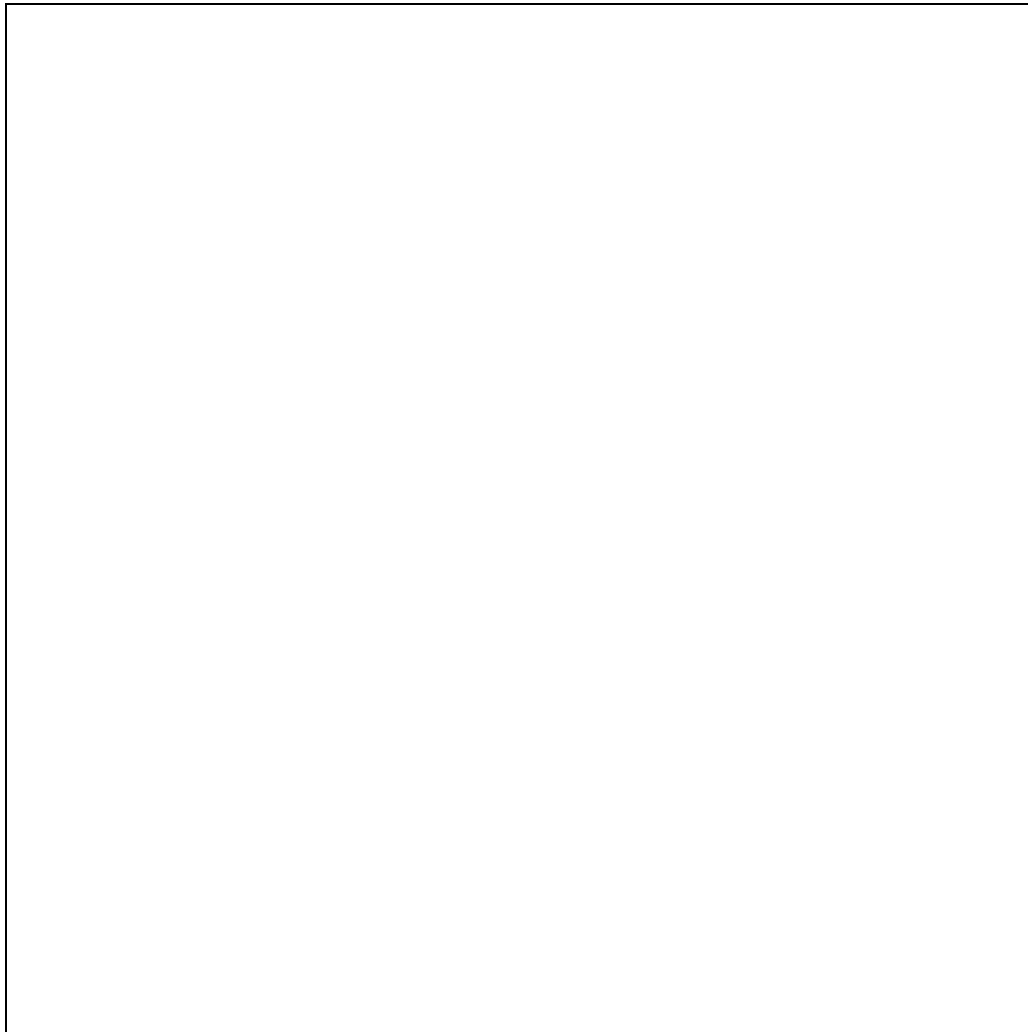
~~THE COUNCIL WILL CONTINUE TO ASSIST IN THE PROMOTION OF IMPROVEMENTS FOR PASSENGERS AT DARLINGTON STATION.~~

- ~~9.77 Darlington station is just to the east of the town centre. Its location and layout does not permit satisfactory access for local bus services. Recent improvements have been made inside the station for passengers. There is adequate space for commuter car parking, but more space is needed nearer the platforms for setting down and short stay waiting for arrivals. The Council has improved signposting between the station and town centre. Other improvements will be encouraged as required, including information on bus and taxi services.~~

PROPOSAL T46 - North Road Railway Station

A NEW PLATFORM FOR PUBLIC PASSENGER SERVICES WILL BE PROVIDED AT NORTH ROAD STATION.

Figure 9.6 Railways: Darlington Urban Area



- 9.78 The former station building and surrounding land is occupied by the Railway Museum. Public access is still required to one platform and trains still run through part of the building. This impedes the development of the museum and damage is caused to this listed building by vandalism and graffiti. Access for passengers would be improved by siting a new platform to the east and diverting the track. This would allow the whole of the existing building to be enclosed within the security fence. The work will be carried out by agreement between the Council and Railtrack.

PROPOSAL T47 - Road / Rail Freight Depot

A SITE WILL BE SAFEGUARDED FOR A ROAD / RAIL FREIGHT DEPOT AT FAVERDALE.

- 9.79 The removal of European trade barriers and the opening of the Channel Tunnel has improved opportunities for international freight haulage by rail. The Council and British Steel Special Sections (formerly DSRM) have identified a site at Faverdale industrial estate and are promoting a transfer centre to attract long distance freight which normally travels by road onto rail. The site is shown on the Proposals Map; it will have direct road access to the Cross Town Route (Proposal T6.1) and it is well located for the A1(M) (Policy T40).

~~POLICY T48 - Rail Served Industrial Land~~

~~RAIL ACCESS TO INDUSTRIAL LAND AT YARM ROAD AND FAVERDALE WILL BE SAFEGUARDED.~~

- ~~9.80 The southern part of Yarm Road industrial estate has rail access to the branch line to Teesside. A substantial amount of land is available for development (Proposal EP3) and it would be suitable for new firms transporting goods which would, environmentally, be better carried by rail than road. Land at Faverdale adjacent to the proposed road / rail freight depot (Proposal T47) is also available.~~

AIRPORT

POLICY T49 - Teesside Airport

PERMISSION WILL BE GRANTED FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO ACCESS TO, AND PASSENGER AND FREIGHT TRAFFIC FACILITIES AT, TEESSIDE AIRPORT. THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK OPPORTUNITIES FOR OTHER IMPROVEMENTS FOR ACCESS, TO THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT AND FOR PUBLICITY.

- 9.81 The airport has the capacity to expand its passenger and freight services and Policy EP9 proposes additional airport-related development there. The recently constructed A67 Teesside Airport link has improved road access, but internal improvements will be needed to accommodate future growth. The Council is supporting a study to improve rail access to the airport, possibly involving the relocation of the existing station. Development at the airport should respect the character of its landscape setting (Policy E7) and the adjacent Area of High Landscape Value (Policy E8).

TRANSMISSION LINES, PIPELINES AND UNDERGROUND SERVICES

- 9.82 As part of the communication and power systems throughout the Borough, overhead lines, pipelines and underground services are essential. Through their very nature these services can affect the possible use of land and sites through which they pass, and conversely the lack of service provision can hinder possible site development. In addition overhead lines can be visually intrusive especially in areas of open landscape and significant urban views.

POLICY T50 - Overhead Lines

PROPOSALS FOR OVERHEAD LINES SHOULD AVOID VISUAL INTRUSION IN THE LANDSCAPE. AN ALTERNATIVE ROUTE EITHER ABOVE OR BELOW THE GROUND WILL BE SOUGHT WHERE THE IMPACT IS CONSIDERED TO BE UNACCEPTABLE.

- 9.83 Visual amenity will be protected throughout the Borough. Special attention will be paid in the Area of High Landscape Value (Policy E8), conservation areas (Policy E35) and from important views (Policy E10).

POLICY T51 - Location of Services

OVERHEAD LINES AND UNDERGROUND SERVICES SHOULD BE SITED TO MINIMISE CONSTRAINING THE POTENTIAL OF LAND FOR DEVELOPMENT AND TO MINIMISE ADVERSE IMPACT ON NATURE CONSERVATION.

- 9.84 The provision of power and services must be undertaken in a manner which maximises opportunities for development or redevelopment of any site through which they pass. Services and other infrastructure, such as roads, should be grouped wherever possible. At the same time nature conservation interests must be safeguarded, for example overhead lines may interfere with bird flight paths, whilst underground cables may have a direct impact on a nature conservation feature.

POLICY T52 - Drainage Infrastructure

DEVELOPMENT WHICH CANNOT BE SATISFACTORILY SERVED BY EXISTING OFF-SITE DRAINAGE INFRASTRUCTURE WILL BE PERMITTED ONLY WHERE ENFORCEABLE AGREEMENTS WITH INTENDING DEVELOPERS TO SECURE THE CARRYING OUT OF ANY REQUISITE OFF-SITE WORKS CAN BE ENTERED INTO, HAVING REGARD TO THE ADVICE OF THE DRAINAGE AUTHORITY.

- 9.85 The sites and areas where the Local Plan provides for new development are already, or can in the future be, adequately served by existing infrastructure.

POLICY T53 - Sewage Treatment Works

PLANNING PERMISSION WILL BE GRANTED FOR NEW OR EXTENDED SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANTS PROVIDED THAT:

- 1. THERE IS NO MATERIAL ADVERSE EFFECT ON THE AMENITIES OF THEIR SURROUNDINGS IN GENERAL AND OF NEIGHBOURING OCCUPIERS IN PARTICULAR;**
- 2. THEIR APPEARANCE DOES NOT MATERIALLY ADVERSELY AFFECT THEIR SETTING OR THE CHARACTER OF THE AREA;**
- 3. THEY ARE NECESSARY IN ORDER TO COMPLY WITH EC AND UK LEGISLATION REGARDING THE TREATMENT OF URBAN WASTE WATER.**

POLICY T54 - Stressholme Sewage Treatment Works

LAND WITHIN THE BOUNDARY OF STRESSHOLME SEWAGE TREATMENT WORKS IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP WILL BE SAFEGUARDED FOR THE PROVISION OF BUILDINGS AND INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDED TO ACHIEVE SATISFACTORY STANDARDS OF SEWAGE TREATMENT. THE DESIGN OF SUCH BUILDINGS AND INFRASTRUCTURE SHOULD ENSURE THAT ANY LOSS OF AMENITY TO NEIGHBOURING OCCUPIERS AND USERS OF LAND, AND ANY DETRIMENTAL IMPACT ON LANDSCAPE CHARACTER, IS MINIMISED.

POLICY T55 - Broken Scar Water Treatment Works

LAND WITHIN THE BOUNDARY OF BROKEN SCAR WATER TREATMENT WORKS IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP WILL BE SAFEGUARDED FOR THE PROVISION OF BUILDINGS AND INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDED TO ACHIEVE SATISFACTORY STANDARDS OF WATER TREATMENT. THE DESIGN OF SUCH BUILDINGS AND INFRASTRUCTURE SHOULD ENSURE THAT ANY LOSS OF AMENITY TO NEIGHBOURING OCCUPIERS AND USERS OF LAND, AND ANY DETRIMENTAL IMPACT ON THE CHARACTER OF THE SURROUNDING AREA, IS MINIMISED.

- 9.86 Improvements to both sewage and water treatment facilities may be required during the Plan period to meet European Union and UK legislation. Development which is needed to achieve treatment standards is most likely to be located within the Stressholme Sewage Treatment Works and the Broken Scar Water Treatment Works, which are identified on the Proposals Map. Whilst Policies T54 and T55 indicate that essential sewage and water infrastructure development will in principle be permitted within the boundaries of the treatment works, Plan policies relating to development in general apply to such proposals in order to ensure that the impact on the amenity and character of the area is acceptable.

- 9.87 This is particularly significant in relation to the Area of High Landscape Value (AHLV). Stressholme Sewage Works is wholly within the AHLV. It is recognised in Policy E8 that infrastructure development has to take place within the AHLV, and that often it cannot satisfy the design requirements which generally apply in the Area. In such circumstances, every effort should be made to ensure that harm to landscape character is minimised.

~~ANNEX: CAR PARKING STANDARDS~~

~~The car parking standards set out in this Annex are based on standards produced by Durham County Council in 1994 and subsequently modified by the Borough Council. The standards for facilities for people with disabilities are based on guidelines prepared by the Institution of Highways and Transportation. They have been adopted by the Borough Council.~~

~~The standards are expressed as maxima and should be interpreted in conjunction with Policies T24 to T26 and paragraphs 9.51 to 9.54 of the Local Plan.~~

~~Operational and Non-Operational Parking~~

~~The standards are divided into operational and non operational parking space.~~

~~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 and 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.~~

~~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).~~

~~The Town Centre~~

~~Policy T25 permits non operational parking space within the town centre only if it is made generally available to the public. Exclusive or dedicated staff or customer parking is not acceptable. Policy T26 adopts a flexible approach in certain areas outside the town centre.~~

~~Mixed Uses~~

~~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. Where it can be shown that the parking demands are likely to arise at different times of the day or on different days of the week, dual use of car parking space is encouraged.~~

~~Facilities for People with Disabilities~~

~~Space will normally be required for people with disabilities to park their vehicles in accordance with the type and capacity of car parks, as follows:~~

- ~~(i) 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, to be reserved;~~
 - ~~over 200 spaces 2% of capacity, plus 6 spaces.~~Spaces for employees with disabilities are additional to those recommended above. Reservations should be ensured, for example by marking a space with a registration number.~~
- ~~(ii) 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;~~
 - ~~over 200 spaces 4% of capacity, plus 4 spaces.~~~~

~~These spaces should be appropriately marked out and signed, should be as close as possible to the destination and should be big enough to allow wheelchair access. Dimensions are shown in Figures 1-2.~~

~~Car Park Layout~~

~~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 in Figures 1, 2 and 3.~~

~~Layouts should incorporate safe routes for pedestrians and, where appropriate, pedal cyclists. Traffic calming features and lighting should also be included. Planting and means of enclosure must allow good visibility for security reasons. Further advice on safety and security measures in car park layout is available from Durham Constabulary.~~

~~Use of the Standards~~

~~The standards set out in the following sections have been designed to ensure that, in normal circumstances, adequate off street parking is provided for vehicles likely to be generated during the life span of new development. On the other hand they are intended to avoid the construction of unnecessarily large parking areas which encourage the use of the private car over other means of travel. 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 or location of the development. For example, reduced non operational requirements may be appropriate for communal non operational parking which forms part of proposals which enable multiple purpose car journeys e.g. Proposal EP4 (Haughton Road development) and Policies S11, S12 and S13 relating to new shopping development. These standards should be read in conjunction with the current Durham County Council Guide to Design and Construction of Estate Roads.~~

~~Where standards for a particular land use are not provided, individual assessment will be necessary for each particular case.~~

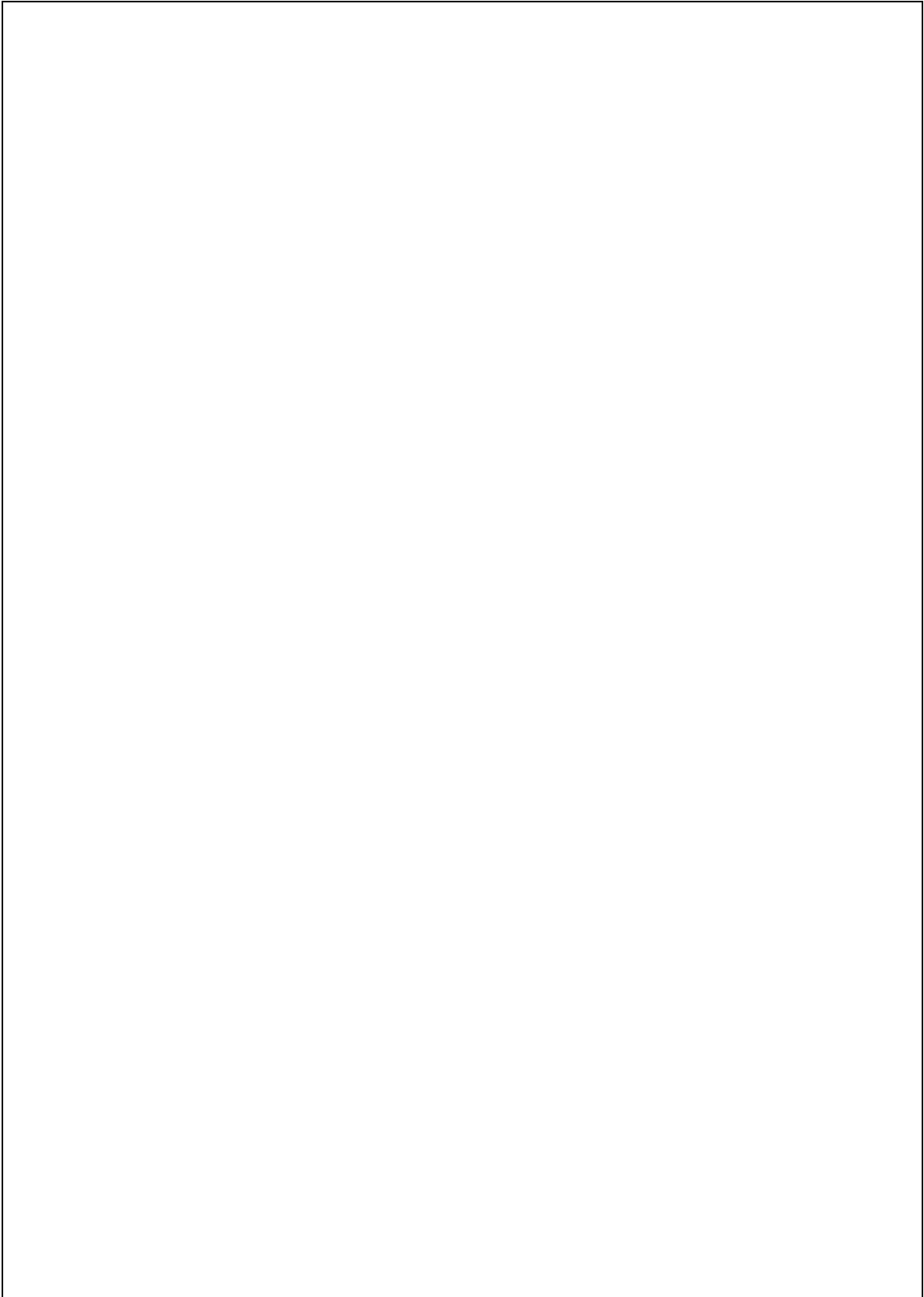
~~Car Parking Standards for Development Control~~

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 house development will be of a high density (such as housing association or Council 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 1 car space per 2 dwellings 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, Bedsitters and Houses in Multiple Occupancy	1 space per bedroom. (This requirement may be relaxed where residents are unlikely to be car owners. The assessment should take notice of 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 one bedroom units)	Staff: 1 space per resident member of staff.	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 unit.
(d) Purpose Built Student Accommodation	Staff: 1 space per resident member of staff.	Students / Visitors: 1 space per 3 students.
(e) Community Housing for Disabled People	Each application will be assessed on individual circumstances or other special types of hostel. In some cases it may be acceptable to provide initially a proportion of the required number of spaces provided that the layout identifies the location of the residual spaces, and provided also that agreement is reached over the funding of residual spaces.	
3 Hotels, Motels, Guest Houses	Minimum of 50m² for servicing purposes. Staff: 1 space per resident member of staff.	Guests: 1 space per bedroom. Staff: 1 space per 2 non resident staff employed at the busiest time. Where restaurants and bars are open to non residents, land use category 4 should also be applied.

<i>Land Use</i>	<i>Operational Requirement</i>	<i>Non-Operational Requirement</i>
<i>4 Restaurants, Cafes, Public Houses, Licensed Clubs, Hotels open to non-residents</i>	<i>Minimum of 50m² for servicing purposes. Staff: 1 space per resident member of staff.</i>	<i>Staff: 1 space per 2 non-resident staff employed at the busiest time. Customers, urban areas: 1 space per 4m² of public area. Customers, rural areas: 1 space per 2.5m² of public area.</i>
<i>5 Fast Food / Hot Food Take-Away Shops</i>	<i>Each application will be assessed on individual circumstances.</i>	
<i>6 Retail</i>		
<i>(a) General Retailing (other than categories (b) (f) below)</i>	<i>50m² per 500m² gross floor area (GFA).</i>	<i>Staff: 1 space per 100m² GFA. Customers: 1 space per 25m² GFA.</i>
<i>(b) Supermarkets (under 2,500m² GFA.)</i>	<i>50m² per 500m² GFA.</i>	<i>Staff: 1 space per 100m² GFA. Customers: 1 space per 20m² GFA.</i>
<i>(c) Superstores (over 2,500m² GFA.)</i>	<i>50m² per 1,000m² GFA.</i>	<i>Staff: 1 space per 100m² GFA. Customers: 1 space per 10m² GFA.</i>
<i>(d) Retail Warehouses (other than DIY stores)</i>	<i>50m² per 1,000m² GFA.</i>	<i>Staff: 1 space per 100m² GFA. Customers: 1 space per 25m² GFA.</i>
<i>(e) DIY Stores</i>	<i>50m² per 1,000m² GFA.</i>	<i>Staff: 1 space per 100m² GFA. Customers: 1 space per 15m² GFA.</i>
<i>(f) Garden Centres</i>	<i>50m² per 1,000m² gross display area (GDA).</i>	<i>Staff: 1 space per 100m² GDA. Customers: 1 space per 25m² GDA.</i>
<i>7 Cash and Carry Warehouses</i>	<i>50m² per 500m² gross floor area (GFA).</i>	<i>Staff: 1 space per 100m² GFA. Customers: 1 space per 2.5m² GFA.</i>
<i>8 Storage and Distribution Warehouses</i>	<i>50m² per 500m² gross floor area (GFA).</i>	<i>Staff: 1 space per 200m² GFA.</i>
<i>9 Industrial Buildings</i>	<i>50m² per 100m² gross floor area (GFA) up to 300m² GFA, and then 50m² per additional 500m² GFA.</i>	<i>Staff / Visitors: 1 space per 50m² GFA.</i>
<i>10 Offices</i>	<i>50m² per 500m² gross floor area (GFA).</i>	<i>Staff / Visitors: 1 space per 30m² GFA.</i>
<i>11 Car Sales</i>	<i>1 space for delivery vehicle.</i>	<i>Staff / Visitors: 1 space per 50m² gross display area.</i>
<i>12 Garages, Service Stations, Car Repair Workshops</i>	<i>1 space for each broken down vehicle. 4 spaces for each service / repair bay. Where a car wash is provided, sufficient space for 5 cars to wait will be required on site.</i>	<i>Staff / Visitors: 1 space per 20m² GFA.</i>
<i>13 Education</i>		
<i>(a) Nursery / Primary / Secondary Schools</i>	<i>50m² for servicing. Facilities for contract buses and parents to pick up and set down as appropriate.</i>	<i>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. Hard surfaced play areas should be capable of accommodating car parking at special events.</i>

<i>Land Use</i>	<i>Operational Requirement</i>	<i>Non-Operational Requirement</i>
(b) Colleges of Further Education, Universities, Teacher Training Colleges	50m² for servicing. Where the development is likely to generate the provision of 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. Student / Visitors: 1 space per 5 full-time students and / or 3 part-time students at the busiest time (depending on the use made of the facilities at different times of the day).
14 Places of Worship	1 space per resident member of staff.	Staff: 1 space per non-resident member of staff. Worshippers: 1 space per 10 seats.
15 Places of Entertainment, Cinemas, Theatres, Bingo Halls, Concert Halls (including halls with fixed seating)	Minimum of 50m² for servicing.	Staff: 1 space per 2 members of staff employed at the busiest time. Customers: 1 space per seat.
16 Community Centres and other Public Halls (including public halls without fixed seating)	Minimum of 50m² for servicing.	Staff: 1 space per 2 members of staff employed at the busiest time. Customers: 1 space per 10m² of floorspace.
17 Art Galleries, Museums and Exhibition Halls	Minimum of 50m² for servicing.	Staff: 1 space per 2 members of staff employed at the busiest time. Visitors: 1 space per 30m² of public floorspace.
18 Hospitals	50m² per 250m² gross floor area.	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.	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 50m² 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 50m² of ground floorspace.
21 Sports Facilities	Minimum of 50m² 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 for servicing.	Staff: 1 space per 2 members of staff. Visitors: 1 space per 10 pitches.
23 Self Catering Holiday Accommodation	1 space per 4 bedspaces for servicing.	Staff: 1 space per 2 members of staff. Visitors: 1 space per 10 units.

Figures 1 - 3: Recommended Car Park Dimensions



CHAPTER 10:

ACHIEVING THE PLAN

IMPLEMENTATION

SECURING COMMUNITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE REQUIREMENTS

CONSULTATION ON DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

OTHER STATUTORY DESIGNATIONS

SUPPLEMENTARY GUIDANCE

MONITORING AND REVIEW

CHAPTER 10: ACHIEVING THE PLAN

IMPLEMENTATION

- 10.1 The policies and proposals of the Local Plan are considered to be capable of being implemented within the Plan period. The co-operation and involvement of both the private and public sectors will be required.
- 10.2 As the private sector will be responsible for implementing most of the policies and proposals, the Council's role will be largely limited to:
- i) its powers to control development under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990;
 - ii) its ability to influence development decisions through its ownership/control of land;
 - iii) its ability to influence private sector investment decisions through negotiation and, in some cases, financial assistance in pursuit of its other strategies and under other legislative provisions.
- 10.3 The Council has sole responsibility for implementing only a few of the policies and proposals. Some are the responsibility of other public sector agencies, and appropriate references are made in the policies, proposals and supporting text. The text also refers to proposals which have a high level of commitment in public sector capital programmes, for implementation in the early part of the Plan period.

SECURING COMMUNITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE REQUIREMENTS

- 10.4 The purpose of the planning system is to regulate the development and use of land in the interest of the community as a whole. Some developments require infrastructure and other provision over and above that forming part of the immediate proposal, and which cannot be secured either through a condition attached to a planning permission, or through other legislation e.g. additional highway and drainage works, or public open space. Others without such requirements may nevertheless require controls which cannot be secured either through a condition attached to a planning permission, or through other legislation e.g. affordable housing.
- 10.5 In these instances, the Council will seek to secure an acceptable overall development by means of planning briefs and appropriate legal agreements. Examples of the types of development where agreements may be sought include:
- i) new developments which require additional off-site highway or drainage provision (such agreements may be made under other legislation);
 - ii) larger housing developments, to contribute towards the provision of off-site open space, community or leisure facilities to the extent required to serve the development;
 - iii) mixed developments, to secure an acceptable balance of uses within the site;
 - iv) developments in the town centre and district centres, in order to contribute towards the provision of publicly available car parking; or
 - v) affordable housing.

CONSULTATION ON DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

- 10.6 Consultation procedures exist to ensure that other interests are safeguarded when development proposals are considered. These do not in themselves constitute land use policies but they are a material consideration in the determination of planning applications and have been considered in formulating the Plan's policies and proposals.
- 10.7 Statutory consultation procedures also apply with other bodies under, for example, the Town and Country Planning General Development Order, the Town and Country Planning (Hazardous Substances) Act 1990, and the Town and Country Planning (Aerodromes) Direction 1992.

OTHER STATUTORY DESIGNATIONS

- 10.8 Some policies relate to matters which are, in part at least, the subject of separate statutory provisions, for example, buildings of architectural or historic value, ancient monuments, and Sites of Special Scientific Interest. In such instances other authorities such as Government departments have additional control and implementation powers although the Council will take appropriate action under planning legislation.

SUPPLEMENTARY GUIDANCE

- 10.9 A large number of the policies cover matters which the Council proposes to implement through decisions on planning applications, legal agreements, Article 4 directions, and in certain cases, enforcement action. These are generally termed Development Control Policies and cover:
- i) particular types of development in the Plan area (e.g. advertisements);
 - ii) particular aspects of development (e.g. design, car parking and servicing);
 - iii) development in particular designated parts of the Plan area (e.g. conservation areas);
 - iv) development affecting transport infrastructure in the interests of safety or to prevent overloading (e.g. highway design).
- 10.10 Further guidance will be issued to householders and developers in respect of a number of matters, including, for example, housing design and layout. Where possible the existence of, or intention to provide, further guidance is referred to in the Plan.
- 10.11 Planning briefs are a further form of guidance which can assist developers in drawing up proposals for individual sites by drawing together Plan requirements in relation to, for example, infrastructure, layout and design, access, community facilities, landscaping or open space. Briefs will be prepared as needed for sites in both public and private ownership, and development proposals will be expected to accord with them.
- 10.12 In most cases briefs will be prepared by the Council as local planning authority. It may be appropriate for developers to prepare a brief for sites for which one does not already exist as the basis for pre-application discussions.
- 10.13 Further guidance in connection with enhancement of the green or natural environment will be contained in the Council's Strategy for the Green Environment. Similarly further guidance in connection with environmental enhancement and other policies and proposals will be contained in the Council's Town Centre Strategy.
- 10.14 Other sources of guidance include, for example, the advice of various national organisations on making provision for those with disabilities.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

- 10.15 Monitoring is the process used to measure the effectiveness of the Plan. It involves assessing the extent to which the policies are being followed and whether they are having the desired

results. It also involves the continuation and development of the environmental appraisal of the Plan.

- 10.16 The process is continuous. It involves the collection of data, much from planning applications and appeals, covering selected indicators on land use and development. A summary of the main topics to be monitored is shown in the Table.
- 10.17 The information collected will be used to assess and make judgements about the success and effectiveness of the Plan. Most has been collected and disseminated on a piecemeal basis for a considerable period. It is now proposed to draw it together into regular monitoring reports which will be considered by the Council and made available to the public.
- 10.18 Monitoring will highlight issues which will justify amendment of the Plan. Amendments could be covered by the issue of supplementary planning guidance, such as an interim policy, or formal alterations where:
 - i) there are fundamental changes of national and strategic policy;
 - ii) the Plan becomes outdated as a result of small, incremental changes;
 - iii) major unforeseen development needs arise.
- 10.19 In accordance with government advice, the Plan will be reviewed regularly, and rolled forward to beyond 2006. A review could encompass the types of alteration referred to above, or may involve replacement by a completely new Plan if many fundamental alterations are required. Minerals and waste policies will be included in a future review.

Table - Main Topics to be Monitored

TOPIC	POLICY/ PROPOSAL	FREQUENCY OF MONITORING
<i>All Topics</i>		
i) <i>Monitoring appeal decisions</i>	<i>Various</i>	<i>Continuous</i>
ii) <i>Monitoring departures (i.e. decisions not conforming with the Plan)</i>	<i>Various</i>	<i>Continuous</i>
<i>Environment</i>		
iii) <i>Extent and condition of areas of nature conservation interest</i>	<i>E19-E23</i>	<i>Continuous</i>
iv) <i>The number and condition of listed buildings</i>	<i>E30</i>	<i>Continuous</i>
v) <i>Buildings of local character and townscape value</i>	<i>E32</i>	<i>Continuous</i>
vi) <i>Archaeological sites</i>	<i>E33, E34</i>	<i>Continuous</i>
vii) <i>Conservation area boundaries and the need for new conservation areas</i>	<i>E36</i>	<i>Occasional</i>
<i>Housing</i>		
viii) <i>Population (Office of Population Censuses and Surveys)</i>	<i>H1</i>	<i>Annual</i>
ix) <i>Residential permissions and completions</i>	<i>H2</i>	<i>Annual</i>
x) <i>Housing land availability</i>	<i>H2</i>	<i>Bi-annual</i>
xi) <i>Need for affordable housing</i>	<i>H9</i>	<i>Occasional</i>
xii) <i>Need for accessible housing</i>	<i>H14</i>	<i>Occasional</i>
xiii) <i>Location of houses in multiple occupation</i>	<i>H17, H18</i>	<i>Continuous</i>
<i>Recreation, Leisure and Community</i>		
xiv) <i>Provision of open space and recreation facilities</i>	<i>R4, R11</i>	<i>Occasional</i>
xv) <i>Demand for playing pitches</i>	<i>R9</i>	<i>Occasional</i>
xvi) <i>Provision of allotments</i>	<i>R19</i>	<i>Occasional</i>
<i>Employment</i>		
xvii) <i>Local unemployment (Department of Employment)</i>	<i>EP1</i>	<i>Continuous</i>
xviii) <i>Surveys of employment (Department of Employment)</i>	<i>EP1</i>	<i>Bi-annual</i>
xix) <i>Industrial land availability</i>	<i>EP1</i>	<i>Annual</i>
<i>Shopping</i>		
xx) <i>Permissions for new retail development</i>	<i>S2</i>	<i>Continuous</i>
xxi) <i>Retail floorspace and occupancy of retail units</i>	<i>Various</i>	<i>Annual</i>
<i>Traffic, Transport and Infrastructure</i>		
xxii) <i>Town centre car parking</i>	<i>T19-T22</i>	<i>Annual</i>

