



Department for
Communities and
Local Government

Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Revocation of the North East Regional Strategy

Post Adoption Statement

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Summary of Key Facts

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Address where documents can be consulted:	Eland House, Bressenden Place London SW1E 5DU

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Preface

This document is the Post Adoption Statement for the revocation of the Regional Strategy for the North East of England. The Post Adoption Statement is a requirement¹ of the Strategic Environmental Assessment process to which the Plan to Revoke the Regional Strategy has been subject. Strategic Environmental Assessment is an assessment process that supports decision making by identifying, characterising and evaluating the likely significant effects of a plan or programme on the environment and determining how any adverse effects may be mitigated or where any beneficial effects may be enhanced.

The Regional Strategy being revoked comprises the North East of England Regional Spatial Strategy published by the then Secretary of State in 2008, and the North East of England Regional Economic Strategy published by the North East Development Agency (ONE North East) in 2006.

The Post Adoption Statement is being published in parallel with the laying of The Regional Strategy for the North East of England (Revocation) Order 2013 (S.I.2013/635), which will come into force on 15 April 2013.

¹ Article 9 of the European Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment and Part 4 (regulation 16) of The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (SI 2004/1633).

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Regional Strategies

The policy to abolish regional strategies fits into the Government's overall public commitment to deliver a fundamental shift of power from Westminster. For planning, this has meant radically reforming the planning system to give local councils and the communities that they represent more control in shaping the places in which they live. The policy to revoke regional strategies is a key element of the Government's decentralisation agenda.

The Coalition Agreement makes clear the Government's priority to promote decentralisation and democratic engagement and to end the era of top-down government by giving new powers to local councils, communities, neighbourhoods and individuals. Regional strategies imposed development upon local communities; the Government wants to return decision-making powers on housing and planning to local councils.

Currently, the North East of England Regional Strategy provides the statutory regional framework for development and investment across the region, including setting targets for housing delivery that apply to constituent local councils.

Since their creation by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, regional strategies, sitting alongside local plans prepared by local authorities, form the statutory development plan for an area. This means that the North East of England Regional Strategy sets the framework for local plan-making and local councils in the region must ensure that their local plan is in general conformity with the Strategy at the time their local plan is submitted for examination. It also means that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan (which includes the relevant regional strategy in the local planning authority's region) unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

In order to localise the planning system, section 109 of the Localism Act provides for the abolition of the regional planning tier as a two-stage process. The first stage, to remove the framework of regional planning, took effect when the Act received Royal Assent on 15 November 2011. This prevents further regional strategies from being created or revised. Section 109 also removed the responsible regional authorities. The second stage is the proposal to abolish each of the existing regional strategies outside London by secondary legislation, subject to the outcomes of the environmental assessment process.

The revocation of the North East of England Regional Strategy would leave a more localist planning system comprising of local and, where made, neighbourhood plans and give local councils responsibility for strategic planning. It makes the local plan the keystone of the planning system, becoming the vehicle for strategic planning and the framework for neighbourhood plans.

On revocation of the North East of England Regional Strategy (and any saved structure plan policies), the statutory development plan would comprise any saved local plan policies and adopted development plan documents. The statutory development plan may in future include any neighbourhood plans that are prepared and made under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, provisions inserted by the Localism Act.

In developing local plans, local planning authorities must have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State:

- The **National Planning Policy Framework** was published in March 2012. This sets out the Government's planning policies for England and provides a framework within which local communities can produce their own distinctive local and neighbourhood plans reflective of the needs and priorities of their communities. Accordingly, local planning authorities and communities will continue to determine the quantum and location of development, albeit without the additional tier of regional direction. It includes Government's expectations for planning strategically across local boundaries and within that the role of the planning system in protecting the environment.
- The **planning policy for traveller sites** which was published in March 2012.
- The **planning policy statement 10: Planning for Sustainable Waste Management (PPS10)** until it is replaced with the national waste planning policy, to be published as part of the National Waste Management Plan for England.

In addition, local councils will need to comply with existing national and European legislation in preparing their plans. Importantly, councils also need to comply with the duty to co-operate introduced in section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (inserted by the Localism Act 2011) in order for their plan to be found sound at examination.

1.2 The Plan to Revoke the North East of England Regional Strategy

The North East of England Regional Strategy combines the contents of the North East of England Regional Spatial Strategy and the North East of England Regional Economic Strategy.

The North East of England Regional Spatial Strategy (published as the North East of England Plan in 2008) was introduced under the PCPA 2004 and, in accordance with Government policy at the time, provides a broad development strategy for the region to 2021. The Plan sets out the need to support the polycentric nature of the North East by concentrating the majority of new development in the Tyne & Wear and Tees Valley City-Regions. It identifies the need for 3,435 hectares of employment land (comprising 2,765 hectares of general employment land and 670 hectares for key employment locations). The Plan requires local planning authorities to provide 7,580 net additional dwellings per annum between 2004 and 2021.

The North East of England Regional Economic Strategy, published in September 2006, was produced in compliance with the Section 7 of the Regional Development Act 1998. It provides a vision for the North East of England economy to 2016. This includes the aspiration that the North East of England will close the economic gap with the rest of the country through improving levels of productivity, increasing levels of business start-ups, improving skill levels and increasing economic participation. The Regional Economic Strategy also sets priorities for achieving sustainable, inclusive economic growth through a series of actions. These actions are:

- **Leadership:** a commitment to:
 - Work in partnership to improve leadership around sustainable development, including implementing the commitments and principles outlined in the Government's *Securing the Region's Futures Strategy*.
- **Business:** comprising:
 - Specialist business support for encouraging resource efficiency;
 - A strong focus on the development and deployment of low carbon technology and renewable energy within the 'Three Pillars' work;
 - A strong focus on the delivery of the Energy White Paper 2003.
- **People:** a strong focus on economic inclusion including activities to:
 - Improve access to employment;

- Raise economic participation in deprived communities;
- Promote equality and diversity.
- **Place:** a strong focus on delivering sustainable development best practice in regeneration and planning, including activities to:
 - Ensure the incorporation of sustainable development principles and best practice in the planning, management and design processes of regeneration schemes;
 - Concentrate on demand management and energy usage in transport schemes;
 - Promote, enhance and protect our natural, heritage and cultural assets.

It is intended to ensure that 'those responsible for economic decision-taking are working effectively together, with common goals and accepted priorities for regional development'. The Regional Economic Strategy was developed with regional partners and was subject to a formal consultation and Strategic Environmental Assessment process.

Revocation of the North East of England Regional Strategy would leave the statutory development plan as comprising of the single saved structure plan policy (in Northumberland), any saved local plan policies and adopted development plan documents, and any made neighbourhood plans. Approximately one third the 13 local planning authorities in the North East of England have adopted development plan documents under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The remaining 9 local planning authorities in the North East of England who were yet to adopt a development plan document under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 have local plans, in the case of Northumberland, the saved structure plan policy, developed under the earlier requirements of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. These authorities are more likely to be affected by the revocation of the Regional Strategy.

Once the regional strategy is revoked, local councils should, in line with the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, and in accordance with section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, approve development that accords with the local plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Where that plan is out of date, councils must, unless material considerations indicate otherwise, grant planning permission for development that is sustainable without delay. Out of date local plans will leave councils vulnerable to speculative development; the Government is encouraging local councils to put in place local plans as soon as possible.

In the absence of the North East of England Regional Strategy, strategic and cross authority working will be driven by local councils who must now show the leadership required to work across boundaries to plan for strategic matters.

The new duty to co-operate requires local councils and other public bodies to work together actively constructively and on an ongoing basis when planning for strategic matters in local and marine plans. This might involve both formal arrangements, such as joint plan-making or joint working partnerships, and less formal processes of close and ongoing dialogue to work through planning for strategic matters.

In the North East of England region, there are already good examples of joint working through a variety of legislative and non statutory means.

Newcastle Gateshead Joint Core Strategy

A partnership between Gateshead and Newcastle was initially established 10 years ago when the two Councils came together with an agreed common purpose of the economic regeneration of Gateshead and Newcastle. As a result of this Partnership, the Newcastle Gateshead Initiative (NGI) was created.

Gateshead and Newcastle City Council are working together to prepare a joint core strategy which is the strategic planning document for both Gateshead and Newcastle. The plan will set out a shared vision and guide the locations and quantum of development to be permitted, what land should be protected from development and how places should change by 2030.

Northumberland Lowlands and Coast Local Nature Partnership

Northumberland Wildlife Trust and partners have received funding from Defra via Natural England to develop proposals for a new Local Nature Partnership (LNP) which covers the administrative areas of Newcastle, North Tyneside and Northumberland (excluding the National Park and North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty). Local Nature Partnerships are a new initiative, announced in the Natural Environment White Paper 2011, tasked with leading on biodiversity, green infrastructure, land restoration and catchment management. They will bring together representatives from different sectors to make links between environmental action and wider economic and community priorities. They will also work alongside the existing Local Enterprise Partnerships to help grow a green and low carbon economy.

In addition, there are non-statutory Local Enterprise Partnerships (of which there are two in the region). This combination of measures aims to ensure that strategic planning operates effectively in the absence of the Regional Strategies.

1.3 Applying Strategic Environmental Assessment to the Revocation of the Regional Strategies

The Plan for the purposes of the Strategic Environmental Assessment is the Plan is to Revoke the North East of England Regional Strategy (the North East of England Plan and Regional Economic Strategy) and to leave in place

a more localist planning system, together with incentives such as the New Homes Bonus, to encourage local authorities and communities to increase their aspirations for housing and economic growth. The Plan to Revoke is set out in more detail in Section 2 of the Environmental Report published in 07 November 2012.

As part of its stated commitment to protecting the environment, the Government initially carried out environmental assessments of the revocation of the Regional Strategies. These first assessments were undertaken to be compliant with the procedure set out in the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive. A 12 week consultation on the Environmental Reports of these assessments commenced on 20 October 2011 and ended on 20 January 2012.

Since the completion of the consultation, the Government has published the final version of the National Planning Policy Framework and a planning policy on Travellers sites, and has commenced the duty to co-operate provided for in the Localism Act. In addition, in a judgement by the Court of Justice of the European Union², the Court held that ‘..in as much as the repeal of a plan may modify the state of the environment as examined at the time of adoption, it must be taken into consideration with a view to subsequent effects that it might have on the environment’. The Government therefore decided to use the additional information gained through the public consultation process, as well as the developments in policy and recent case law, to update and build on the assessments which were described in the previous Environmental Reports.

AMEC Environment and Infrastructure Ltd were commissioned to carry out the further assessment and to prepare updated Environmental Reports. A public consultation exercise undertaken on the updated Environmental Report for the North East of England Regional Strategy ran from 7 November 2012 until 10 January 2013. Updating of, and consultation on, the Environmental Reports for the other seven regions has been staggered. The North East of England Regional Strategy is the fourth of the eight to have completed consultation on the Environmental Report. This has enabled the Secretary of State to understand the environmental effects of revoking the regional strategy and to consider the views of the statutory bodies and the public who responded to two public consultations.

In accordance with Article 8 of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive, the Government has taken into account findings of the two Environmental Reports (on the revocation of the Regional Strategy and the reasonable alternatives assessed as part of that process) and the consultation responses to those reports in coming to its decision to revoke the Regional Strategy.

² The judgment in Case C-567/10 Inter-Environnement Bruxelles ASBL v Région de Bruxelles-Capitale.

1.4 Purpose of the Post Adoption Statement

Article 9 of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive requires that when a plan or programme is adopted (in this case, the Plan to Revoke the Regional Strategy), the consultation bodies, the public and any other Member States consulted on the Environmental Report are informed and the following specific information is made available:

- the plan as adopted;
- a statement summarising:
 - (i) how environmental considerations have been integrated into the Plan to Revoke the North East of England Regional Strategy;
 - (ii) how the Environmental Report has been taken into account;
 - (iii) how opinions expressed in response to the consultation on the Environmental Report have been taken into account;
 - (iv) the reasons for choosing the Plan to Revoke the North East of England Regional Strategy, as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with; and
 - (v) the measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the Plan to Revoke the North East of England Regional Strategy.

The purpose of this Post Adoption Statement is to provide the specific information outlined under each of the points listed (i) to (v) above and which is presented in the following sections of this statement.

Chapter 2

How environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan

2.1 Environmental Considerations in the Plan to Revoke the North East of England Regional Strategy

Environmental considerations have been integral to the Plan to Revoke the North East of England Regional Strategy. Policy changes developed alongside the Plan to Revoke provide protections in the context of revocation. For example, within the National Planning Policy Framework, sustainable development is described as a 'golden thread' running through both plan making and decision making. The National Planning Policy Framework makes clear that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural environment, including by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible. The Framework underlines that pursuing sustainable development means moving from a net loss of biodiversity to achieving net gains for nature.

During its development, the National Planning Policy Framework was also subject to consultation, with many of the responses focusing on aspects of environmental protection and enhancement.

Environmental considerations are also key to other ongoing regional planning processes identified in the region. For example, water companies and their respective Water Resource Management Plans which set out how future demand for water resources will be met. Similarly, River Basin Management Plans for the region identify the pressures that the water environment faces and include action plans requiring cross boundary co-operation and input from a range of organisations. The duty to co-operate came into force on 15 November 2011. This statutory duty, set out in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 inserted by the Localism Act, requires local planning authorities and other public bodies to work together constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis when planning for strategic cross boundary matters.

The Government expects authorities to be working collaboratively whatever stage of local plan preparation they are at. The National Planning Policy Framework makes clear that the planning system should be genuinely plan

led, and that plans should be kept up to date and based on joint working and cooperation to address larger than local issues.

2.2 Environmental Considerations in the Strategic Environmental Assessment

To provide the context for the assessment, and in compliance with the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive, the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and its evolution without the Plan to Revoke were considered, along with the environmental characteristics likely to be significantly affected. Key environmental considerations identified from this process included:

- The North East is a large area covering some 8,500 square kilometres and contains a wide variety of habitats and landscapes that go to make up the remarkable diversity of plants and animals found in the Region. Whilst some, such as the Northumberland coastline and the Pennine moorlands of Upper Teesdale are recognised as being of national and even international importance (over 13% of the Region's area is designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest –SSSI and 30% is covered by National Parks and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty).

Nearly 80% of agricultural land in the North East is under some sort of agri-environment management which is an indicator of the extent to which land is being managed in a sustainable way. Significant parts of the region's countryside are protected by national and international legislation.

- The North East covers 8,600 square kilometers (sq km) and is the second smallest region in England after London. In 2010, the North East had a population of around 2.6 million, making it the least populous region in the country with 5% of the English total. The local authority area with the largest population was County Durham and fewest people lived in Hartlepool.

The population of the region grew by just over 2% between 2000 and 2010. This is considerably slower than the average pace of population growth across England (6%).

Overall, 281 of the 10% most deprived Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LLSOAs) in England are located in this region.

- The North East Gypsy and Traveller community is small compared with other regions and is made up mostly of Romany Gypsies. The number of people this comprises in the region varies and depends on the time of year. According to the latest bi-annual caravan count³ for the Government in January 2006 there were 530 caravans in the North

³ Association of North East Councils (2010) Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Sites Regional Analysis

East. Over 91 percent of these were on authorised sites. The vast majority of the North East community lives on authorised sites owned by local authorities. There are a small number of authorised sites in private ownership. Unauthorised encampments do exist in some places but represent a very small proportion of all sites. The Gypsy and Traveller population live throughout the North East but are particularly concentrated in the southern part of the region in County Durham and Tees Valley and have close links with Yorkshire and across the Pennines. At present there are over 350 pitches in the region.

- Over the past five years there has been a steady upward trend in life expectancy across English regions⁴. The North East is no exception to this positive trend, although life expectancy at birth is below the national average for both men and women. Male life expectancy at birth is 77.2 years and female life expectancy is 81.2 years compared to England averages of 78.6 and 82.6 years respectively⁵.
- The death rate in the North East was 10.1 per 1,000 population in 2009, compared to 8.9 across England as a whole⁶. This is the highest death rate of any English region. The age-standardised mortality rate, which takes into account the age structure of the population, was 6.2 per 1,000 people – higher than the England average of 5.5⁷. The infant mortality rate in the region is 17% lower than the national average at 3.8 per 1,000 live births.
- The North East Strategic Health Authority area had the highest prevalence of adult obesity of anywhere in England (13.1%). This is significantly higher than the national average of 10.5%.
- Around eight per cent of the land in North East is urban. About three per cent of the North East region is covered by very good quality agricultural land and 39 per cent by good or moderate quality agricultural land. Nearly 80% of agricultural land in the North East is under some sort of agri-environment management which is an indicator of the extent to which land is being managed in a sustainable way.
- The Environment Agency's state of the environment report published in 2011 estimated that 5,700 hectares of brownfield/contaminated land in the region is either derelict, vacant or is in use with the potential for development. Between 2006-2009, 62% of new properties (on

⁴ Office for National Statistics (October 2011), *Life expectancy at birth and at age 65 by local areas in the United Kingdom 2004-06 to 2008-10*, <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/subnational-health4/life-expectancy-at-birth-age-65/2004-06-to-2008-10/statistical-bulletin.html#tab-Regional-life-expectancy>

⁵ Office for National Statistics (February 2012), *Region and Country Profiles: key statistics*, <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/publications/re-reference-tables.html?edition=tcm%3A77-227575>

⁶ Office for National Statistics (February 2012), *Region and Country Profiles: key statistics*, <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/publications/re-reference-tables.html?edition=tcm%3A77-227575>

⁷ Office for National Statistics (June 2011), *Regional Trends online tables; 06: health and social care*.

average) were built on previously developed land, compared to the average for England over the same period of 76%. The 2004 sustainability appraisal recorded 51% of housing built on brownfield sites between 1989-1993, and 59% between 1999-2002.

- Northumbrian Water provides water and sewerage services from the Scottish border to North Yorkshire. It provides public water supply for major cities including Newcastle upon Tyne, Durham and Darlington. They also operate Kielder Water which is Northern Europe's largest manmade lake, located in the headwaters of the River North Tyne. The Water Framework Development identifies that 43% of surface waters are at good or better ecological status/potential and 37% of assessed surface waters are at good or better biological status now. The coastline between the Scottish Border and the River Tyne supports a number of coastal communities and an important industrial base. It broadly comprises a series of dune systems and wide, sandy bays separated by lengths of cliffs and small islands (such as Holy Island, the Farne Islands and Coquet Island). Only a relatively small proportion of the overall coast is protected by man-made defences, most notably in the more urban areas. Due to this, much of the coastline is also important because of its natural landscape character, and because of the wildlife and habitats which are of great nature conservation value. The coast is also important for tourism and local industry.
- As of 2008 there were four authorities in the region, Blyth Valley (now part of Northumberland), Gateshead, Newcastle and South Tyneside, that had declared Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) indicating that they were unlikely to meet the target for levels of nitrogen oxide/ dioxide/ particulate pollutants in their city/town centres. There are growing pressures on air quality in particular locations, most notably due to the increasing traffic across the region.
- As of the 31 December 2011 there were 6,838 sites in total are generating renewable energy in the region. Outside of London this is the lowest level of sites generating electricity from renewable sources of any region within England. It is approximately 3.85% of the total for England. The 312.7 MWe of renewable energy produced within the region is the third lowest producing region in England and only provides approximately 5.3% of the installed capacity of renewable energy in England.
- North East England is rich in mineral resources. Minerals currently extracted or which are potentially exploited, include coal, clays for brick-making, igneous rock, limestone, sandstone, sand and gravel, peat and oil and gas.

- The region is home to 12,252 listed buildings, 387 listed Grade I and 754 listed Grade II* buildings. In 2011, 6.3% of Grade I and II* buildings were deemed at risk (compared to the National average of 3.0%). The North East has two World Heritage Sites (Durham Cathedral and Castle and Hadrian's Wall).
- The region includes two National Parks, Northumberland and a small area of the North York Moors which extends into the southern part of Redcar & Cleveland. This area is covered by the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Spatial Strategy. The North East also contains two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the Northumberland Coast and the Pennines (the latter of which is also within the North West region).
The coast at North Northumberland, along with Durham and North Yorkshire & Cleveland are designated as Heritage Coasts.

These factors were then reflected in the range of topics that were considered in detail by the Strategic Environmental Assessment, as are outlined in **Table 2.1**.

Table 2.1 Environmental topics which were considered in the Strategic Environmental Assessment

Topics included in the Strategic Environmental Assessment of the revocation of regional strategies
Biodiversity and Nature Conservation (which includes flora and fauna, and the functioning of ecosystems)
Population (including socio-economic effects and accessibility)
Human Health
Soil and Geology (including land use, important geological sites, and the contamination of soils)
Water Quality and Resources (including inland surface freshwater and groundwater resources, and inland surface freshwater, groundwater, estuarine, coastal and marine water quality)
Air Quality
Climate Change (including greenhouse gas emissions, predicted effects of climate change such as flooding and the ability to adapt)
Material Assets (including waste management and minerals)
Cultural Heritage (including architectural and archaeological heritage)
Landscape and Townscape

All the environmental topics listed in the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive and Regulations were found to be relevant for the assessment of the revocation plan.

In line with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (now Department for Communities and Local Government) Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive, the assessment process predicted the significant environmental effects of the Plan to Revoke the North East of England Regional Strategy against all of the topic areas listed in **Table 2.1**. This was done by identifying the likely changes to the baseline conditions as a result of the implementing the proposed plan (or reasonable alternative). These changes are described (where possible) in terms of their geographic scale, the timescale over which they could occur, whether the effects would be temporary or permanent, positive or negative, likely or unlikely, frequent or rare. Where numerical information was not available, the assessment was based on professional judgement and with reference to relevant legislation, regulations and policy.

Where it was identified that revocation of a Regional Strategy policy would have an effect on the environment and that this would have a consequence for Local Plan policies and/or local areas, the assessment examined those effects in more detail. Comparisons were made between the policies in the North East of England Plan on housing allocations, allocations of pitches for gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople, employment (both jobs and employment land), renewable energy, land won aggregates and rock, waste apportionment and policies on the Cambridge green belt and the heritage environment with the equivalent policies in local plans and /or core strategies in the region. This analysis was set out in Appendix C of the Environmental Report and was reflected, where relevant in the assessment of individual plan policies in Appendix D of the Environmental Report.

The designated consultation bodies for strategic environmental assessment in England (the Environment Agency, English Heritage and Natural England) were consulted for a period of five weeks on the scope and level of detail to be included in the Environmental Reports in May 2011. The corresponding bodies for Scotland and Wales were also consulted on the reports for regions on their boundaries.

Both Environmental Reports (issued in October 2011 and in November 2012) documented the findings of the assessment, outlining where any likely significant effects were identified and proposing where appropriate mitigation measures. These findings have then been taken into account during the preparation of the Plan to Revoke and before the final decision was taken to adopt the Plan.

Chapter 3

How the Environmental Reports have been taken into account

The Environmental Reports and Plan to Revoke the North East of England Regional Strategy have developed in tandem. **Table 3.1** details key stages of the Strategic Environmental Assessment and its relationship with the development of the Plan to Revoke the Regional Strategy.

Table 3.1 Key stages in the development of the Environmental Report and its relationship with the Plan to Revoke the Regional Strategy

Strategic Environmental Assessment	Plan to Revoke	Relationship
Scoping		
The scoping stage of the Strategic Environmental Assessment identified other relevant plans, programmes and environmental protection objectives which could be affected by, or which could affect the Plan to Revoke the Regional Strategy.	The development of the National Planning Policy Framework and its adoption in March 2012 removed the need to reference the planning policy statements (listed in Annex 3 of the National Planning Policy Framework, 'Documents replaced by this Framework')	The links between the other relevant plans, programmes, policies and strategies that were applicable to the Plan to Revoke were outlined. These included plans and programmes at an international, European or national level covering a variety of topics (including spatial and resource planning).
Assessment		
Initial assessment of the impact of revocation of the regional strategies undertaken before the National Planning Policy Framework was	The Government published the National Planning Policy Framework in March 2012. The analysis presented in the	Assumptions that underpin the National Planning Policy Framework are clarified in the updated assessment,

Strategic Environmental Assessment	Plan to Revoke	Relationship
adopted resulting in assumptions over the final contents of the National Planning Policy Framework and its influence.	Environmental Report takes account of the policies set out in the Framework.	documented in the updated Environmental Report (published in November 2012).
Initial assessment of the impact of the duty to co-operate took place prior to the commencement of the new duty and required outline of assumptions with regard to operation.	The provisions which create a new duty to co-operate were commenced when the Localism Act received Royal Assent on the 15th November 2011. They require local planning authorities to work collaboratively to ensure that strategic priorities across local boundaries are properly co-ordinated and clearly reflected in Local Plans.	Commencement of the duty to co-operate provided greater certainty to the assessment, reflected in updated assessment, documented in the updated Environmental Report (published in November 2012).
Assessment considered the effects of revocation on local planning authorities and provided analysis of local plans highlighting where plans were out of date or silent on key planning policy matters.	The National Planning Policy Framework states that it is 'highly desirable that local planning authorities should have an up-to-date plan in place'.	The Strategic Environmental Assessment provided up to date summary of current position on the adoption and status of local plans, with indication of the number of authorities who needed to take action within each region regarding the revision and update of local plan policies.
Reporting		
The key findings of the Environmental Report are presented along with the Government's responses in Table 4.2 below. The extent to which the findings have informed the final Plan to Revoke is detailed in section 6 of this Post Adoption Statement.		
Consultation		

Strategic Environmental Assessment	Plan to Revoke	Relationship
<p>The consultation responses to the consultation on the first and updated Environmental Reports are presented along with the Government's responses in Tables 5.1 and 5.2 in the following section. The extent to which the consultation has informed the final Plan to Revoke is detailed in section 6 of this Post Adoption Statement.</p>		
Monitoring		
Proposals for monitoring	<p>Section 5 'Put Communities in charge of planning' of the Department for Communities and Local Government business plan 2012 – 2015 includes specific monitoring actions for the Department regarding the local plan making progress by authorities and on compliance with the duty to co-operate.</p>	<p>The Department for Communities and Local Government is able to jointly meet requirements for monitoring environmental effects of the implementation of the Plan to Revoke with business plan commitments and by undertaking periodic review of data for specific monitoring information.</p>

Key findings of the Environmental Report are summarised in **Table 3.2** together with the Government response and how these have been taken into account in the Plan to Revoke.

Table 3.2 Key findings of the Environmental Report

No	Key Environmental Report findings	Response
1.	<p>Significant positive environmental effects, similar to those if the Regional Strategy were retained, will occur from the revocation of the North East of England Regional Strategy in the long term on all elements of the environment.</p>	<p>The Government notes the findings of the updated Environmental Report and considers that the Plan to Revoke is largely positive in its effect although it is acknowledged that these are largely similar to those of retention.</p>

No	Key Environmental Report findings	Response
2.	<p>For revocation, there may be more uncertainty about the nature and scale of positive and negative impacts on the Strategic Environmental Assessment topics in the short and medium term due to the transition period for those local planning authorities that need to establish Local Plan policies that reflect the objectively assessed and up to date needs of their respective local communities</p>	<p>The Government notes the findings of the updated Environmental Report. In noting the findings of the Environmental Report, the Government considers any uncertainty of impacts until plans are in place are mitigated by measures outside the Plan to Revoke</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework states that it is 'highly desirable that local planning authorities should have an up-to-date plan in place'. Where plans are absent, silent or out of date, the National Planning Policy Framework's presumption in favour of sustainable development will apply in respect of decision-taking. In particular, where a local authority cannot deliver a five year supply of deliverable sites, the relevant local policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up to date. In such cases, the decision taker will apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development, taking into account all relevant planning considerations. The presumption in favour of Sustainable Development is clearly set out at paragraph 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework in respect of both plan-making and decision taking. From the end of March 2013 transitional arrangements on the implementation of the National Planning Policy Framework will cease to apply. From March 2013 in considering all decisions for planning permission, due weight will be given to relevant policies in all existing plans according to the degree of consistency with the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework. The closer policies are to policies in the National Planning Policy Framework the greater the weight that may be given.</p> <p>Government notes the findings of the Environmental Report on progress of plan-making in the North East of England. Across the North East region six councils have adopted Local Plans – 46% of councils have a plan adopted post-2004 and overall 54% of councils now have a published plan.</p>

No	Key Environmental Report findings	Response
		<p>There is a package of advice and support being offered to all councils, from the Local Government Association, the Planning Inspectorate and the Department, to support councils get local plans updated or in place. The Planning Inspectorate is working in particular with authorities with published plans about to be examined, and the Local Government Association's Planning Advisory Service is offering support to councils working towards plan publication. The Inspectorate continues to work quickly to examine plans already submitted, and the focus now is on maintaining a strong pipeline of plans coming through for examination.</p> <p>Furthermore, the Government has already introduced, or is introducing, a range of measures to make the planning system work more effectively and efficiently. These measures are designed to create the conditions that support local economic growth, increase building and remove barriers that stop local businesses creating job. Specific measures build on the measures in the Localism Act and the introduction of the National Planning Policy Framework and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • proposals to extend permitted development rights for a trial period of 3 years; • instructing the Planning Inspectorate to respond quickly to all major economic and housing-related appeals • proposals to speed up the process for determining planning appeals • giving developers extra time to get their sites up and running before planning permission expires; and • through the Growth and Infrastructure Bill, giving new powers to the Planning Inspectorate to take over the role of making planning decisions in an area if the local authority has a record of consistently slow or poor quality decisions <p>In conclusion, the Government considers</p>

No	Key Environmental Report findings	Response
		that any uncertainty of impacts until local plans are in place are mitigated by measures outside the Plan to Revoke the North East Regional Strategy.
3.	The effects of revocation of policies which provide strategic direction whose requirements extend beyond the boundaries of a single authority, such as the city-region locational strategy will be more uncertain until all participating local authorities define and agree areas of co-operation and implement the duty to co-operate and then reflect them in their adopted plans.	<p>The Government notes the findings of the Environmental Report.</p> <p>In noting the findings of the Environmental Report, the Government considers that the uncertain nature of the effects are mitigated by measures outside the Plan to Revoke</p> <p>Revocation of the Regional Strategy will mean that it will be for local authorities to determine the priorities and location for growth and regeneration, working with other local authorities, business partners and their communities. The National Planning Policy Framework was published in March 2012. One of the 12 planning principles set out in the National Planning Policy Framework is that planning should encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value. The National Planning Policy Framework makes it clear that local planning authorities may continue to consider the case for setting a locally appropriate target for the use of brownfield land (paragraph 111).</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework is also clear that developments that generate significant movement should be located where the need to travel will be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes can be maximised' and that local planning authorities should 'support a pattern of development which, where reasonable to do so, facilitates the use of sustainable modes of transport'.</p> <p>The statutory duty to co-operate, set out in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 inserted into the Localism Act, requires local planning authorities and other public bodies to work together constructively,</p>

No	Key Environmental Report findings	Response
		<p>actively and on an ongoing basis when planning for strategic cross boundary matters. The Government expects authorities to be working collaboratively whatever stage of local plan preparation they are at. The National Planning Policy Framework makes clear that the planning system should be genuinely plan led, and that plans should be kept up to date and based on joint working and cooperation to address larger than local issues, including those set out in paragraph 156 of the Framework (homes and jobs needed in the area; the provision of retail, leisure and other commercial development; the provision of infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat); the provision of health, security, community and cultural infrastructure and other local facilities; and climate change mitigation and adaptation, conservation and enhancement of the natural and historic environment, including landscape) and taking account of paragraph 160. Local Plans are prepared in this context – in addition to the tests of soundness the examination will determine whether the local planning authority has complied with the duty to co-operate in preparing the development plan.</p> <p>The duty to co-operate reflects the Government's broader approach to locally-driven cooperation to address the challenges of growth, including the strategic role played by Local Enterprise Partnerships. There are two Local Enterprise Partnerships in the North East of England region: the Tees Valley Unlimited and North Eastern Local Enterprise Partnership. Their remit is to drive growth across their area making the most of its inherent strengths.</p> <p>For example, the Tees Valley Local Enterprise Partnership Ambition Statement seeks to support growth in major town</p>

No	Key Environmental Report findings	Response
		centres and regeneration sites, supporting a “more balanced – economically and environmentally – model of growth to address long term challenges”.
4.	<p>The duty to co-operate could well address a wide range of strategic issues, but there is uncertainty as to how this might work, particularly in the short to medium term, both by topic and geographically. Some issues such as renewable energy, biodiversity enhancement or landscape conservation, which typically benefit from being planned at a wider geographical scale, may not have their full potential realised.</p>	<p>The Government notes the findings of the Environmental Report.</p> <p>In noting the findings of the Environmental Report, the Government considers that it has put in place measures to reduce the uncertainty of effects through measures outside the Plan to Revoke.</p> <p>The Government has put in place the duty to co-operate which came into force on 15 November 2011. This statutory duty, set out in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 Act inserted by the Localism Act, requires local planning authorities and other public bodies to work together constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis when planning for strategic cross boundary matters. The National Planning Policy Framework makes clear cross boundary cooperation should apply in particular to the strategic priorities set out in paragraph 156. These matters include climate change mitigation and adaptation, conservation and enhancement of the natural and historic environment, including landscape. The duty to co-operate not only means that authorities are required to work collaboratively when developing their local plans, but also that they will be held accountable for their cross-boundary working when their plan is examined. The examination of Local Plans will determine whether the local planning authority has complied with the duty to co-operate.</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework sets out a set of core land use planning principles which should underpin both plan-making and decision-taking – including encouraging the use of renewable resources. To be found sound, local plans need to reflect this principle and enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the National Planning</p>

No	Key Environmental Report findings	Response
		<p>Policy Framework's policies and the statutory duty to co-operate. These include the requirements for local authorities to have a positive strategy to promote energy from renewable sources; design their policies to maximise renewable energy developments while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed satisfactorily; approve applications for renewable energy if the impacts are (or can be made acceptable); and co-operate to deliver strategic outcomes which include mitigating climate change. The National Planning Policy Framework's proactive, plan-led approach sits within a wider set of requirements and policy initiatives to deliver renewable energy. These include the UK's legally binding target that by 2020 15% of energy should come from renewable energy. Additionally, there is a specific duty on Local Planning Authorities to ensure their local plan includes policies designed to mitigate climate change.'</p> <p>Six Energy National Policy Statements (including one on nationally significant renewable energy infrastructure) set out the need for certain infrastructure and policies against which applications for development consent for energy projects will be considered. These documents include the requirements for applicants to address economic, social and environmental impacts of a scheme; they also enable potential mitigating measures to be considered and, in some cases, built into the project before an application is submitted.</p> <p>Existing legislation concerning environmental protection remains (legislation includes the Habitats Directive, Water Framework Directive and the Floods and Water Management Act 2010 – which includes a duty to co-operate). Local Planning Authorities are required by the National Planning Policy Framework to undertake a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, preferably at a catchments level through joint co-operation – there are examples of joint working on Strategic Flood</p>

No	Key Environmental Report findings	Response
		<p>Risk Assessments throughout England.</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework expects the planning system to protect and enhance valued landscapes. It states that planning should protect and enhance valued landscapes, minimise impacts on biodiversity and provide net gains in biodiversity where possible. It makes clear that local planning authorities should plan positively for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure, and that to minimise impacts on biodiversity, planning policies should plan for biodiversity at a landscape-scale across local authority boundaries.</p> <p>Nature Improvement Areas provide cross-boundary projects where partners' work to improve biodiversity and can be expected also to contribute significantly to landscape conservation (although the initial 12 Nature Improvement Areas did not include any in the North East). There are three Local Nature Partnerships in the North East which have been set up and are starting work. These are 'Northern Upland Chain' (partly in the North East), Northumberland Lowlands and Coast and Tees Valley. These partnerships were announced in the Natural Environment White Paper 2011 and are tasked with leading on biodiversity, green infrastructure, land restoration and catchment management. They will bring together representatives from different sectors to make links between environmental action and wider economic and community priorities. They will also work alongside the existing Local Enterprise Partnerships to help grow a green and low carbon economy</p> <p>Reforming the planning system to give local councils and the communities that they represent more control in shaping the places in which they live is part of the Government's broader approach set out in, for example, 'Enabling the transition to a green economy',</p>

No	Key Environmental Report findings	Response
		<p>and the Government's 'Biodiversity 2020' strategy, and in the context of statutory requirements. Strategic partnerships, including Local Nature Partnerships such as those set out above, Climate Local, and the new arrangements for Lead Local Flood Authorities, are examples of how co-operation is already a key part of the wider framework addressing the issues raised.</p>
5.	<p>In respect of setting local housing targets, over the medium and longer term, reliance on locally-generated housing figures could yield an increasing difference between authority areas within regions. Tensions may arise, where the duty to co-operate and housing market assessments require an agreed strategy to accommodate growth that is not viewed as equitable by the co-operating authorities. This could create or exacerbate socio-economic disparities (reflected in the Strategic Environmental Assessment as effects on the population and health topics) which are difficult to reconcile without significant interventions.</p> <p>In addition over the medium and longer term, the wider effects could yield increasing differences between regions with growth concentrated in those areas of greatest demand with consequential effects</p>	<p>The Government notes the findings of the Environmental Report.</p> <p>In noting the findings of the Environmental Report, the Government considers that the effects on the population and health Strategic Environmental Assessment topics are mitigated by measures outside the Plan to Revoke.</p> <p>There are also two Local Enterprise Partnerships in the North East. Their remit is to drive growth across their area making the most of its inherent strengths. The North East Local Enterprise Partnership has as its core objective the need to maximise its contribution to national economic growth and rebalancing the national economy. The Local Growth White Paper 2010, "Realising Every Place's Potential" established the Government's position on regional economic circumstances and set the framework for the ongoing activity of Local Enterprise Partnerships and investments such as the Growing Places Fund and the Regional Growth Fund.</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework instead asks authorities to use their evidence base to ensure that their Local Plan meets the full objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area, as far as is consistent with policies set out in the Framework (such as the protections on Green Belt, high grade agricultural land, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty etc). They should prepare Strategic Housing Market Assessment to assess this need, working with neighbouring authorities where</p>

No	Key Environmental Report findings	Response
	<p>for infrastructure and environmental assets (such as increased demand for travel, waste management facilities and water resources and the effects from land take and disturbance on biodiversity and landscapes).</p>	<p>housing market areas cross administrative boundaries. They should also prepare a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment to establish realistic assumptions about the availability, suitability and the likely economic viability of land to meet the identified need for housing over the plan period. The practice guidance on Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment states that the study area should preferably be a sub regional housing market area, but may be a local planning authority area, where necessary. The National Planning Policy Framework states that it is 'highly desirable that local planning authorities should have an up-to-date plan in place' and, where plans are absent, silent or out of date, the National Planning Policy Framework's presumption in favour of sustainable development will apply.</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework makes clear that cross boundary cooperation should apply in particular to the strategic priorities set out in paragraph 156 which include strategic policies to deliver the homes needed in the area. Local Plans are prepared in this context – in addition to the tests of soundness the examination will determine whether the local planning authority has complied with the statutory duty to co-operate in preparing the development plan.</p> <p>The Government has put in place the duty to co-operate which came into force on 15 November 2011. This statutory duty to co-operate requires local planning authorities and other public bodies to work together constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis when planning for strategic cross boundary matters. The duty to co-operate not only means that authorities are required to work collaboratively when developing their Local Plans, but also that they will be held accountable for their cross-boundary working when their plan is examined. The examination of Local Plans will determine whether the local planning authority has</p>

No	Key Environmental Report findings	Response
		<p>complied with the duty to co-operate.</p> <p>Local planning authorities are expected to work collaboratively through the duty to co-operate to set their local housing numbers and consider how to mitigate the potential impact of growth on infrastructure and their environmental assets.</p> <p>The Government notes the findings of the Environmental Report and judgements made on the potential wider effects. The Government have introduced broader policy measures outside of the Plan to Revoke, for example, the New Homes Bonus which complements broader policy on growth, including the role of Local Enterprise Partnerships whose remit is to drive growth across their area making the most of its inherent strengths.</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework directs significant development towards the most sustainable locations. For example, developments that generate significant movement are located where the need to travel will be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes can be maximised</p> <p>An evidence and local plan-led approach towards identifying and meeting the future infrastructure requirements of an area is essential. The tariff-based, and locally set, Community Infrastructure Levy provides a faster, more certain and transparent way of helping localities fund that infrastructure than the system of planning obligations where lengthy negotiations often create severe delays.</p> <p>Other statutory and policy measures are in place to address the consequential effects on biodiversity, landscape and water resources), such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • existing legislation concerning environmental protection (such as the Habitats Directive, Water Framework Directive, the Floods and Water Management Act 2010)

No	Key Environmental Report findings	Response
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • existing planning policy (such as the National Planning Policy Framework, in this context particularly sections 10 & 11, and PPS10) • other government policy (such as that articulated in the Natural Environment White Paper) • actions by other organisations subject to statutory requirements such as water companies and requirements under the Water Industry Act 1991, as amended by the Water Act 2003 concerning water resource management planning.
6.	<p>At a broader scale, there could be an increasing diversification of regional circumstances across the country, accentuating issues such as the north-south divide with wider socio-economic consequences and reliance on other policy instruments for their resolution.</p>	<p>The Government notes the findings of the updated Environmental Report. The Government considers that there are other, broader drivers of spatial change. For instance, there are two Local Enterprise Partnerships in the North East. Their remit is to drive growth across their area making the most of its inherent strengths. The North East Local Enterprise Partnership has as its core objective the need to maximise its contribution to national economic growth and rebalancing the national economy.</p> <p>We note the judgement that there could be a reliance on other policy instruments. The Local Growth White Paper 2010, "Realising Every Place's Potential" established the Government's position on regional economic circumstances and set the framework for the ongoing activity of Local Enterprise Partnerships and investments such as the Growing Places Fund and the Regional Growth Fund.</p>

Chapter 4

How consultation on the Environmental Reports has been taken into account

4.1 Overview

As part of the environmental assessment of the revocation of the Regional Strategies, there has been consultation with the statutory consultation bodies on the scope and level of detail of the Environmental Reports, followed by a public consultation on the Environmental Reports on the effects of revoking each of the eight regional strategies.

Detailed responses to the first Environmental Report on the North East of England Regional Strategy, published in October 2011, were provided by consultees and summarised in the updated Environmental Report, published in November 2012.

The consultations and how they have been taken into account is summarised below.

4.2 Scoping Consultation

The designated consultation bodies for strategic environmental assessment in England (the Environment Agency, English Heritage and Natural England) were consulted on the scope and level of detail to be included in the Environmental Reports in May 2011 for five weeks. The corresponding bodies for Scotland and Wales were also consulted on the reports for regions on their boundaries. Their comments on individual regions have been taken into account in the Environmental Reports for each region.

The Environment Agency agreed that the scope and level of detail proposed for the analysis of environmental effects of revocation of the regional strategies was appropriate. Natural England recognised that the Strategic Environmental Assessment was unusual in that it applied to the revocation, rather than the creation of a plan, and that therefore many of the usual aspects of Strategic Environmental Assessment did not apply. English Heritage focussed their comments on the implications for Heritage on the proposed revocation. Scottish Natural Heritage considered that the implications for strategic planning for green infrastructure and the interface with the marine environment should be considered.

Annex A provides more detailed information on the responses to the scoping consultation and the Government response (which has been updated for inclusion in this post adoption statement).

4.3 Public Consultation on the first Environmental Report

As part of the assessment of the revocation of the Regional Strategies a public consultation on the eight Environmental Reports on the effects of revoking each of the eight regional strategies was undertaken. Consultation on the Environmental Reports was announced in both Houses of Parliament through a Written Ministerial Statement and copies were sent by email to the statutory consultation bodies, the equivalent organisations in the devolved administrations, all local planning authorities and organisations thought to have an interest in the process. Copies of the reports were also published on the Department for Communities and Local Government website. The consultations ran from 20 October 2011 to 20 January 2012.

A total of 103 responses were received, of which half contained comments that were common to all the reports. The remaining responses made specific comments on the environmental reports for particular regions while 8 dealt specifically with the environmental report for the North East of England. The remaining responses made specific comments on the Environmental Reports for particular regions. The Woodland Trust provided individual responses for each of the eight regions as did the Scottish Government Strategic Environmental Assessment Gateway (enclosing responses from Scottish Heritage, the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage). Eight responses dealt specifically with the Environmental Report for the North East of England. Responses were received from Northumberland County Council and a joint response was prepared by Durham County Council, Gateshead Council, Newcastle City Council, South Tyneside Council and Sunderland City Council. A summary of the consultation responses relevant to the North East of England Environmental Report is set out at Appendix F of the updated Environmental Report.

A high level summary of the issues raised on the first report and the response to those is set out in **Table 4.1** below. **Annex A** presents more detailed information and the responses.

Table 4.1 Summary of consultation responses to the first Environmental Report and the Government response

Issue	Summary of consultation responses to the October 2011 Environmental Report	Response
The overall approach taken to Strategic Environmental Assessment	The statutory consultees supported the broad approach to the analysis presented in the October 2011 environmental reports. Some respondents thought the analysis was undertaken too late in the plan making process and was not consistent with the requirements of the Directive.	Section 1 of the updated Environmental Report sets out how the report meets the requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive. The impacts of revoking, retaining or partially revoking the North East of England Plan have been assessed in detail in the short, medium and long term against the 12 Strategic Environmental Assessment topics.
Assessment	The statutory consultees drew attention to more up to date data that could be included in the environmental report, for instance in River Basin Management Plans. Other respondents asked for a revised non-technical summary, for baseline data to be updated, for a more extensive analysis of the potential effects taking into account the content of local plans, the reconsideration of the likelihood of effects and, where significant effects were identified, to set out mitigation measures and give more consideration to monitoring the impacts.	The updated Environmental Report updates the baseline evidence and provides a detailed analysis of the retention, partial revocation and revocation of the North East of England Plan in the short, medium and long term against all 12 Strategic Environmental Assessment topics, taking into account the content of local plans. Mitigation measures are proposed where significant impacts are predicted. Arrangements for monitoring possible effects are set out and a non-technical summary is provided.

Issue	Summary of consultation responses to the October 2011 Environmental Report	Response
Reliance on the National Planning Policy Framework	A number of respondents thought that it was difficult to assess the impact of revocation of the regional strategies before the National Planning Policy Framework was finalised.	The Government published the National Planning Policy Framework in March 2012. The analysis presented in the updated Environmental Report takes account of the policies set out in the Framework.
Policy Change	Several respondents thought that the revocation of the North East of England plan would leave a policy gap, particularly for the delivery of strategic policies.	The National Planning Policy Framework states that local planning authorities should set out the strategic priorities for the area in the Local Plan. This should include strategic policies to deliver homes and jobs and other development needed in the area, the provision of infrastructure, minerals and energy as well as the provision of health, security, community and cultural infrastructure and other local facilities; and climate change mitigation and adaptation, conservation and enhancement of the natural and historic environment, including landscape.
Reliance on the duty to co-operate	Some respondents thought that it was unlikely that the duty to co-operate would be able to provide a framework robust enough to enable strategic planning across local government boundaries at a sufficiently large scale.	The Government has introduced a new duty to co-operate and supporting regulations are now in place. In addition the National Planning Policy Framework sets out the expectations for local planning authorities

Issue	Summary of consultation responses to the October 2011 Environmental Report	Response
		working across boundaries on strategic planning matters which form part of the test of soundness for local plans.
Individual Topics	Respondents raised a number of questions about individual topics. In particular, respondents thought that the impact of the revocation of the North East of England could impact on Green Belt, the provision of gypsy and traveller pitches, housing allocations, heritage, waste management, biodiversity, renewable energy, transport, water, brown field land, coast, flooding and managed woodland.	Individual policies for the planning of individual topics are described in the updated Environmental Report, drawing on the policies set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.

As a result of considering the responses received, the changes made to the approach to the updated assessment were as follows:

- Providing additional contextual information for the assessment including the review of plans and programmes and updated baseline for each of the 12 Strategic Environmental Assessment Annex I(f) topics and presenting this in separate topic chapters.
- Providing additional information on the details of the Plan to Revoke the regional strategies and the reasonable alternatives to them, including reasons for the selection of some alternatives and the discontinuation of others.
- Providing additional information in the assessment of revocation and retention of each regional strategy policy explicitly against all 12 of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Annex I(f) topics.
- Identifying, characterising and assessing any likely significant effects of the plan and the reasonable alternatives, based on a common interpretation of what constitutes a significant effect for each topic and reflecting the possible timing effects.

- Providing additional information on likely secondary, cumulative and synergistic effects of the Plan to Revoke the regional strategies.
- Assessing the likely significant effects at a number of geographic levels (national, regional, sub-regional and local) depending on the content, intent and specificity of the individual policy.
- Providing further information that includes proposals to mitigate effects including more sub-regional information on an understanding of the duty to co-operate.
- Providing further information that includes proposals to monitor any significant effects.

The updated Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Plan to Revoke the North East Regional Strategy was undertaken in 2012 by AMEC on behalf of the Department for Communities and Local Government.

4.4 The Updated Environmental Report

Public consultation on the updated Environmental Report on the revocation of the North East of England Regional Strategy ran from 7th November 2012 until 10th January 2013.

The updated Environmental Report indicated that the Government welcomed, in particular, views on:

- whether there is any additional information that should be contained with the baseline or review of plans and programmes;
- whether the likely significant effects on the environment from revoking the regional strategy for the North East of England have been identified, described and assessed;
- whether the likely significant effects on the environment from considering the reasonable alternatives to revoking the Regional Strategy for the North East of England have been identified, described and assessed; and,
- the arrangements for monitoring.

In total 12 written responses were received summarised by interest group

- 6 Strategic Environmental Assessment consultation bodies (Environment Agency, Natural England, Historic Scotland, Scottish Environment Protection Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage);

- 2 Local planning authorities (Northumberland County Council and Sunderland City Council);
- 2 NGOs and Professional Bodies (Town and Country Planning Association, Royal Town Planning Institute, North East);
- 2 Industry representatives (RenewableUK and EDF Energy);

A summary of the comments and the Government's response is presented in **Table 4.2** below. Comments are structured by the questions asked above. Details of the comments are set out in **Annex B**.

Table 4.2 Summary of consultation responses to the updated Environmental Report

Issue	Summary of consultation responses to the updated Environmental Report	Response
<p>The overall approach taken to Strategic Environmental Assessment</p>	<p>Natural England, the Environment Agency, and English Heritage considered the updated Environmental Report an improvement providing a more rigorous approach to the analysis, presented in a more detailed and clearer document.</p> <p>The Town and Country Planning Association welcomed the adoption of a more robust methodology, Sunderland City Council and Royal Town Planning Institute, North East stated that the Environmental Report was comprehensive.</p> <p>Scottish Natural Heritage, the Scottish Environment Protection Agency and Historic Scotland did not anticipate any significant environmental effects from the revocation of the North</p>	<p>The Government welcomes the comments on the updated Environmental Report, which has been welcomed by statutory consultees and thought robust by a wide range of interested parties.</p>

Issue	Summary of consultation responses to the updated Environmental Report	Response
	East Regional Strategy on the Scottish Environment.	
Likely significant effects	<p>The Town and Country Planning Association considers that by removing the Location Strategy (Policy 6) and Sequential Approach (Policy 4) to Development it could lead to more development of unconstrained countryside. The Town and County Planning Association go onto state that they can find no justification for the assertion that a locally led approach could more effectively mitigate the negative effects of new housing and employment development.</p>	<p>The Government has provided a response to the findings of the Strategic Environment Assessment (Table 3.2 of this Post Adoption Statement) regarding issues of uncertainty and delay. In noting the findings of the Environment Report, the Government considers that it has put in place measures, such as the statutory duty to co-operate underpinned by the National Planning Policy Framework to ensure that local planning authorities and other agencies work together to inform strategic planning approaches and cross boundary issues.</p> <p>The extent to which the adverse effects of development are mitigated will not only rely on the environmental protection policies in local plans and the National Planning Policy Framework but also a hierarchy of measures that reflect existing legislation, other government policies and actions by other organisations subject to statutory environmental requirements such as water companies.</p>
Reasonable	Sunderland City Council	The Government welcomes

Issue	Summary of consultation responses to the updated Environmental Report	Response
alternatives	<p>state that the updated Environmental Report has assessed the proposed revocation of the North East Regional Strategy against what they consider to be three reasonable alternatives.</p> <p>The Town and Country Planning Association welcomes the fact that the methodology used is more thorough than the original Environmental Report.</p>	<p>the comments that suitable alternatives have been identified and that the environmental assessment has been undertaken in line with the legislative requirements.</p>
Monitoring	<p>The Environment Agency, Town and Country Planning Association, Renewable UK and English Heritage welcomed the monitoring recommendations in the Environmental Report.</p> <p>Natural England suggested that the monitoring section could be extended to address the loss of best and most versatile land. The Environment Agency recommended closer monitoring of highly complex, cumulative effects on issues such as climate change, water quality and water resources.</p>	<p>The measures that are to be taken forward to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the plan to revoke the North East of England Regional Strategy are contained in Chapter 6 and Annex C of this Post Adoption Statement.</p>
Reliance on the duty to co-operate	<p>Natural England and the Environment Agency recognise the duty to co-operate and consider</p>	<p>The duty to co-operate formalises arrangements for local authorities and agencies already working together by creating a</p>

Issue	Summary of consultation responses to the updated Environmental Report	Response
	<p>cross boundary working as being crucial in achieving effective environmental mitigation.</p> <p>Natural England did raise a concern that over the potential delay between the adoption of the National Planning Policy Framework compliant local plans and the revocation of the North East Regional Strategy.</p> <p>RenewableUK would welcome further guidance for local authorities on the implementation of the duty to co-operate.</p>	<p>statutory requirement to co-operate to ensure that local plans are effective and deliverable on cross-boundary matters. The duty requires authorities to work together constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis in relation to strategic cross boundary issues in local plans.</p>
<p>Application of the Habitats Regulations</p>	<p>Natural England believe that the Strategic Environmental Assessment does not set out the steps that the Government has undertaken to identify if the revocation of the Regional Strategy will have likely significant effects on the European habitats within the region.</p>	<p>Section 1.4 of the updated Environmental Report addresses the requirements of the Habitats Directive and concludes that “the Government’s view is that the revocation of the regional strategies will have no effects requiring assessment under the Habitats Directive”. This conclusion was reached on the basis of a screening exercise with each Regional Strategy policy reviewed to identify those that referred to the protection of European sites and those which are locationally specific. This exercise did not identify any likely significant effects on European sites. The decision not to undertake a Habitats</p>

Issue	Summary of consultation responses to the updated Environmental Report	Response
		Regulations Assessment was therefore not taken on the basis that Habitats Directive does not apply to the revocation of the plan but rather on the basis of the screening exercise, the conclusions of which were supported by the Strategic Environmental Appraisal.
Structure Plan Policy S5: Extension to the Green Belt	Northumberland County Council welcomes the proposed retention of Policy S5 until the new local plan for Northumberland is adopted.	The Government is retaining Policy S5 as proposed in the updated Environmental Report.
Individual Topics	Respondents raised a number of questions about individual topics in relation to: housing numbers and land supply, employment land portfolio and key employment sites, flood risk, minerals and waste planning, renewable energy and climate change, water management and water efficiency, River Basin Management Plans and the Water Framework Directive.	Appendix D of the updated Environmental Report contains the assessment of the effects of retention and revocation against all Strategic Environmental Assessment topics in the short, medium and long term and includes of consideration of permanent and temporary and positive and negative effects. Appendix E presents information covering all ten assessment topics at national, regional and sub-regional levels, consistent with the requirements of Annex I (b) to (e) of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive and focuses on those likely significant effects identified in Appendix D.

In light of the findings of the assessment as reported in the Environment Report, the comments received from consultees and the framework for environmental protection and planning that is in place, the Government is content that environmental considerations have been adequately incorporated into the Plan to Revoke the regional strategy. As explained in Section 6 below, where significant effects and/or uncertainty have been identified, a programme of monitoring has been proposed to enable future consideration of whether any further mitigation or intervention is needed.

Chapter 5

The reasons for choosing the plan as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with

5.1 Policy background

The Government proposed the Plan to Revoke the North East of England Regional Strategy because it believes that planning works best when the people it affects are placed at the heart of the system – and that when they are empowered, there is a greater stimulus for growth.

Every local area has its own set of needs and priorities, its aspirations, unique features and heritage. Only local people understand this so when they have the tools to plan, development happens through consensus by recognition of the benefits of development to the community and with wider benefits for growth. Local empowerment can lead to development that is more sensitive and responsive to the character of the communities in which we live, including to habitats and the natural environment.

While the Government believes that local empowerment can support growth, it also recognises that cross-boundary development, such as housing or transport, are critical to driving economic growth. So, the revocation of the North East of England Regional Strategy does not signal an end to strategic planning, but a shift towards a locally-led approach to planning for cross-boundary matters in local plans.

The Localism Act 2011 has complemented the powers to remove regional strategies with a new statutory duty to co-operate (inserting a new section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004). The duty to co-operate requires local councils and other public bodies to work together constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis when planning for strategic matters in local and marine plans.

Through national planning policy, we will ensure that local plans are effective vehicles for strategic planning and growth. Local plans, produced by local people, are the keystone of the planning system. They are now the channel for strategic planning and set the framework for neighbourhood plans. In particular, the National Planning Policy Framework is clear that:

- the planning system should be genuinely plan-led and support sustainable economic growth, proactively driving the homes and jobs that we need.
- local councils should plan to meet their housing need, based upon objectively assessed evidence, and should identify a 5 year supply of deliverable sites.
- in line with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, local councils should approve development that accords with the local plan. Where that plan is out of date, councils must, unless material considerations indicate otherwise, grant planning permission for development that is sustainable without delay.
- local councils must plan in their local plans for strategic development, reflecting the strategic priorities set out at paragraph 156 of the Framework.

The policies in the National Planning Policy Framework, and in particular the presumption, provide certainty for local councils, developers and communities about the role of local plans in planning for growth and planning decisions.

The new **Planning policy for traveller sites** (March 2012) requires that local planning authorities, working collaboratively, develop fair and effective strategies to meet need through the identification of land for sites. It asks local authorities to:

- use a robust evidence base to establish accommodation needs to inform the preparation of local plans and make planning decisions.
- co-operate with travellers, their representative bodies and local support groups, other local authorities and relevant interest groups to prepare and maintain an up-to-date understanding of the likely permanent and transit accommodation needs of their areas over the lifespan of their development plan working collaboratively with neighbouring local planning authorities.
- set pitch targets for Gypsies and Travellers which address the likely permanent and transit site accommodation needs of travellers in their area, working collaboratively with neighbouring local planning authorities.
- identify and update annually, a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years' worth of sites against their locally set targets, and a supply of specific, deliverable sites or broad locations for growth for six to ten and where possible for years 11-15.

The Government's planning reforms also include a package of incentives to encourage growth. These include the New Homes Bonus which rewards communities for each new home built; the Community Infrastructure Levy which enables councils to levy money on new development; and the Business

Rates Retention which allows authorities to directly profit from business rates raised in their area.

This policy background sets in context the reasons for the Government's preferred option to revoke the Regional Strategy and illustrates the structure of the planning system that will be left in place post revocation.

5.2 The Reasonable Alternatives

The first Environmental Report on the proposed revocation of the North East of England Regional Strategy, published for consultation in October 2011, suggested two alternatives – either to revoke the North East of England Plan entirely, or to retain it. Responses to the consultation suggested a number of other alternatives (see Appendix F to the updated Environmental Report) including partial revocation. In considering these responses and following the application of the reasonableness test in compliance with Article 5(1) of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive, the following alternatives to the Plan to Revoke were taken forward for the updated assessment within the Strategic Environmental Assessment:

- **Retention** of the North East of England Regional Strategy but not updating it in the future.
- **Partial revocation of the North East of England Regional Strategy either by:**
 - Revoking all the quantified and spatially specific policies (for instance where a quantum of development, land for development or amounts of minerals to be extracted or waste disposal is allocated to a particular location in the region) and retaining for a transitional period the non spatial policies, ambitions and priorities; or
 - Retaining for a transitional period all the spatially specific policies (for instance where a quantum of development, land for development or amounts of minerals to be extracted or waste disposal is allocated to a particular location in the region) and revoking the non spatial policies, ambitions and priorities; or
 - Retaining for a transitional period policies, ambitions and/or priorities, the revocation of which may lead to likely significant negative environmental effects.

5.3 The Reasons for Choosing the Plan to Revoke the North East of England Regional Strategy in light of the other Reasonable Alternatives dealt with

The Government has carefully considered each of the reasonable alternatives and the environmental effects assessed in relation to those reasonable alternatives, set out in the updated Environmental Report⁸. In doing this the Government has taken account of the consultation responses to both the initial and the updated Environmental Reports. The Government welcomes the comments on both of those reports and notes that that the opportunity to use the additional information gained through the public consultation process, as well as the developments in policy and Court of Justice of the European Union jurisprudence to update and build on the earlier assessments, have been an important contribution to making the final decision on the Plan to Revoke the North East of England Regional Strategy. The summary of consultation responses set out in this report show that consultees welcomed the rigorous approach to assessment of environmental effects.

One respondent considered that the updated Environmental Report did not reach a clear conclusion or recommendation on whether the Regional Strategy should be retained or revoked. As explained in Annex B to this Post Adoption Statement, the Government has taken account of the findings on the Strategic Environmental Assessment process, including the findings of the initial and updated environmental reports, consultation responses and reasonable alternatives set out in the updated environmental report, in reaching a final decision. The Government is clear that the findings of the environmental report have thus informed its decision

Three respondents expressed concern that revocation of specific regional strategy policies could lead to an increase in development on unconstrained greenfield land and away from identified sites (including brownfield sites). One of these respondents questioned outputs of the assessment concerning soil, landscape, human health, climatic factors and air quality. As detailed in Annex B to this Post Adoption Statement, the Government considers that this issue has been adequately covered in the updated Environmental Report. This includes section 4.5 of the updated Report dealing with secondary, cumulative and synergistic effects.

One response asked for a number of individual policies to be retained to deliver Regional Strategy outcomes on renewable energy. As detailed in this Post Adoption Statement (including at Table 3.2 and Annex B), the Government considers that these have been adequately covered in the updated Environmental Report, including the assessment at Chapter 4 of the updated Report. The reasons for adopting the Plan to Revoke the North East Regional Strategy, but retaining the single saved structure plan policy, are set

⁸ Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Revocation of the North East of England Regional Strategy: AMEC Environment & Infrastructure UK Limited: November 2012

out in this Post Adoption Statement in accordance with the requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive.

Some respondents suggested additional monitoring measures, including a specific suggestion to monitor impacts on Best and Most Versatile Land to reflect the findings of the updated Environmental Report for impacts on soil. The proposals for monitoring, which take account of these responses, are set out in Chapter 6 and Annex C of this report, including a measure to monitor the quantity of Best and Most Versatile Land. Lastly, there were also some questions from some respondents on individual topics such as the Green Belt, housing, flood risk, minerals, heritage and biodiversity and renewable energy. The Government considers that these issues have all been adequately covered in the updated Environmental Report, as set out in this Post Adoption Statement (including table 3.2 and Annex B of this Post Adoption Statement).

In conclusion, none of the responses to the consultation on the updated Environmental Report has led the Government to reconsider the adequacy of the assessment of the environmental effects of the Plan to Revoke the North East Regional Strategy, and the reasonable alternatives to the Plan, set out in the updated Environmental Report.

In light of this conclusion the Government considered each of the reasonable alternatives, and the environmental effects assessed in relation to those reasonable alternatives, as follows:

(i) On the **retention** of the North East Regional Strategy but not updating it in the future it was noted in the updated Environmental Report that there will be significant positive environmental effects in the long term, although these will be largely similar to those if the Regional Strategy were revoked. The only area where retention of the Regional Strategy would lead to significant negative effects is in relation to soil associated with housing provision and air quality and climatic factors associated with airport growth, although the Government notes that a similar policy performance is recorded for the revocation alternative. For the majority of policies, the updated Environmental Report found it difficult to identify clear differences between the effects of retention and revocation. The Government considers that the retention of the Regional Strategy would lead to a strategy that was a consideration in plan-making and decision taking but with policies based on increasingly out of date evidence or which run contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework and fail to promote a locally-led approach to planning and does not therefore consider that it should pursue this alternative.

(ii) On **partial revocation**, the updated Environmental Report noted that there were policies where potential significant negative environmental effects were identified for the **revocation of the quantified and spatially specific policies**. These include potential significant negative environmental effects on soil, air quality and climatic factors from housing development and airport growth. The effects were also identified for retention of the Regional Strategy, although there would be more uncertainty about the impacts of partial revocation in the short to medium term. The Government does not therefore

consider that it should pursue this alternative, in particular given that those policies retained would become increasingly out of date or run contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework and fail to promote a locally-led approach to planning. The National Planning Policy Framework makes clear the evidence on which Local Plans should be based, including quantified demand for housing and other uses, and where the duty to co-operate is particularly relevant.

(iii) Specific effects for **retention for a transitional period of policies which set the quantum for development or which are spatially specific** were identified in the updated Environmental Report. These include potential significant negative environmental effects on soil, air quality and climatic factors from housing development and airport growth. The effects were also identified for retention of the Regional Strategy, although there would be more uncertainty about the impacts of partial revocation in the short to medium term. The Environmental Report also noted that retention of these policies for a transitional period may result in some confusion with the intent of the National Planning Policy Framework and how they are to be applied. The Government does not therefore consider that it should pursue this alternative, in particular given that those policies retained would be based on increasingly out of date evidence or run contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework and fail to promote a locally-led approach to planning.

(iv) **Regarding retention of policies, the revocation of which may lead to likely significant negative environmental effects**, the updated Environmental Report also found that there are no policies in the Regional Strategy where the act of revocation will cause a significant negative effect whilst retaining the same policy will maintain a significant environmental benefit. Where there is a potential significant negative effect this is the same issue for retention and revocation and will require a similar concerted effort by all interested parties to resolve, irrespective of the presence of the Regional Strategy itself.

In relation to each of the reasonable alternatives assessed there has not been found to be a significant difference in the environmental effects as against those for the preferred option of revocation (as evidenced in Appendix D of the updated Environmental Report). For retaining quantified and spatially specific priorities there were found to be potential positive and negative effects, but recognition that policies are based on evidence that would become increasingly out of date and could gradually lead to a decline in the positive effects that the strategy aimed to deliver and potential conflicts with policies that local communities wish to pursue will increase. For these reasons and given the structures and framework already in place the Government does not consider that the retention of any of the policies in the North East Regional Strategy is necessary.

Therefore in light of the policy background and reasons for the Plan to Revoke the North East Regional Strategy, consideration of the environmental effects of the Plan to Revoke and the reasonable alternatives, and consideration of

responses to the Environmental Reports, the Government has decided to proceed with its preferred option to revoke the North East Regional Strategy.

The updated Environmental Report set out that the Government was proposing to retain Saved Structure Plan policy S5 of the Northumberland County and National Park Joint Structure Plan (2005) – Extension to the Green Belt – which was originally saved to maintain a coherent strategic planning framework for the preparation of local plans. Three respondents expressed supported retention of this policy until an up-to-date local plan was in place. The Government will therefore continue to save this policy.

Chapter 6

The measures decided concerning monitoring

Monitoring of the effects of the Plan to Revoke the North East of England Regional Strategy will focus on:

- The significant effects identified in the assessment that may give rise to irreversible damage, where appropriate, relevant mitigating measures can be taken; and
- Uncertain effects where monitoring would enable preventative or mitigating measures to be undertaken.

Consistent with the proposals of the updated Environmental Report, potential effects against all the environmental topics have been included in the monitoring framework. Specific additional monitoring suggestions were made by consultees and are outlined in the summary of consultation in **Annex B**. The final measures are presented in **Annex C**.

The monitoring programme will use existing regulatory regimes and data collection processes to provide information for these potential environmental impacts. For example, the Environment Agency's requirements under the Water Framework Directive, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs' requirements with regard to Air Quality Management Areas and the Department for Communities and Local Government's commitments regarding the local plan making progress by authorities and on compliance with the duty to co-operate. The metrics are proposed in part to minimise any additional burdens associated with collection and analysis of monitoring data.

The Department for Communities and Local Government will make periodic reference to the metrics and sources of information contained in **Annex C** to review the effects of revocation.

ANNEX A

Consultation and Partner Engagement – Initial Environmental Report

Responses to scoping stage of the preparation of the Initial Environmental Report

The designated consultation bodies for strategic environmental assessment in England (the Environment Agency, English Heritage and Natural England) were consulted on the scope and level of detail to be included in the Environmental Reports in May 2011 for five weeks. The corresponding bodies for Scotland and Wales were also consulted on the reports for regions on their boundaries. The statutory bodies agreed that the scope and level of detail proposed for the analysis of environmental effects of revocation of the regional strategies was appropriate.

Table A1 Summary of statutory body’s responses at the Strategic Environmental Assessment scoping stage

No	General	Detailed comments	Raised by	Response
1	Scope and Detail	<p>The Environment Agency agreed that the scope and level of detail proposed for the analysis of environmental effects of revocation of the regional strategies was appropriate. Natural England recognised that the Strategic Environmental Assessment was unusual in that it applied to the revocation, rather than the creation of a plan, and that therefore many of the usual aspects of Strategic Environmental Assessment did not apply. English Heritage focussed their comments on the implications for Heritage on the proposed revocation.</p> <p>Historic Scotland, Scottish Environmental Protection Agency and Scottish National Heritage believe the consideration of networks between regions of England and trans-boundary connections between regions of England and Scotland are absent from the Environmental Report. They felt the report should consider more fully what they saw as some loss of strategic planning which could have some</p>	<p>Environment Agency, Natural England, English Heritage, Historic Scotland, Scottish Environmental Protection Agency, Scottish Natural Heritage</p>	<p>The updated Environmental Report has been produced consistent with the requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive. Responses to the detailed points raised at scoping stage are set out in the rest of the Table.</p>

No	General	Detailed comments	Raised by	Response
		adverse effects in terms of delivering wider sustainability objectives across the region.		
2	Reliance on the Duty to Co-operate and the National Planning Policy Framework	<p>The Environment Agency, Natural England and English Heritage questioned whether the reliance on the draft duty to co-operate was sufficient to capture and address cross-boundary issues or cumulative effects of multiple local authorities' local plans. For example, English Heritage remains concerned about the effectiveness of the duty to co-operate to work for the four local authorities on the lower Tyne and Sunderland in relation to landscape character.</p> <p>They also commented that references to planning policy assumed existing policies would be carried forward to the new National Planning Policy Framework. Since the National Planning Policy Framework was still in its draft form, this needs to be more fully considered. It is also difficult to predict what local authorities will do post revocation of regional strategies so that the environmental effects of their revocation is more likely to be "uncertain" rather than positive.</p>	Environment Agency, Natural England, English Heritage, Scottish Natural Heritage	The Government has now published the National Planning Policy Framework and developed the statutory instruments to put into place the duty to co-operate through the Localism Act and the supporting legislation and policy.
3	Topics to be	The Environment Agency considered that	Environment Agency	Appendix D of the updated Environmental

No	General	Detailed comments	Raised by	Response
	considered	the impacts on climate change, water quality and water resources should be fully assessed. The Water Framework Directive should be considered as well as strategic planning of water resources.		Report contains an assessment of the effects of retention and revocation of individual policies on climate change, water quality and water resources. Appendix E reviews the baseline condition for each of the Strategic Environmental Assessment topics (including climatic factors and water) and assesses the likely effects on the baseline of retaining and revoking individual policies, the Regional Strategy as a whole and reasonable alternatives.

No	General	Detailed comments	Raised by	Response
4	Water Quality	There are currently issues around accommodating growth within existing Waste Water Treatment Work's consent limits, and without compromising Water Framework Directive requirements. This issue should be acknowledged in the assessment. The assessment could usefully inform the allocation of growth across catchments, which are likely to be wider than an individual local authority boundary. The assessment should also consider how strategic cross-boundary water quality issues will be dealt with following the revocation of the Regional Strategy.	Environment Agency	Water quality issues have been assessed under the Strategic Environmental Assessment topic "Water". This includes the consideration of the topics in Appendix E of the updated Environmental Report, and as part of the assessment of the retention and revocation of individual policies and the overall assessment of the revocation of the North East of England Regional Strategy and reasonable alternatives. This also takes account of the strategic planning cross-boundary issues.
5	Water resources	The Environment Agency considered that the demand for water is dependent on the number of households, number of occupants and the per capita consumption of occupants. If the post Regional Strategy forecast housing numbers increase, even with the same population and thus lower occupancy, then per capita consumption of water is likely to be higher, resulting in a higher demand for water. Similarly, if the number of houses forecast remained the same and the per capita consumption of	Environment Agency	Water resources have been assessed under the Strategic Environmental Assessment topic "water". This includes the consideration of the topics in Appendix E of the updated Environmental Report, as part of the assessment of the retention and revocation of individual policies and the overall assessment of the revocation of the North East of England Regional Strategy and reasonable alternatives. This also includes takes account of the strategic planning cross-boundary issues

No	General	Detailed comments	Raised by	Response
		<p>water increased, or occupancy increased, then this would also increase the demand for water.</p> <p>Change in water use will be influenced by the individual local authorities post Regional Strategy policies, these effects may not be uniform for all local authorities. Therefore, the net effects on water resources of having a regional strategies or not could be zero, more or less. Increases in housing numbers could be considered against the relevant water companies' Water Resources Management Plan to ensure that the company is able to supply the additional households. The same applies to any redistribution of households within the existing overall housing numbers. Moving planned builds to another local authority area or within a local authority area may shift the demand into a different water company water resource zone. The effects of this on the company's ability to supply the 'additional' houses should be considered.</p>		<p>including through assessment of the water companies' Water Resources Management Plan.</p>

No	General	Detailed comments	Raised by	Response
6	Waste	Waste plans, required to meet the meet the requirements of the Waste Framework Directive, will need a strong evidence base to support them.	Environment Agency.	<p>The National Planning Policy Framework was published in March 2012. Paragraph 153 of the framework makes clear the expectation that local planning authorities should produce a local plan for the area, whilst Section 17 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 makes it clear that two or more local planning authorities may agree to prepare one or more local development documents. This allows unitary authorities and county councils to work together if they wish. However such plans must still meet the legal and procedural requirements, including the test of soundness required under section 20 of the 2004 Act and Paragraph 182 of the Framework including for the planning of waste infrastructure.</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework also makes it clear that local planning authorities may continue to draw on evidence that informed the preparation of regional strategies to support Local Plan policies, supplemented as needed by up-to-date, robust local evidence. The National Planning Policy Framework (paragraphs 158-177) also sets out in</p>

No	General	Detailed comments	Raised by	Response
				<p>detail the evidence base that is required to underpin the development of local plans and planning decisions. The National Planning Policy Framework states that local planning authorities should work with other authorities and providers to assess the quality and capacity of infrastructure for waste and its ability to meet forecast demands.</p>
7	Climate Change	<p>Climate risk and associated adaptation actions should be assessed to help ensure resilience to future climate change. Local authorities could put monitoring mechanisms in place, as action or inaction by one local authority could impact on neighbouring authorities. We suggest that possible mechanisms for monitoring resilience to climate change are considered within the assessment.</p> <p>The Environmental Report stated that local authorities may find it useful to draw on regional data including assessments of the potential for renewable and low carbon energy. This should be considered in greater detail at the next stage of the environmental assessment.</p> <p>In relation to adaptation to climate change,</p>	Environment Agency, Scottish Natural Heritage.	<p>Climate change issues are assessed as part of the climatic factors Strategic Environmental Assessment topic, set out in Appendix E of the updated Environmental Report, and proposals for monitoring are set out in Chapter 5, including for climatic factors.</p>

No	General	Detailed comments	Raised by	Response
		<p>Scottish Natural Heritage would like the Environmental Report to address the protection and enhancement of networks to allow species dispersal throughout Britain.</p>		
8	Growth	<p>Assumptions on future growth, including for housing allocations, are important when making assessments of the potential impacts of revocation of the regional strategies. An assumption that lower levels of growth (than that proposed by the Regional Strategy) may be pursued by local authorities may lessen pressures on negative regional trends. It is possible that some local authorities may decide to increase their housing figures above Regional Strategy targets which could potentially result in significant environmental effects.</p> <p>It may become more challenging to accommodate growth in certain river catchments - all available, up-to-date information should be utilised when carrying out the next stage of the assessment.</p>	<p>Environment Agency, English Heritage</p>	<p>In order to better understand the content of local plans, the updated Environmental Report has taken into account local plan policies on housing, pitches for gypsies and traveller sites, renewable energy, employment, minerals and waste.</p> <p>Baseline data has been expanded and updated in the Environmental Reports, including for heritage assets and river basin management plans.</p>

No	General	Detailed comments	Raised by	Response
9	Marine Planning	<p>The North East of England Regional Strategy was adopted before the marine planning process started. It therefore did not account for the role that marine planning can play, not just within the marine environment, but also on land. Many of the Sustainability Appraisal objectives could be compared to the aims of the marine planning process. It was suggested that the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) was consulted at all stages of the assessment, given that their plans could potentially apply to the areas covered by this environmental assessment.</p> <p>Scottish Natural Heritage, Historic Scotland and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency commented that consideration should be given to addressing the loss of strategic planning on the shared marine and coastal environment, although the organisations do acknowledge that the requirement for Shoreline Management Plans and Integrated Coastal Management provide a degree of strategic planning for the coastal and marine environment.</p>	<p>Environment Agency, Scottish Natural Heritage, Scottish Environment Protection Agency.</p>	<p>The consultation on the updated Environmental Report is a public one and comments from all parties with an interest are welcome. The Environmental Report published in October 2011 was sent to the MMO. The updated Environmental Report has also been sent to the MMO.</p>
10	Cumulative	<p>The Environmental Report should</p>	<p>Environment Agency.</p>	<p>Cumulative impacts are taken into</p>

No	General	Detailed comments	Raised by	Response
	Effects	effectively assess cumulative impacts and mitigation measures of many small adverse impacts on the environment for instance on climate change including greenhouse gas emissions.		account in the assessment presented in the updated Environmental Report. The approach to the analysis is set out in the methodology in Chapter 3, and a discussion of the impacts is included in Chapter 4. Mitigation measures are considered throughout the report including for individual Strategic Environmental Assessment topics, and the retention and revocation of individual regional policies.
11	Regional Heritage Policies	English Heritage noted that some policies are only in regional strategies, not in local plans hence the risk of “policy gaps” if these regional policies are not saved. For example, Policy 9 seeks to preserve the setting and special character of Durham City, Hexham, Corbridge and Morpeth, but no up-to-date Core Strategy policy exists for any of these settlements. And they commented that Policy 32 - Historic Environment promotes the concept of 'constructive conservation', which has yet to find its place in forthcoming national policy or in all but a few single tier authority Development Plan Documents. It has been a very useful policy to have in the North East.	English Heritage.	Also, see lines 24 and 27 in Table 2. The National Planning Policy Framework, published in March 2012, continues to provide protection for heritage assets and designated heritage assets throughout the country. By definition, heritage assets include areas and landscapes, as well as individual buildings and monuments, which have a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of their heritage interest. The significance of a heritage asset is stated to derive not only from its physical presence, but also from its setting. The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts and has

No	General	Detailed comments	Raised by	Response
		<p>They questioned the assumption that local authorities will carry forward regional policies to secure the boundaries of Green Belts around historic settlements, and whether existing national heritage policies will be carried forward to the National Planning Policy Framework. They thought that regional heritage policies do not just repeat national policy, but include regionally specific detail. They asked for more material to be included in the historic environment baseline data.</p> <p>They considered that the revocation of the regional strategies will result in significant adverse effects which should be mitigated, in particular:</p> <p>The national/regional overview of the significance of historic assets (summarised in the Historic Environment policy) will be lost, although the National Planning Policy Framework could underline English Heritage's role in identifying historic character of more than local significance; and</p> <p>The uncertainty in relation to housing numbers could result in planning by appeal, which is more likely to be harmful to historic</p>		<p>maintained strong protection for them in the National Planning Policy Framework. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. The essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework makes clear, as with previous Green Belt policy, that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework also states that a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in Green Belt. Limited exceptions to this are set out in the National Planning Policy Framework,</p>

No	General	Detailed comments	Raised by	Response
		environment interests. Transitional arrangements should be considered.		<p>together with other forms of development that are also not inappropriate in Green Belt provided they preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land in Green Belt.</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework is also clear that once established, Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances. A change to a Green Belt boundary would need to take place through the local plan process, which would involve public consultation and an independent examination. At that time, authorities should consider the Green Belt boundaries having regard to their intended permanence in the long term, so that they should be capable of enduring beyond the plan period.</p> <p>When drawing up or reviewing Green Belt boundaries local planning authorities should take account of the need to promote sustainable patterns of development. They should consider the consequences for sustainable development of channelling development towards urban areas inside the Green Belt boundary, towards towns and villages</p>

No	General	Detailed comments	Raised by	Response
				<p>inset within the Green Belt or towards locations beyond the outer Green Belt boundary. Additional policies are set out to be applied when defining boundaries. Policies for the development of a village in a Green belt are also included.</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework states that once Green Belts have been defined, local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance the beneficial use of the Green Belt.</p> <p>Implementation arrangements are set out in Annex 1 of the National Planning Policy Framework.</p>

Representations received in response to the first public consultation on the proposed revocation of the North East of England Regional Strategy

The consultation on the first Environmental Report ran from 20 October 2011 to 20 January 2012.

The representations received on the proposed revocation of the North East of England Regional Strategy have been summarised in the two following tables. The first provides a headline summary of the issues. The responses are grouped under the following themes:

- The Overall Approach to Strategic Environmental Assessment;
- Assessment;
- Reliance on the National Planning Policy Framework;
- Policy Change;
- Reliance on the duty to co-operate;
- Individual Topics (covering greenbelt, gypsies and travellers, housing supply and growth, heritage, waste, biodiversity, renewable energy, transport, water, Brownfield land, the coast, flooding and woodland).

Since the responses received to the consultation of this first report, a significant amount of policy and legislation has been developed (for instance the publication of National Planning Policy Framework and the introduction of the duty to co-operate) and so some of these comments have inevitably been overtaken by events. The comments relevant to the first Environmental report for the North East of England Plan (i.e. responses specifically to the North East of England report and comments that applied to all regions including the North East of England are presented in summary below, together with how they have been addressed in the updated Environmental Report.

Table A2: Summary of consultation responses – headline issues

Issue	Summary of consultation responses to the October 2011 Environmental Report	Response
The overall approach taken to Strategic Environmental Assessment	The statutory consultees supported the broad approach to the analysis presented in the October 2011 environmental reports. Some respondents thought the analysis was undertaken too late in the plan making process and was not	Section 1 of the updated Environmental Report sets out how the report meets the requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive. The impacts of revoking, retaining or partially

Issue	Summary of consultation responses to the October 2011 Environmental Report	Response
	consistent with the requirements of the Directive.	revoking the North East of England Plan have been assessed in detail in the short, medium and long term against the 12 Strategic Environmental Assessment topics.
Assessment	The statutory consultees drew attention to more up to date data that could be included in the environmental report, for instance in River Basin Management Plans. Other respondents asked for a revised non-technical summary, for baseline data to be updated, for a more extensive analysis of the potential effects taking into account the content of local plans, the reconsideration of the likelihood of effects and, where significant effects were identified, to set out mitigation measures and give more consideration to monitoring the impacts.	The updated Environmental Report updates the baseline evidence and provides a detailed analysis of the retention, partial revocation and revocation of the North East of England Plan in the short, medium and long term against all 12 Strategic Environmental Assessment topics, taking into account the content of local plans. Mitigation measures are proposed where significant impacts are predicted. Arrangements for monitoring possible effects are set out and a non-technical summary is provided.
Reliance on the National Planning Policy Framework	A number of respondents thought that it was difficult to assess the impact of revocation of the regional strategies before the National Planning Policy Framework was finalised.	The Government published the National Planning Policy Framework in March 2012. The analysis presented in the updated Environmental Report takes account of the policies set out in the Framework.
Policy Change	Several respondents thought that the revocation of the North East of England plan would leave a policy gap, particularly	The National Planning Policy Framework states that local planning authorities should set out

Issue	Summary of consultation responses to the October 2011 Environmental Report	Response
	for the delivery of strategic policies.	the strategic priorities for the area in the Local Plan. This should include strategic policies to deliver homes and jobs and other development needed in the area, the provision of infrastructure, minerals and energy as well as the provision of health, security, community and cultural infrastructure and other local facilities; and climate change mitigation and adaptation, conservation and enhancement of the natural and historic environment, including landscape.
Reliance on the duty to co-operate	Some respondents thought that it was unlikely that the duty to co-operate would be able to provide a framework robust enough to enable strategic planning across local government boundaries at a sufficiently large scale.	The Government has introduced a new duty to co-operate and supporting regulations are now in place. In addition the National Planning Policy Framework sets out the expectations for local planning authorities working across boundaries on strategic planning matters which form part of the test of soundness for local plans.
Individual Topics	Respondents raised a number of questions about individual topics. In particular, respondents thought that the impact of the revocation of the North East of England could impact on Green Belt, the provision of gypsy and traveller	Individual policies for the planning of individual topics are described in the Environmental Report, drawing on the policies set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.

Issue	Summary of consultation responses to the October 2011 Environmental Report	Response
	pitches, housing allocations, heritage, waste management, biodiversity, renewable energy, transport, water, brown field land, coast, flooding and managed woodland.	

More detailed information on each respondent's comments is provided in Table A3. Information in the table includes:

- The overall issue
- Detailed information on the comments made:
- The respondents who raised the issue; and
- A response.

Table A3 Responses to the consultation on the initial Environmental Report (published in November 2011) (this table has been revised following the close of consultation on the updated Environmental Report)

Summary of the comments received to the initial Environmental Report

No	General	Detailed comments on the initial Environmental Report	Raised by	Response
1	The Overall Approach to Strategic Environmental Assessment	The Environment Agency supported the broad approach to the analysis presented in the Environmental Reports published in October 2011. Natural England recognised that the Strategic Environmental Assessment was unusual in that it applied to the revocation, rather than the creation of a plan, and that therefore many of the usual aspects of Strategic Environmental Assessment did not apply. English Heritage did not comment on the overall approach taken to the assessment. Other respondents thought the analysis was undertaken too late in the plan making process and was not consistent with the requirements of the Directive.	Environment Agency, Natural England and English Heritage.	The impact of retaining, partially revoking and fully revoking the North East Regional Strategy has been assessed in detail in the short, medium and long term against the 12 Strategic Environmental Assessment topics. This includes an assessment of cultural heritage – including architectural and archaeological heritage.
2	The Overall Approach to Strategic Environmental Assessment	The consultation on the assessment of the revocation of regional strategies which ran from October 2011 was contrary to the requirements of Article 6(5) of the Directive.	Clyde and Co LLP and Icen Projects.	The Government disagrees that the consultation process undertaken in October 2011 was contrary to the requirements of Article 6(5) of the Directive which states that the “detailed arrangements for the information and consultation of the authorities and the public shall be determined by Member States”. This

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				<p>requirement is transposed into English law by regulation 13 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.</p> <p>The Environmental Report which was published for public consultation in October 2011, and the updated Environmental Report, which takes account of consultation responses, demonstrates the Government's desire to consult fully on the assessment of the impacts of revocation of the Regional Strategy.</p> <p>Chapter 1 of the updated Environmental Report sets out the purpose of the consultation and sets out a number of questions on which the Government would particularly welcome</p>

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3	<p>The Overall Approach to Strategic Environmental Assessment</p>	<p>The environmental assessment had been carried out too late in the process, and should have been conducted prior to the initial decisions to revoke the regional strategies. Strategic Environmental Assessment carried out at an early stage and with an open mind helps to identify the environmental consequences of revocation and steps which could be taken to mitigate any adverse impacts (such as saving significant environmental policies).</p>	<p>RenewableUK, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, Wildlife and Countryside Link.</p>	<p>responses.</p> <p>The Government signalled its proposed intention to remove the regional tier of Government and return decision making on housing and planning to local authorities in the coalition agreement. Parliament subsequently agreed to the removal of the legal framework for Regional Strategies through the repeal of Part 5 of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 (through section 109 of the Localism Act 2011) and gave the Secretary of State powers to revoke the whole or any part of a Regional Strategy by order. Any decision to revoke the regional strategies has always been dependent on and subject to the outcome of the environmental</p>

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				<p>assessments.</p> <p>The Environmental Report which was published for public consultation in October 2011, and the updated Environmental Report, which takes account of responses, demonstrates this and is in accordance with the requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive and its objectives.</p> <p>The outcome of the consultations on the Environmental Reports will form part of the matters that will be taken into account in deciding whether or not to revoke the regional strategies.</p>
4	<p>The Overall Approach to Strategic Environmental Assessment</p>	<p>The Town and Country Planning Association were concerned that the Environmental Reports did not represent an analytically robust and rigorous assessment of the likely impacts or how</p>	<p>Town and Country Planning Association, The Woodland Trust.</p>	<p>The October 2011 Environmental Report was structured around the individual requirements of the Strategic Environmental</p>

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		<p>they may be mitigated. They considered that not all of the Directive's provisions had been addressed with sufficient robustness to provide an appropriate means of assessment, with, for example, reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with and a description of how the assessment was undertaken. The Environmental Reports did not explore the potential short-term impacts that could arise in the interim period while the Regional Strategy is revoked, but before adopted local plans are in place. The reports do not project what the future might be like under local plans prepared with a minimum of national guidelines. The reports should contain more analysis of minerals and waste, infrastructure, town centre development, new settlements and major urban expansions.</p> <p>The Woodland Trust also expressed concern about the process and that there were no details on how the findings would be taken into account.</p>		<p>Assessment Directive. Chapter 1 of the updated Environmental Report sets out which parts of the report address the requirements of the Directive.</p>
5	Assessment – likelihood of effects	The assessment had placed unquestioning faith in the environmental benefits of the	Levett-Therivel, Treweek Environmental	The short, medium and long term impacts of retaining, partially revoking and

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		<p>Government's planning reforms, and seemed to be a justification for revocation rather than objective analysis. The assumptions within the Environmental Report that revocation of the Regional Strategy will have no significant adverse environmental effects were untested and unsupported by evidence.</p> <p>Given the conclusions in the Environmental Report for the North East that "in the main, the later stages of the development of the Plan had moved the strategy towards a stronger model of sustainability which embraces environmental, social and economic facets of sustainable development", it was queried whether this hampered claims that it was in the interests of sustainable development to abolish it.</p>	<p>Consultants, Collingwood Environmental Planning.</p>	<p>revoking the North East of England Regional Strategy have been assessed in detail in the updated Environmental Report for each of the 12 Strategic Environmental Assessment topics.</p>
6	<p>Assessment – cumulative impacts</p>	<p>The Environmental Report should assess the cumulative effects of revocation, in particular the consequent capacity for 'linked or cumulative, synergistic or secondary effects' coupled with the need for environmental assessment to adapt to the scale and nature of the plan in question. The assessment should include</p>	<p>Clyde and Co LLP, Levett- Therivel, Treweek Environmental Consultants, Collingwood Environmental Planning.</p>	<p>Chapter 3 of the updated Environmental Report sets out the assessment methodology for cumulative, synergistic or secondary effects. Chapter 4 of the updated Environmental report contains a</p>

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		a consideration of the impact of the revocation of all the Regional Strategies.		consideration of these effects.
7	Assessment – mitigation	No mitigation measures are presented in the Environmental Reports because no impacts have been identified. Every section or policy of the Regional Strategy except one (the core spatial strategy) Annex A of the Environmental Report stated that 'These policies could be delivered by other means than through a Regional Strategy.' However, no evidence had been provided to show that this would actually take place.	Levett-Therivel, Treweek Environmental Consultants, Collingwood Environmental Planning.	Appropriate mitigation measures will be proposed in Chapter 6 and Annex C of the Post Adoption Statement.
8	Assessment – strategic planning	<p>The Regional Strategies provided strategic policies to ensure that development can be planned in a way that is compatible with biodiversity targets. There are similar issues with water supply/demand, for example, under the Water Framework Directive, to ensure that housing development will be compatible with the requirements for favourable status and there are knock on implications for European protected sites.</p> <p>The Town and Country Planning Association considered that the Environmental Reports understated the</p>	Levett-Therivel, Treweek Environmental Consultants, Collingwood Environmental Planning, Town and Country Planning Association.	The National Planning Policy Framework states that local planning authorities should set out the strategic priorities for their area in their Local Plan. This should include strategic policies to deliver: the homes and jobs needed in the area; the provision of retail, leisure and other commercial development; the provision of infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, waste management, water supply,

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		benefits of regional policy which all the original Strategic Environmental Assessments had identified. They also considered that there was insufficient detail to show how the new planning reform measures would deal effectively with strategic spatial issues.		<p>wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat); the provision of health, security, community and cultural infrastructure and other local facilities; and climate change mitigation and adaptation, conservation and enhancement of the natural and historic environment, including landscape.</p> <p>The impact of retaining, partially revoking and revoking the North East of England Regional Strategy has been assessed in detail in the short, medium and long term for each of the 12 Strategic Environmental Assessment topics.</p>
9	Assessment - baseline data	Statutory Agencies identified more recent environmental data than that used in the Environmental Reports - such as data used to inform the preparation of the River	Natural England, Environment Agency, Treweek Environmental	The baseline data has been updated and expanded in the updated Environmental Report, and described for the

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		Basin Management Plans, and on climate change and sea level rise. Other respondents asked for other baseline data to be updated, for data on human health to be included and for data to better reflect the economic climate. Some respondents asked for maps to be included to better illustrate spatial impacts. Friends of the Earth referred to the comment in the North East report that Sites of Special Scientific Interest were overall in the worst condition compared to the rest of England, and that traffic was the main cause of air pollution.	Consultants, Clyde and Co LLP, Town and Country Planning Association, Levett-Therivel, Friends of the Earth (FOE).	12 Strategic Environmental Assessment topics in Appendix E. Maps have been included. This data has been used to inform the assessment the strategic environmental impacts of the revocation of the North East of England Regional Strategy and a number of alternatives.
10	Assessment – material assets	The analysis of material assets could include the full range of infrastructure, employment sites, waste, energy and water use etc.	Levett- Therivel, Treweek Environmental Consultants, Collingwood Environmental Planning.	The updated Environmental Report includes an assessment of all 12 Strategic Environmental Assessment topics. This incorporates assessment of waste and minerals, energy, water use, and employment land.
11	Assessment – likely evolution of the environment	The likely evolution of the environment in the absence of the plan should be set out.	Levett- Therivel, Treweek Environmental Consultants, Collingwood	In compliance with Annex 1(b) of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive, the updated Environmental Report

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			Environmental Planning.	presents for each of the 12 Strategic Environmental Assessment topics, an assessment of the likely evolution of the baseline without implementation of the plan or programme. Uniquely (to date) in this case, “without implementation of the proposed plan or programme” actually refers to the plan to revoke the Regional Strategy. So the evolution of the environmental baseline without the plan will mean in this instance, the evolution of the baseline with the retention of the existing Regional Strategy on place. Therefore, and where appropriate in addition to using projections, this assessment has used the findings of the relevant sustainability appraisal and appropriate assessment to

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				help provide an informed understanding of the likely future evolution of the baseline. This information is contained in Appendix E and presented within each topic chapter of the updated Environmental Report.
12	Assessment – Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservations	Information on the existing impacts on Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation should be provided.	Levett- Therivel, Treweek Environmental Consultants, Collingwood Environmental Planning.	The updated Environmental Report contains an Appendix G listing all Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation and the impact on particular sites has been drawn out where relevant.
13	Assessment – method statement	Information should be provided on who has carried out the assessments, details of the consultation with statutory agencies, responses to scoping responses and what problems were faced.	Levett- Therivel, Treweek Environmental Consultants, Collingwood Environmental Planning.	Detail of the preparation of the report, consultation with the statutory agencies, responses to scoping comments, and difficulties faced with the analysis are set out in Chapters 1 and 3 and Appendix F of the updated Environmental Report.
14	Assessment – non technical summary	The non- technical summaries are not consistent with the Strategic Environmental	Levett- Therivel, Treweek	A non-technical summary which is based on the

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		Assessment Directive requirements. They are generic and make assertions that are not based on evidence.	Environmental Consultants, Collingwood Environmental Planning.	findings of the assessment and consistent with the requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive is included in the updated Environmental Report.
15	Assessment – local plans	<p>Campaign for the Protection of Rural England stated that the reports should have considered appropriate evidence that currently exist, such as changes to Core Strategies made subsequent to the announcement that regional plans would be abolished. They suggested that no such assessment had been made. As a result there were no recommendations about how the plan making process might be improved to address environmental issues, for example, by strengthening the Sustainability Appraisal process at local authority level.</p> <p>Friends of the Earth were concerned that the statement in the Environmental Reports that local authorities would deal with environmental issues was not based on a full analysis of whether local plans do have strong local environmental policies in</p>	FOE, Council for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE), Professor Alan Townsend.	The updated Environmental Report includes an analysis of the content of local plans at Appendix C, focussing on housing allocation, Gypsies and Traveller pitches, renewable energy, employment land, minerals and waste.

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		<p>place similar to those in the Regional Strategies in a situation where they were specifically not supposed to duplicate regional policy; or in areas where there are no local plans. In addition, the assumption that there are 'strong protections' for the environment in national planning policy had been disputed by several Non Government Organisations.</p> <p>Professor Alan Townsend considered the reference in the reports that the removal of the Regional Strategies would create 'opportunities for securing environmental benefits' to be unfounded. He commented that the experience of Campaign for the Protection of Rural England was that economic and commercial pressures would act as a serious threat to a balanced approach to the environment and to development. He also referred to paragraph 1.25 in the Environmental Report where it is stated that environmental effects cannot be predicted for certain because they depend on local decisions, but disagreed with the view that decisions taken locally will look to maximise positive environmental outcomes</p>		

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		<p>for the local area.</p> <p>The Woodland Trust believed that the Strategic Environmental Assessment relied heavily on local policies, but these are patchy in their coverage and often out of date. In addition the National Planning Policy Framework may undermine existing local policies, necessitating their revision.</p>		
16	Assessment – reasonable alternatives	<p>The environmental assessment had considered too narrow a range of alternatives. The only alternative considered was no revocation. This in turn means that there are no clear recommendations to address the practical question of whether the proposed planning system, centred on the National Planning Policy Framework and local plans, should be modified to address environmental issues that arise from the abolition of regional planning.</p> <p>Other alternatives suggested were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reviewing the Regional Strategies; • revoking the Regional Strategies but saving key policies; • the retention of the Regional Strategy system with regional 	<p>Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), Wildlife and Countryside Link, CPRE, The Woodland Trust, Renewable UK, Clyde and Co LLP, Irish Travellers Movement in Britain, Levett- Therivel, Treweek Environmental Consultants, Collingwood Environmental Planning.</p>	<p>The updated Environmental Report draws on the consultation responses and the findings of the assessment to develop a number of alternatives and identifies three reasonable alternatives to complete revocation for assessment.</p>

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		<p>groupings of local authorities responsible for drafting them and adoption by the Secretary of State;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> maintaining the plans and revising certain policies in order to make the plans more acceptable, as well as the possibility of local authorities producing joint development plans to cover specific issues; revoking certain chapters or parts of the strategies and introducing transitional arrangements. 		
17	Assessment - monitoring	<p>Natural England, Campaign for the Protection of Rural England, Town and Country Planning Association considered that it was not clear whether the local authorities, Government or any other body would collate the authorities' monitoring information and assess it to determine where more than local gaps in policy or problem areas were arising.</p> <p>The Town and Country Planning Association suggested that there was a need to monitor the general impact of the Government's planning changes. Consistent and effective monitoring on the</p>	<p>Natural England, Campaign for the Protection of Rural England, Town and Country Planning Association, Levett-Therivel, Treweek Environmental Consultants, Collingwood Environmental Planning, Clyde and Co LLP, Forestry Commission.</p>	<p>Proposals for monitoring are set out in Chapter 5 of the updated Environmental Report.</p>

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		<p>effects of the 'duty to co-operate' over the next 2-3 years was particularly important, for example, by tracking local plan progress on local authority websites in a systematic but simple way.</p> <p>Levett- Therivel, Treweek Environmental Consultants, Collingwood Environmental Planning suggested that the effects of revocation should be monitored, for example, to track housing completions and development on Greenbelt.</p> <p>Clyde and Co LLP considered that not clearly identifying additional, specific methods of monitoring undermined the consultation process.</p> <p>The Forestry Commission commented that the monitoring and sharing of information was far easier with the Monitoring Group established by the Regional Assembly. Local authorities were unlikely to monitor if this is not a requirement given funding constraints. The Annual Monitoring report was extremely valuable for seeing what was being</p>		

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		<p>achieved, and believed that it was unclear now how national targets for carbon reduction could be met. Whilst Local authorities may be responsible for monitoring: they asked who they reported to and how (a) cumulative effects or (b) actions in one authority being undermined in another could be assessed.</p>		
18	<p>Reliance on the draft National Planning Policy Framework</p>	<p>Natural England, the Environment Agency, the Town and Country Planning Association and Campaign for the Protection of Rural England noted that it was difficult to come to a view on the significance of the environmental effects of revocation, prior to the publication of the final National Planning Policy Framework and the implementation of the new “duty to co-operate”. Campaign for the Protection of Rural England for example, commented that as a result of the wider changes in planning it was inherently difficult to assess the likely impact of the revocation of Regional Strategies. In particular, the content of the final National Planning Policy Framework and future local plans were uncertain and neither of these statements could currently be fully tested. They expressed concern that the</p>	<p>Natural England, Environment Agency, Town and Country Planning Association, Campaign for the Protection of Rural England, Wildlife and Countryside Link, Durham County Council, Gateshead Council, Newcastle City Council, South Tyneside Council and Sunderland City Council, Scottish Power Renewables, RenewableUK, Levett-Therivel, Treweek Environmental Consultants,</p>	<p>The National Planning Policy Framework is consistent with the Government’s Natural Environment White paper, and makes it clear that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, and sets out as a core planning principle that planning should recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. The Framework also maintains protection for designated areas such as the Green Belt, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty,</p>

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		<p>Environmental Reports did not give a comprehensive overview of the potential environmental impact of the Government's intentions.</p> <p>Similar issues were raised in a joint response from Durham County Council, Gateshead Council, Newcastle City Council, South Tyneside Council and Sunderland City Council, commenting that the draft National Planning Policy Framework may change substantially, so the Environmental Report should not place weight on it. The Environmental Report does not refer to existing policies which remain material considerations.</p> <p>Levett- Therivel, Treweek Environmental Consultants, Collingwood Environmental Planning questioned the evidence that the National Planning Policy Framework will be so favourable to the environment or sustainable development, as the National Planning Policy Framework has not been subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment.</p>	<p>Collingwood Environmental Planning.</p>	<p>National Parks, and Sites of Special Scientific Interest. It sets out policy for the support of delivery of renewable energy development as well as leisure facilities for the community including theatres.</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework is not subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment as it is high level policy and does not fall within the scope of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive.</p>

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		<p>Natural England agreed with the assessment that there was an inherent difficulty in providing an assessment of the National Planning Policy Framework as an alternative, as it was not known how the final version would differ from the consultation draft.</p> <p>Scottish Power Renewables were of the view that the Regional Strategies have a key role in ensuring that national policy objectives are met and encouraged the wider deployment of renewable energy, making an important contribution to the UK's legally binding renewable energy targets. In particular, the regional plans do and could continue to play a key role in the strategic planning of onshore wind and the infrastructure to support the development of offshore wind. They were therefore concerned that the process for the revocation of Regional Strategies pre-empted the final National Planning Policy Framework and requested that the Government require local authorities to put in place policies to ensure a contribution to the national renewable energy targets, in</p>		

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		<p>line with the National Policy Statement.</p> <p>RenewableUK shared the concern about the reliance on the draft National Planning Policy Framework and were concerned that the draft National Planning Policy Framework did not contain a sufficient level of detail to support renewable energy planning.</p> <p>The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and Wildlife and Countryside Link considered it misleading for the Environmental Reports to imply that the planning reform would usher in new policies that, on balance, would make up for the loss of Regional Strategies. They considered, for example, that even though 'top-down' housing targets were being removed, the stated purpose of planning reform was to create more growth and to deliver more housing. There was no criticism of Regional Strategy housing figures being too high, only that they were 'top-down'. It therefore followed that local authorities would use similar methodologies and arrive at similar figures when 'objectively assessing' housing need.</p>		

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		<p>Friends of the Earth stated that local authorities will have to be guided by the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework. Based on the draft National Planning Policy Framework text, in many cases, local authorities will struggle to take decisions on a 'local' basis to protect the environment. They stated that legal advice obtained by them showed that the concept of local decision-making was outweighed by the wording used in the draft National Planning Policy Framework which is directive on the need to approve development. They also pointed to shortcomings in the draft National Planning Policy Framework on sustainable development, countryside and biodiversity, transport, water, and climate change mitigation and adaptation.</p> <p>The Wildlife and Countryside Link were concerned that the Environmental Reports relied so heavily on the draft National Planning Policy Framework, which had not been finalised and was therefore subject to change.</p>		

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		<p>The Theatres Trust suggested that suitable policy within the National Planning Policy Framework and other measures needed to be in place to ensure the pooling of knowledge on physical and social cultural infrastructure, particularly theatres, if the plans are revoked. They referred to North East England Plan Policy 16 which promotes cultural tourism and considered that the planning of cultural facilities may not take place on such a scale if this policy is revoked even with the duty to co-operate.</p> <p>The Woodland Trust thought it impossible to assess the impact of the loss of the Regional Strategy without being able to assess it against the National Planning Policy Framework. They also commented that the Strategic Environmental Assessment implies that the National Planning Policy Framework and planning reform in general will lead to less development, particularly in the absence 'top down targets', but felt this is contradictory to the Government's policy, as the stated purpose of the current planning reforms is to encourage economic growth. Paragraph 1.6 of the</p>		

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		<p>Environmental Report states that the National Planning Policy Framework sits within the broader context of national policy and legislation such as the National Environment White Paper. The draft National Planning Policy Framework did not however reflect the National Environment White Paper.</p>		
19	<p>Assessment - policy change</p>	<p>Natural England noted that the revocation of the Regional Strategies would require local planning authorities to incorporate relevant environmental policies, previously included in the Regional Strategy, into their local plans or to rely on National Planning Policy Framework policies. The full effect of revoking individual Regional Strategy policies was therefore likely to depend greatly on where individual local authorities were in their local plan-making process. Where local authorities had not yet adopted core strategies, in the absence of regional strategies, they considered that it may be much more difficult for them to develop locally tailored evidence-based policies.</p> <p>The Environment Agency welcomed the Environmental Report highlighting which</p>	<p>Natural England, the Environment Agency, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, Wildlife and Countryside Link, Theatres Trust, RenewableUK, Friends of the Earth, Durham County Council, Gateshead Council, Newcastle City Council, South Tyneside Council and Sunderland City Council.</p>	<p>The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England.</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework emphasises the need for local planning authorities to plan strategically. The National Planning Policy Framework states that local planning authorities should set out their strategic priorities for their area in their Local Plan. This should include strategic policies to deliver the homes and jobs needed in the area; the provision of retail, leisure and other commercial</p>

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		<p>parts of current national policy and guidance were important to help avoid significant adverse environmental impacts. Where local authorities had adopted Core Strategies that were developed with a backdrop of the Regional Strategy, a robust National Planning Policy Framework would need to ensure that any potential policy gaps were filled.</p> <p>The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds proposed that the Government should not revoke the Regional Strategies in full. They suggested that saving key environmental policies until they were replaced by equivalent local plan policies would significantly mitigate the risk of environmental harm. Saved policies should be kept in place during a transitional period while local plans were updated, which could easily coincide with the transitional period in which the National Planning Policy Framework was translated into local plans. A similar point was made in a joint response from Durham County Council, Gateshead Council, Newcastle City Council, South Tyneside Council and Sunderland City Council.</p>		<p>development; the provision of infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat); the provision of health, security, community and cultural infrastructure and other local facilities; and climate change mitigation and adaptation, conservation and enhancement of the natural and historic environment, including landscape.</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework also makes clear that, where it would be appropriate and assist the process of preparing or amending Local Plans, Regional Strategy policies can be reflected in Local Plans by undertaking a</p>

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		<p>The Wildlife and Countryside Link suggested that Government and its agencies should work together with local authorities and their partners in each region to identify which Regional Strategy policies should be saved, while local plans were updated to incorporate those policies.</p> <p>The Royal Society of the Protection of Birds and the Wildlife and Countryside Link considered that revocation would remove a raft of policies on issues, such as those on the natural environment and renewable energy, that were largely not contentious, and the product of close cooperation between local authorities and other interested parties.</p> <p>The Theatres Trust stated that the proposed revocation of the Regional Strategies could have adverse social effects. The Regional Strategies included measures for local authorities to work collaboratively 'to increase investment in physical and social infrastructure'. This may not take place on such a scale, even with the duty to co-operate, if Regional</p>		<p>partial review focusing on the specific issues involved. Local planning authorities may also continue to draw on evidence that informed the preparation of Regional Strategies to support their Local Plan policies, supplemented as needed by up-to-date, robust local evidence.</p> <p>Climate change is one of the core land use planning principles which the National Planning Policy Framework expects should underpin both plan-making and decision-taking. Local planning authorities are expected to adopt proactive strategies to mitigate climate change and co-operate to deliver strategic outcomes which include climate change. They should plan for new development in locations and ways which</p>

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		<p>Strategies are revoked. The Theatres Trust believes that this would have ensured that cultural facilities were in place for communities to share and that places exchange knowledge when creating new buildings or networks, so that resources were not squandered by the repetition of mistakes. Thus, it was suggested that measures needed to be in place to ensure the pooling of knowledge on physical and cultural infrastructure, which also affect theatres, if the Regional Strategy is revoked.</p> <p>RenewableUK were of the view that the revocation of the Regional Strategies would create a policy gap which would affect the ability of local authorities to make informed decisions. They did not believe that a reliance on national policy and the duty to co-operate was sufficient to ensure that the UK met its renewable energy generation and carbon emissions reduction targets.</p> <p>Friends of the Earth were concerned that the Strategic Environmental Assessment of the revocation of the Regional Strategies</p>		<p>reduce greenhouse gas emissions (including through transport solutions which support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions); actively support energy efficiency improvements to existing buildings; and promote energy from renewable and low carbon sources. These strategies are expected (paragraph 94 of the National Planning Policy Framework) to be in line with the objectives and provisions of the Climate Change Act 2008. There is a legal requirement on local planning authorities to ensure their Local Plan (taken as a whole) includes policies designed to tackle climate change and its impact. This complements the sustainable development duty on plan-makers and the expectation that neighbourhood plans will</p>

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		<p>do not fully assess the environmental impacts of the incoherent policy context that would arise. They recommended that to fill the gap left by the Regional Strategies, local plans should absorb the regional evidence bases for renewable energy resources, and 'save' renewable energy target and adaptation policies where this would otherwise leave a gap in local frameworks. They added that the loss of the Regional Strategy left a gap in the consideration of the global impacts of a local authority's areas consumption/ indirect impacts. They were of the view that the footprint approach at a regional level specifically aimed to counter a strictly localist approach of local authorities. They were concerned that local authority plans would only consider local resource management and the whole footprint approach would be lost. They considered it essential that the evidence base section of the draft National Planning Policy Framework was revised to include the concept of foot printing to acknowledge the burden of resource use within a local authority on other areas. They therefore recommended that local authorities 'save'</p>		<p>contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The National Planning Policy Framework has underlined (paragraph 93) that responding to climate change is central to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.</p>

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		relevant policies where this would plug a gap in their existing local planning framework until the next appropriate review date; and Department of Communities and Local Government should maintain the regional evidence bases for local authorities to draw upon for local plans and cross boundary co-operation.		
20	Reliance on the duty to co-operate	Natural England and the Environment Agency welcomed the emphasis given to cross boundary working which could potentially promote partnership working and offer a more strategic approach to spatial planning. However, both organisations commented that the Environmental Reports did not identify how the duty to co-operate would work in practice or replace the co-ordination provided by the regional strategies and the various working groups that existed within this structure. Natural England also considered that there was too much reliance on the assumption that local planning authorities would continue to work together on strategic issues under the duty to co-operate. It was noted that the duty would not apply to private sector companies who provide public services	Natural England, Environment Agency, English Heritage, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, The Woodland Trust, Renewable-UK, Town and Country Planning Association, Friends of the Earth, Durham County Council, Gateshead Council, Newcastle City Council, South Tyneside Council and Sunderland City Council, Clyde and Co LLP, Professor Alan Townsend, Campaign for the Protection of	The Government recognises the importance of strategic planning. The National Planning Policy Framework makes clear that strategic priorities across local boundaries are properly co-ordinated and clearly reflected in individual local plans. Strategic matters such as housing, infrastructure and transport connections are vital to attract investment into an area and generate economic growth. However, for strategic planning to work on the ground, councils need to work together and with a

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		<p>such as water and sewerage, energy and telecommunications, many of which would have a key role to play in infrastructure planning. The Environment Agency stated that common intelligence and joint working arrangements were needed between partner local authorities and other key organisations to develop an integrated approach to planning.</p> <p>The Environment Agency referring to the duty to co-operate accepted that local authorities would work with adjacent councils, but not at a range of scales including a catchment scale. They considered that this was important as building development at the top of a catchment could increase run-off and cause flooding many miles downstream. They suggested that this is recognised so that the duty to co-operate could fully support strategic planning at a local level.</p> <p>Natural England accepted that it was possible that cross-boundary impacts may be assessed between adjoining authorities, but were unclear how the cumulative impacts of multiple authorities' plans would</p>	<p>Rural England.</p>	<p>range of bodies. In some cases, such as planning for waste facilities or flood prevention, cooperation will be necessary with authorities well beyond an authority's own border.</p> <p>Many local authorities are already working collaboratively to produce sound plans. The duty to co-operate formalises those arrangements by creating a statutory requirement to cooperate to ensure that local plans are effective and deliverable on cross-boundary matters. The duty requires authorities to work together constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis in relation to strategic cross-boundary issues in local plans.</p> <p>The Government recognises that the duty needs to be</p>

No	General	Detailed comments on the initial Environmental Report	Raised by	Response
		<p>be assessed to take into account issues occurring within broader environmental boundaries, such as water catchments. Both the Environment Agency and Natural England sought further clarification on mechanisms which could be employed to ensure that likely cumulative, in-combination and cross-boundary environmental impacts, are identified, assessed and monitored as part of the Local Plan process and duty to co-operate.</p> <p>English Heritage noted how critical it was that the duty to co-operate was taken forward by local authorities and public bodies to ensure that the strategic planning issues are successfully addressed, based on a shared understanding of local needs and the wider context. However, they saw a danger that the wider perspective gained through strategic planning would be lost. They suggested that the National Planning Policy Framework and any guidance issued to support it; may assist with this by encouraging strategic analysis through sub-national partnerships in appropriate circumstances.</p>		<p>sufficiently robust to secure effective planning on cross-boundary issues, and the legislative requirement was strengthened during the development of the Localism Act, working with a broad range of external expert bodies. The stronger duty requires councils to demonstrate how they have complied with the duty as part of the independent examination of local plans. This could be, for example, by way of plans or policies prepared as part of a joint committee, informal strategies such as joint infrastructure and investment plans, or a memorandum of understanding which is presented as evidence of an agreed position. Failure to demonstrate compliance may mean that local authorities may not pass the examination process. This is</p>

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		<p>While the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds welcomed the strengthening of the duty to co-operate during its Parliamentary passage, they remained sceptical that the duty would deliver contentious forms of development where it is needed or effective strategic planning for the natural environment. They were concerned by the unsubstantiated assumption that the duty to co-operate would overcome the strategic vacuum left by the revocation of the Regional Strategies. They stated, as an example, that there was no recognition of the shortcomings caused by having multiple plans being developed over multiple time and spatial scales, and the difficulties this would cause in terms of assessing the cumulative impacts of development.</p> <p>RenewableUK also expressed the view that the duty to co-operate provisions in the Localism Act appear weak, with no clear means of ensuring that local authorities would co-operate productively. They considered that a lack of strategic action on mitigation and adaptation to climate change was likely to result in</p>		<p>a powerful sanction. Where local planning authorities have failed to co-operate on cross boundary matters it is also likely that their Local Plan will not be deliverable and as such they may be found unsound.</p> <p>As a further check, the Localism Act and local plan regulations require local authorities to prepare a monitoring report to be published and made available at least once every 12 months. This includes a requirement to report action taken under the duty and these reports may also indicate where action has not been taken. This will ensure that local authorities are fully accountable to local communities about their performance under the duty to co-operate.</p>

No	General	Detailed comments on the initial Environmental Report	Raised by	Response
		<p>significant and unpredictable effects on biodiversity, flora and fauna. Other elements, such as population, human health etc. would also be adversely affected.</p> <p>The Town and Country Planning Association indicated that it had made clear that the duty to co-operate had a range of significant limitations - having a narrow remit, a retrospective sanction and no defined or specific outcomes. They considered that even where joint cooperation was enthusiastically entered into by local authorities the nature of cooperation would be on a smaller spatial scale and with a tighter remit and much less resource than the statutory Regional Strategy process. They considered that this may lead to increased environmental impacts and may limit effective responses on renewable energy and catchment scale or coastal flood risk.</p> <p>Friends of the Earth considered that revocation would leave a gap in both planning policy on environmental issues and in a regional understanding of them.</p>		<p>In recognition of the breath of bodies involved in effective strategic planning, the duty's requirements extend beyond local planning authorities and county councils to include a wide range of bodies that are critical to local plan making. The bodies, which are listed in local plan regulations, are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Environment Agency; • the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England; • Natural England; • the Mayor of London; • the Civil Aviation Authority; • the Homes and Communities Agency; • Primary Care Trusts; • Marine Management Organisation • Office for Rail Regulation • the Highways Agency;

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		<p>They considered that the duty to co-operate was unlikely to provide an effective response to the wider pattern of unsustainable pressures and growing regional inequalities in England. They suggested that the duty does not require co-operation on any specific issues. Issues which are by their nature spatial and cross-boundary, for example, river basin management, flood risk, green infrastructure, and transport, would suffer from the removal of the Regional Strategy. While, for example, river basin management plans are developed by the Environment Agency, local authorities and others, the context for local decision-making on planning applications will still lack regional spatial awareness of the larger than local and cumulative impacts of decisions. This will lead in many cases to poor planning, and increased negative environmental impacts. They were concerned that there are no sanctions for local authorities who fail to co-operate, while local authorities who have failed to persuade neighbouring authorities to co-operate would suffer if the Inspector judged their plan to be unsound as a</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport for London; • Integrated Transport Authorities; and • Highway authorities <p>The National Planning Policy Framework makes clear that local planning authorities should work collaboratively with private sector bodies, utility and infrastructure providers.</p> <p>As indicated above, the National Planning Policy Framework states that local planning authorities should set out the strategic priorities for their area in their Local Plan. This should include strategic policies to deliver: the homes and jobs needed in the area; the provision of retail, leisure and other commercial development; the provision of infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, waste</p>

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		<p>result.</p> <p>In a joint response, Durham County Council, Gateshead Council, Newcastle City Council, South Tyneside Council and Sunderland City Council considered that the duty to co-operate would not create a duty to agree or a mechanism for resolving differences. It was unlikely to adequately replace Regional Strategy policies on infrastructure, renewable energy, minerals or waste.</p> <p>Clyde and Co LLP considered that the expectation that authorities would co-operate was not good enough. It was therefore inappropriate for the assessment of likely effects, as encapsulated within the Environmental Reports, to be predicated on that basis.</p> <p>Another consultee (Professor Alan Townsend) suggested that a number of policy areas would be under threat from relying on the duty to co-operate, such as, climate change, river flooding, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, reducing</p>		<p>management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat); the provision of health, security, community and cultural infrastructure and other local facilities; and climate change mitigation and adaptation, conservation and enhancement of the natural and historic environment, including landscape.</p>

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		unnecessary travel, congestion and emissions, reducing deprivation and retailing.		
21	Individual Topics - Access to data	Referring to the comment in the Environmental Reports that local authorities can continue to draw on available information, including data from partners, to address cross-boundary issues, it was not clear whether data previously collated as part of the Regional Strategy preparation process would remain up-to-date, or whether coordinated monitoring mechanisms would continue to exist in the future.	Town and Country Planning Association	The National Planning Policy Framework makes it clear that local planning authorities may also continue to draw on evidence that informed the preparation of regional strategies to support Local Plan policies, supplemented as needed by up -to-date, robust local evidence. The National Planning Policy Framework (paragraphs 158-177) also sets out in detail the evidence base that is required to underpin the development of local plans and planning decisions.
22	Individual Topics - Green Belt	In a joint response, Durham County Council, Gateshead Council, Newcastle City Council, South Tyneside Council and Sunderland City Council say they consider that rising population and demand for households would increase pressures and lead to Green Belt reviews. Without	Durham County Council, Gateshead Council, Newcastle City Council, South Tyneside Council and Sunderland City Council,	The National Planning Policy Framework makes it clear that the Government attaches great importance to Green Belts, and overall that the planning system should recognise the intrinsic

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		<p>regional coordination, local planning authorities could plan for higher growth.</p> <p>Northumberland County Council proposes that a saved Structure Plan on the extension of Green Belt around Castle Morpeth should be saved.</p> <p>JC Consultants considered that the Environmental Report misrepresented the intended effect of revoking Regional Strategies by saying that it “will provide opportunities for securing environmental benefits because their revocation would remove threats to local environments” and that (through Green Belt policy) revocation “brings many environmental benefits including safeguarding the countryside and preventing urban sprawl.”</p> <p>Campaign for the Protection of Rural England commented on the statement in the Environmental Report that “the revocation of top-down housing targets will remove pressure to review Green Belt to accommodate growth” and that it is now up to local authorities to review their Green Belt boundaries. They felt the assertion</p>	<p>Northumberland County Council; JC Consultants, Campaign for the Protection of Rural England</p>	<p>character and beauty of the countryside. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. The essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence. Green Belt serves five purposes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas; (ii) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another; (iii) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment; (iv) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and (v) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and

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		<p>that the Green Belt would be 'safer', was debatable. They took the view that this was based on the National Planning Policy Framework making clear that a key objective of the planning system is to increase significantly the delivery of new homes; and therefore the tenor of wider Government policy (for example the New Homes Bonus) is that local authorities will be under greater pressure than before to provide new housing. Local authorities would therefore be obliged to "maintain a rolling supply of deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years worth of housingthe supply should include an additional allowance of at least 20%..." (draft National Planning Policy Framework, clause109).</p>		<p>other urban land.</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework states that once Green Belts have been defined, local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance the beneficial use of the Green Belt, such as looking for opportunities to provide access; to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation; to retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or to improve damaged and derelict land. The general extent of Green Belts across the country is already established. New Green Belts should only be established in exceptional circumstances, for example when planning for larger scale development such as new settlements or major</p>

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				<p>urban extensions.</p> <p>If proposing a new Green Belt, local planning authorities should: demonstrate why normal planning and development management policies would not be adequate; set out whether any major changes in circumstances have made the adoption of this exceptional measure necessary; show what the consequences of the proposal would be for sustainable development; demonstrate the necessity for the Green Belt and its consistency with Local Plans for adjoining areas; and show how the Green Belt would meet the other objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework .</p> <p>Local planning authorities with Green Belts in their area</p>

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				<p>should establish Green Belt boundaries in their Local Plans which set the framework for Green Belt and settlement policy. The National Planning Policy Framework also states that once established, Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances, through the preparation or review of the Local Plan. At that time, authorities should consider the Green Belt boundaries having regard to their intended permanence in the long term, so that they should be capable of enduring beyond the plan period.</p> <p>When drawing up or reviewing Green Belt boundaries local planning authorities should take account of the need to promote sustainable patterns</p>

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				<p>of development. They should consider the consequences for sustainable development of channelling development towards urban areas inside the Green Belt boundary, towards towns and villages inset within the Green Belt or towards locations beyond the outer Green Belt boundary.</p> <p>Additional policies are set out in the National Planning Policy Framework to be applied when defining boundaries. Policies for the development of a village in a Green belt are also included.</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework makes clear, as with previous Green Belt policy, inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. When</p>

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				<p>considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework also states that a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in Green Belt. Limited exceptions to this are set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, together with other forms of development that are also not inappropriate in Green Belt provided they preserve the</p>

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				<p>openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land in Green Belt.</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework also includes specific policy on renewable energy projects and Community Forests in the Green Belt.</p> <p>The housing policies in the National Planning Policy Framework clearly state that when local planning authorities are ensuring their Local Plan meets the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area, this is consistent with the policies set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, including policies on the protection of Green Belts.</p>

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				Regarding saved Structure Plan on the extension of Green Belt around Castle Morpeth, the Government intends to retain Policy S5 of the Northumberland County and National Park Joint Structure Plan (2005) as proposed in the updated Environmental Report.
23	Individual Topics - Gypsies and Travellers	The Garden Court Chambers Gypsy & Traveller Team considered that the revocation of Regional Strategies would have a detrimental effect upon the provision of sites for Gypsies and Travellers. They considered that the view in the Environmental Reports that sufficient sites would be delivered by local authorities without regional or national supervision was misconceived. They were therefore disappointed that consideration had not been given to the alternative option of retaining those regional policies relating to the provision of sites for Gypsies and Travellers. Community Law	The Garden Court Chambers Gypsy & Traveller Team, Community Law Partnership, Friends, Families and Travellers, National Federation of Gypsy Liaison Groups.	It is the Government's view that Local authorities are best placed to understand the needs of their communities. The Government has produced new planning policy for traveller sites that reflects this. The policy published in March 2012 ⁹ makes it clear that its overarching aim is to ensure fair and equal treatment for travellers, in a way that facilitates their traditional and nomadic way

⁹ <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/2113371.pdf>

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		<p>Partnership supported these comments and added that revocation would lead to a decrease in the provision of new sites which would have an inevitable result in the numbers of Gypsies and Travellers on unauthorised encampments and unauthorised developments increasing. Friends, Families and Travellers also supported these comments and stated that they objected most strongly to the proposals to abolish Regional Strategies and, at the very least, considered that an option which retains a regional perspective should be retained for the provision of Gypsy and Traveller sites.</p> <p>The National Federation of Gypsy Liaison Groups also disagreed with the conclusions in the Environmental Reports that revocation was unlikely to have any significant environmental effect on human health, population, cultural heritage or the historic environment. The revocation of policies relating to the provision for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, would have a significant impact as a direct result of the fact that without a regional framework, local</p>		<p>of life while respecting the interests of the settled community.</p> <p>Local planning authorities when preparing their Local Plans should set pitch targets for gypsies and travellers and plot targets for travelling show people which address the likely permanent and transit site accommodation needs of travellers in their area, working collaboratively with neighbouring local planning authorities. The policy makes it clear that local authorities should set their targets based on robust evidence of need that will be tested at the Local Plan examination.</p> <p>This includes:</p> <p>(i) identifying and updating annually, a supply of specific</p>

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		<p>authorities were likely to, and already were, including reduced pitch numbers in their Development Plan Documents. The resulting lack of suitable accommodation was directly related to poor health and lower life expectancy, difficulty in accessing education opportunities, which contributed to poor living conditions, for example, on unauthorised sites. Unauthorised sites also impacted on the environment, for example if they were not suitably located there could be local impacts on the landscape.</p>		<p>deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years' worth of sites against their locally set targets;</p> <p>(ii) identifying a supply of specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for years six to ten and, where possible, for years 11-15;</p> <p>(iii) considering the production of joint development plans that set targets on a cross-authority basis, to provide more flexibility in identifying sites, particularly if a local planning authority has special or strict planning constraints across its area.</p> <p>The duty to co-operate will ensure that local authorities work together constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis in relation to these</p>

No	General	Detailed comments on the initial Environmental Report	Raised by	Response
				<p>cross boundary matters in local plans.</p> <p>The proposal to abolish Regional Strategies is part of a wider package of measures that will work alongside the reformed and decentralised planning system and are aimed at securing fair and effective provision of authorised sites for travellers. This includes the new traveller policy, Traveller Pitch Funding, the New Homes Bonus, reforms to enforcement measures to tackle unauthorised sites (via the Localism Act); improved protection from eviction for local authority traveller sites (via application of the Mobile Homes Act) and training for local authority councillors on their leadership role in site provision.</p>
24	Individual Topics – Housing Supply	The Town and Country Planning Association referred to the statement in	Town and Country Planning Association,	The National Planning Policy Framework and the duty to

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		<p>the Environmental Report that under the regional strategies the overall direction was expected to be a widening gap between housing provision in the strategy and the level of need. They considered that the assertion that local authorities planning for housing to reflect "the needs of their communities" would achieve this level was completely unsupported. The text asserts that "where drivers of growth are local, decisions should be made locally", but the new system failed to identify any mechanisms equivalent to the national growth areas or new growth points for accommodating in-migrants.</p> <p>Campaign for the Protection of Rural England believed that the Government's continued policy of not allowing local authorities to include windfalls in their housing allowance (except in very prescribed circumstances) would, in practice, lead to an inevitable allocation of more greenfield sites.</p> <p>Levett-Therivel, Treweek Environmental consultants and Collingwood Environmental Planning were concerned</p>	<p>Campaign for the Protection of Rural England, Levett-Therivel, Treweek Environmental consultants and Collingwood Environmental Planning, Northumberland County Council.</p>	<p>co-operate address this issue. The National Planning Policy Framework makes clear that local planning authorities should work collaboratively with other bodies to ensure that strategic priorities across local boundaries are properly coordinated and clearly reflected in individual Local Plans. These strategic priorities include the need to develop strategic policies to deliver the homes and jobs needed in the area.</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework states that joint working should enable local planning authorities to work together to meet development requirements which cannot wholly be met within their own areas – for instance, because of a lack of physical capacity or because to do so would</p>

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		<p>that no attempt had been made to consider or estimate the quantum of housing provision and level of economic growth without the Regional Strategy in place. They referred to Table 1 which states that, in regard to policy 28, “these policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a Regional Strategy..” the consultants suggest that whilst there was a desire to achieve the original quantum of growth, no attempt had been made to understand the likely significant effects on the environment of this without important “mitigation type policies” in place which were recognised in the original sustainability appraisal.</p> <p>Northumberland County Council proposed that Regional Strategy Policy 28 on gross and net dwelling provision should be saved.</p>		<p>cause significant harm to the principles and policies of the National Planning Policy Framework. As part of this process, they should consider producing joint planning policies on strategic matters and informal strategies such as joint infrastructure and investment plans.</p> <p>Local planning authorities will be expected to demonstrate evidence of having effectively co-operated to plan for issues with cross-boundary impacts when their Local Plans are submitted for examination. The Local Plan will be examined by an independent inspector whose role is to assess whether the plan has been prepared in accordance with the duty to co-operate, legal and procedural requirements,</p>

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				<p>and whether it is sound.</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework states that Local planning authorities may make an allowance for windfall sites in their five-year supply if they have compelling evidence that such sites have consistently become available in the local area and will continue to provide a reliable source of supply. Any allowance should be realistic having regard to the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, historic windfall delivery rates and expected future trends, and should not include residential gardens. This policy, together with the approach to the use of brownfield land and other policies aimed at the protection and enhancement of the environment, aims to ensure that housing</p>

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				<p>development is located in a way that is consistent with the principles of sustainable development.</p> <p>The updated Environmental Report consulted on a number of Reasonable Alternatives including the retention and updating and maintaining of the Regional Strategy, and Retaining for a transitional period all the spatially specific policies for instance where a quantum of development is allocated to a particular location in the region.</p> <p>The effects of retaining and revoking Policy 28 are outlined on pages 145-149 of Appendix D of the updated Environmental Report. Under the assessment of revocation of the policy, it notes that the scale of the effects of revocation is</p>

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				<p>uncertain in the short to early medium term, but over the long term is likely to be similar to retaining the Regional Strategy.</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework states that it is 'highly desirable that local planning authorities should have an up-to-date plan in place'. Where plans are absent, silent or out of date, the National Planning Policy Framework's presumption in favour of sustainable development will apply in respect of decision-taking. In particular, where a local authority cannot deliver a five year supply of deliverable sites, the relevant local policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up to date. In such cases, the decision taker will apply the presumption in favour of</p>

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				<p>sustainable development, taking into account all relevant planning considerations. The presumption is clearly set out at paragraph 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework in respect of both plan-making and decision taking.</p> <p>Across the North East region six councils have adopted Local Plans – 46% of councils have a plan adopted post-2004 and overall 54% of councils now have a published plan.</p> <p>In response to the updated Environmental Report, Northumberland County Council states that following revocation of Policy 28 there is likely to be a policy gap until local planning authorities which adopted local plans before 2008,</p>

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				<p>establish local plan policies, that reflect the needs of their communities. However in there area they state that in their area they have agreed that the North East Regional Strategy housing figures will continue to be used as an interim measure to inform the assessment of housing land requirements. The council does not consider that the revocation of the Regional Strategy will have an impact upon dwelling provision in their locality.</p>
25	<p>Individual Topics - Waste</p>	<p>The Environment Agency commented that the assessment of waste policies was quite comprehensive, but they were concerned with the second sentence in the last paragraph on page 61 of the Environmental Report which stated that, “local waste authorities already work together, and with other bodies, on strategic issues that cross local authority boundaries and may work together to produce joint waste plans if they wish”. As</p>	<p>Environment Agency, Woodland Trust, Durham County Council, Gateshead Council, Newcastle City Council, South Tyneside Council and Sunderland City Council.</p>	<p>Paragraph 153 of the National Planning Policy Framework makes clear the expectation that local planning authorities should produce a local plan for the area, whilst Section 17 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 makes it clear that two or more local planning authorities may</p>

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		<p>waste plans are currently produced at county and unitary level, they questioned whether the Government was suggesting wider than county waste plans. If that was the case, they recommended that further details are provided on how this will be applied.</p> <p>The Woodland Trust commented that the draft National Planning Policy Framework had stated that waste would be considered in a National Waste Management Plan. No date has yet to be given for the publication of this plan. Therefore there will be a lack of environmental protection in the interim which has not been accounted for.</p> <p>Durham County Council, Gateshead Council, Newcastle City Council, South Tyneside Council and Sunderland City Council in their joint reply noted that the Regional Strategy had established regional apportionments for waste management and new waste capacity co-ordinated by Regional Technical Advisory Bodies. However, the Regional Technical Advisory Bodies network had now been effectively dismantled through the removal of funding,</p>		<p>agree to prepare one or more local development documents. This allows unitary authorities and county councils to work together if they wish. However such plans must still meet the legal and procedural requirements, including the test of soundness required under section 20 of the 2004 Act and Paragraph 182 of the National Planning Policy Framework.</p>

No	General	Detailed comments on the initial Environmental Report	Raised by	Response
		which makes cross boundary collaboration more difficult to achieve.		
26	Individual Topics - Biodiversity	<p>On the basis of the content of the consultation draft of the National Planning Policy Framework, Natural England disagreed with the statement in Section 1.2 of the Environmental Reports that the National Planning Policy Framework “maintains protection of the Green Belt, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, National Parks, Sites of Special Scientific Interest and other environmental designations which protect landscape character, stop unsustainable urban sprawl and preserve wildlife”.</p> <p>The Woodland Trust highlighted how in ‘Making Space for Nature’ Lawton set out that planning at different geographical scales was vital to inform conservation decisions. It also sets out that planning is pivotal in maximising the contributions of the existing network and ensuring that new components are sited in effective locations. The Trust believed that ‘Nature Improvement Areas’ recommended by Lawton would be very difficult to implement</p>	Natural England, Woodland Trust, Scottish Natural Heritage, Environment Agency.	<p>The National Planning Policy Framework was published in March 2012. The finalised version makes it clear that the planning system should protect and enhance valued landscapes, minimise impacts on biodiversity, provide net gains in biodiversity where possible, and contribute to the Government’s commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are resilient to current and future pressures.</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework also states that local plans contain a clear strategy for enhancing the natural, built and historic environment, and supporting</p>

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		<p>without the Regional Strategy in place.</p> <p>Scottish Natural Heritage suggested that the Environmental Reports should address the protection and enhancement of networks to allow species dispersal throughout Britain. They considered that value could be added to the Environmental Reports if they identified a framework for establishing networks of green infrastructure across all the regions. They suggested examination of potential significant impacts on shared Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation such as the River Tweed Special Area of Conservation and the Berwickshire-North Northumberland Coast.</p> <p>The Environment Agency suggested that the significance of new emerging initiatives set out in the Natural Environment White Paper, such as Local Nature Partnerships and Nature Improvement Areas should be highlighted. They pointed out that the overall purpose of Local Nature Partnerships is to bring a diverse range of individuals, businesses and organisations together at a local level to create a vision</p>		<p>Nature Improvement Areas where they have been identified.</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework also asks that, in order to minimise impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity, planning policies should: plan for biodiversity at a landscape-scale across local authority boundaries; identify and map components of the local ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity, wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them and areas identified by local partnerships for habitat restoration or creation.</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework also states that local planning authorities</p>

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		<p>and plan of action for how the natural environment can be taken into account in decision making. In the absence of regional policies, Local Nature Partnerships and Nature Improvement Areas could offer a good opportunity to strengthen local action, enable local leadership and operate across administrative boundaries.</p>		<p>should work with Local Nature Partnerships to assess existing and potential components of ecological networks.</p>
27	<p>Individual Topics - Renewable Energy</p>	<p>RenewableUK were concerned that the Strategic Environmental Assessment process failed to fully account for the impact that the removal of the Regional Strategies would have on the ability of local authorities to plan for renewable energy infrastructure, and the corresponding ability of the UK to meet its target of generating 15% of all energy from renewables by 2020. Overall, they suggested that there will be significant environmental effects of revoking the regional plans, if guidance and support for renewable energy development was not strengthened. Under existing proposals, the key mechanisms for strategic planning and renewable energy would be lost.</p>	<p>RenewableUK</p>	<p>The National Planning Policy Framework includes as one of the core land-use planning principles that planning should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, including to "...encourage the use of renewable resources (for example, by the development of renewable energy)". The National Planning Policy Framework makes clear that planning plays a key role in helping shape places to secure radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions,</p>

No	General	Detailed comments on the initial Environmental Report	Raised by	Response
		<p>Campaign for the Protection of Rural England commented that the Regional Strategy included significant detail on the issue of climate change and formulated a number of policies to help to address it (for example ENG1: Carbon Dioxide and Energy Performance). Campaign for the Protection of Rural England were concerned that the breadth and detail of these policies will be lost.</p>		<p>minimising vulnerability and providing resilience to the impacts of climate change, and supporting the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework contains a number of policies aimed at encouraging the development of renewable energy development including that local planning authorities should : have a positive strategy to promote energy from renewable and low carbon sources; design their policies to maximise renewable and low carbon energy development while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed satisfactorily, including cumulative landscape and visual impacts; consider identifying suitable areas for</p>

No	General	Detailed comments on the initial Environmental Report	Raised by	Response
				<p>renewable and low carbon energy sources, and supporting infrastructure, where this would help secure the development of such sources; support community-led initiatives for renewable and low carbon energy, including developments outside such areas being taken forward through neighbourhood planning; and in line with the objectives and provisions of the Climate Change Act 2008.</p> <p>In addition, National Planning Policy Framework policies on strategic planning for infrastructure include the need to plan for energy infrastructure including heat.</p>
28	Individual Topics - Transport	Friends of the Earth considered that the removal of the Regional Strategies would in some cases have a negative environmental effect as their transport policies were stronger than those	Friends of the Earth	The National Planning Policy Framework, published in March 2012, includes a number of core planning principles. These include the

No	General	Detailed comments on the initial Environmental Report	Raised by	Response
		presented in the draft National Planning Policy Framework.		<p>need to actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable. The National Planning Policy Framework makes it clear that transport policies have an important role to play in facilitating sustainable development but also in contributing to wider sustainability and health objectives. The transport system needs to be balanced in favour of sustainable transport modes, giving people a real choice about how they travel. Encouragement should be given to solutions which support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and reduce congestion. In preparing Local Plans, local planning authorities should</p>

No	General	Detailed comments on the initial Environmental Report	Raised by	Response
				<p>therefore support a pattern of development which, where reasonable to do so, facilitates the use of sustainable modes of transport. The National Planning Policy Framework also states that local authorities should work with neighbouring authorities and transport providers to develop strategies for the provision of viable infrastructure necessary to support sustainable development, including large scale facilities such as rail freight interchanges, roadside facilities for motorists or transport investment necessary to support strategies for the growth of ports, airports or other major generators of travel demand in their areas.</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework is clear that</p>

No	General	Detailed comments on the initial Environmental Report	Raised by	Response
				plans and decisions should ensure developments that generate significant movement are located where the need to travel will be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes can be maximised. It also says that planning policies should aim for a balance of land uses within their area so that people can be encouraged to minimise journey lengths for employment, shopping, leisure, education and other activities.
29	Individual Topics - Brownfield land	Campaign for the Protection of Rural England's position was that revocation, combined with the Government's wider reforms to the planning system, had seen the abandonment of policies aimed at making re-use of previously developed land a priority. They submitted that this was likely to lead to increased urban sprawl and environmental degradation. They also highlighted research by	Campaign for the Protection of Rural England's	One of the 12 planning principles set out in the National Planning Policy Framework is that planning should encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high

No	General	Detailed comments on the initial Environmental Report	Raised by	Response
		<p>Campaign for the Protection of Rural England showing that very substantial amounts of brownfield land remained in the region and continues to be produced. They felt that the goal of urban regeneration would suffer significantly through the abandonment of this ‘brownfield first’ policy - with negative consequences for the environment.</p>		<p>environmental value. The National Planning Policy Framework makes it clear that local planning authorities may continue to consider the case for setting a locally appropriate target for the use of brownfield land (paragraph 111).</p>
30	<p>Individual Topics - Flooding</p>	<p>The Environment Agency welcomed the recognition that local authorities should continue to work together on issues that cross local authority boundaries, alongside the Lead Local Flood Authorities’ duties on flood risk management and the complementary duty in the Floods and Water Management Act on bodies to co-operate. The provision of technical guidance, including on flood and coastal erosion risk, to complement the National Planning Policy Framework would support Lead Local Flood Authorities and help achieve the duty to co-operate.</p>	<p>Environment Agency</p>	<p>The National Planning Policy Framework contains policies to manage the risk of flooding through the planning system, together with technical guidance on flooding. The National Planning Policy Framework also states that local planning authorities should set out the strategic priorities for their area in their Local Plan. This should include strategic policies to deliver: the provision of infrastructure for flood risk and coastal change management.</p>
31	<p>Minerals</p>	<p>Northumberland County Council</p>	<p>Northumberland</p>	<p>The National Planning Policy</p>

No	General	Detailed comments on the initial Environmental Report	Raised by	Response
		<p>suggested that Policy 43 on Aggregate Minerals Provision should be saved.</p> <p>Durham County Council, Gateshead Council, Newcastle City Council, South Tyneside Council and Sunderland City Council in their joint reply considered that the Regional Strategy set out a regional minerals strategy and sub-regional aggregates apportionment. They also noted that the Regional Strategy also includes an overarching policy on opencast coal working and fireclay extraction, intended to ensure a consistent approach across the North East. They considered that given the high profile and controversial nature of continued opencast coal extraction in many areas, a regionally consistent approach was unlikely.</p>	<p>County Council, Durham County Council, Gateshead Council, Newcastle City Council, South Tyneside Council and Sunderland City Council.</p>	<p>Framework, contains policies to ensure the steady and adequate supply of minerals, including aggregate minerals and coal. In particular, paragraph 143 of the Framework makes it clear that each mineral planning authority should identify and include policies for extraction of mineral resource of local and national importance in their area. The duty to co-operate will ensure that mineral planning authorities work together on minerals extraction.</p> <p>Paragraph 145 of the Framework requires each minerals planning authority to prepare a local aggregate assessment which gives each authority greater control over how much mineral extraction it needs to plan for, and how this should be provided. Technical</p>

No	General	Detailed comments on the initial Environmental Report	Raised by	Response
				Advice will continue to be provided through Aggregate Working Parties and the duty to co-operate should assist in ensuring that the overarching policy objective is met.

ANNEX B

Consultation and Partner Engagement – Updated Environmental Report

Public consultation on the updated Environmental Report on the revocation of the North East of England Regional Strategy ran from 7th November 2012 to 10th January 2013.

The updated Environmental Report indicated that the Government welcomed, in particular, views on:

- whether there is any additional information that should be contained with the baseline or review of plans and programmes;
- whether the likely significant effects on the environment from revoking the regional strategy for the North East of England have been identified, described and assessed;
- whether the likely significant effects on the environment from considering the reasonable alternatives to revoking the Regional Strategy for the North East of England have been identified, described and assessed; and,
- the arrangements for monitoring.

In total 12 written responses were received summarised by interest group

- 6 Strategic Environmental Assessment consultation bodies (Environment Agency, Natural England, Historic Scotland, Scottish Environment Protection Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage);
- 2 Local planning authorities (Northumberland County Council and Sunderland City Council);
- 2 NGOs and Professional Bodies (Town and Country Planning Association, Royal Town Planning Institute, North East);
- 2 Industry representatives (RenewableUK and EDF Energy);

The following table summarised the points made and the Government's response.

Table B1 Responses to the consultation on the updated Environmental Report (published in 07 November 2012)

No	Issue	Summary of consultation responses to the updated Environmental Report	Response
1.	<p>The overall approach taken to Strategic Environmental Assessment</p>	<p>Natural England welcomed the updated Environmental Report and believe that it is a significant improvement over the previous iteration. They support the identified outcomes of the assessment and believe that the most significant effects and the main contributors to these effects are correctly identified. Environment Agency agreed with the overall approach and welcomed the environmental report as a more robust document than the initial report published in October 2011. Environment Agency is also pleased to note that most of their previous comments on earlier version of the report have been reflected in Appendix F.</p> <p>English Heritage stated the report provides a much more rigorous assessment than its predecessor of the potential implications which revocation of the regional strategy will have on the region's historic environment. They agreed with the report's conclusions about the likely effects which the revocation of the regional strategy will have and broadly endorse the means which the absence of the regional strategy will be addressed by the implementation of the duty to co-operate and</p>	<p>Comments noted.</p> <p>The Government welcomes the fact that the three English Strategic Environmental Assessment consultation bodies, Natural England, the Environment Agency and English Heritage consider the second Environmental Report on the proposed revocation of the North East Regional Strategy provides a rigorous approach to the preparation of the Strategic Environmental Assessment and is an improvement on the initial Environmental Report published in October 2011.</p>

No	Issue	Summary of consultation responses to the updated Environmental Report	Response
		<p>National Planning Policy Framework.</p> <p>Scottish Natural Heritage, the Scottish Environment Protection Agency and Historic Scotland did not anticipate any significant environmental effects from the revocation of the North East Regional Strategy on the Scottish environment and had no further comments to make on the updated environmental report.</p> <p>Town and Country Planning Association welcomes the fact that the Strategic Environmental Assessment process in the updated Environmental Report for the North East Regional Strategy has used a more robust methodology. Sunderland City Council states that the updated Environmental Report on the proposed revocation of the North East Regional Strategy is a comprehensive report consisting of some 800 pages. Royal Town Planning Institute, North East states that there is no doubt that the Strategic Environmental Assessment exercise reported in the updated</p>	<p>The Government welcomes the comments from the three Scottish Strategic Environmental Assessment consultation bodies, Scottish Natural Heritage, the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency and Historic Scotland who do not anticipate any significant environmental effects from the revocation of the North East Regional Strategy on Scotland's environment.</p> <p>The Government welcomes the comments on the updated Environmental Report and that it is thought robust by a wide range of interested parties, ranging from a local planning authority, Sunderland City Council, a non-government organisation the Town and Country Planning Association and a professional body the Royal Town Planning Institute, North East and a private sector firm EDF Energy.</p>

No	Issue	Summary of consultation responses to the updated Environmental Report	Response
		<p>Environmental Report on the proposed revocation of the North East Regional Strategy is very comprehensive and that the consultants have considered not just the impacts of total revocation of the regional strategy but also those associated with different types of partial revocation and that they have taken account of cumulative impacts. They welcome this comprehensive approach. EDF Energy supports the Strategic Environmental Assessment that the Government has undertaken of the North East Regional Strategy and supports the initiative to replace the eight regional strategies with a localist planning approach underpinned by the National Planning Policy Framework.</p>	
2.	<p>The overall approach taken to Strategic Environmental Assessment – reasonable alternatives</p>	<p>Sunderland City Council states that the updated Environmental Report has assessed the proposed revocation of the North East Regional Strategy against what they consider to be 3 reasonable alternatives: revocation of the entire regional strategy; retention of the regional strategy; partial revocation of the regional strategy.</p> <p>However, The Council states that the Strategic Environmental Assessment does not reach a clear conclusion or recommendation on whether the</p>	<p>Comments noted.</p> <p>The Government is pleased to note that Sunderland City Council and the Town and Country Planning Association believe the updated Environmental Report on the proposed revocation of the North East Regional Strategy has assessed reasonable alternatives through the Strategic Environmental Assessment as required by the Directive.</p> <p>The Government has taken account of the</p>

No	Issue	Summary of consultation responses to the updated Environmental Report	Response
		<p>Regional Strategy should be retained or revoked.</p> <p>Town and Country Planning Association welcomes the fact that the methodology used is more thorough than in the original Environmental Report, particularly in describing the environmental characteristics of the North East, in its inclusion of alternatives, in acknowledging the interrelationship with the Regional Economic Strategy which was particularly strong in this region, and its attempt to take account of local plan status of each of the local planning authorities in the region.</p>	<p>findings on the Strategic Environmental Assessment process, including the findings of the initial and updated environmental reports and consultation and the conclusions on choosing the Plan as adopted in light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with are set out in Chapter 5 of this Post Adoption Statement.</p>
3.	<p>Whether the likely significant effects have been identified, described and assessed: human health, air quality and climatic factors</p>	<p>Town and Country Planning Association states that removing the emphasis in the North East Regional Strategy on concentrating the majority of new development in the region's two conurbations as set out in Policy 6 (Locational Strategy) together with the sequential approach to development in Policy 4 (The Sequential Approach to Development) could lead to more development of unconstrained countryside, thereby giving uncertainty over effects on soil and landscape, and air quality and greenhouse gas emissions through the greater need to travel.</p> <p>Town and Country Planning Association go on</p>	<p>Comments noted.</p> <p>The Government notes the Town and Country Planning Association's opinion that in the absence of Policy 6 and Policy 4, a locally lead approach to strategic planning could result in dispersed and unsustainable patterns of development emerging in the region and that a dispersed pattern of development will negatively impact on the environment because it will result in a greater need to travel.</p> <p>In assessing the cumulative effects of the Plan to Revoke the updated Environmental Report at</p>

No	Issue	Summary of consultation responses to the updated Environmental Report	Response
		<p>to state they can find no justification for the assertion that a locally led approach could more effectively mitigate the negative effects of new housing and employment development. The possibility of more diverse and locally-specific spatial distributions taking account of local environmental capacity, will in all likelihoods, equate with more dispersal, thereby giving uncertainty over effects on soil and landscape, and on air quality and greenhouse gas emissions through the greater need to travel.</p>	<p>Table 4.5 noted that revocation could alter the pattern of development, for example increasing pressure on greenfield land. It found that revocation could in theory have a cumulative affect (on soil/geology, waste/minerals and cultural heritage) if the alternatives lessened existing levels of protection. On water quality and resources, air quality and climate change the updated Environmental Report found that that revocation is not considered to affect the policy intent as it will be delivered by other policy and legislation therefore the cumulative effect of revocation on air quality is considered to be neutral. For soil the updated Environmental Report found that that revocation is not considered to affect the policy intent and local planning authorities will be able to use strong policies which apply in the National Planning Policy Framework.</p> <p>Revocation of the Regional Strategy will mean that it will be for local authorities to determine the priorities and location for growth and regeneration, working with other local authorities, business partners and their communities. The National Planning Policy Framework was published in March 2012. One of the 12 planning</p>

No	Issue	Summary of consultation responses to the updated Environmental Report	Response
			<p>principles set out in the National Planning Policy Framework is that planning should encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value. The National Planning Policy Framework makes it clear that local planning authorities may continue to consider the case for setting a locally appropriate target for the use of brownfield land (paragraph 111).</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework is also clear that developments that generate significant movement should be located where the need to travel will be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes can be maximised' and that local planning authorities should support a pattern of development which, where reasonable to do so, facilitates the use of sustainable modes of transport'.</p> <p>The statutory duty to co-operate underpinned by the National Planning Policy Framework enables local planning authorities along with other bodies to strategically plan to address the types of environmental issues such as climate change, flood risk, waste management and water use. In recognition of the breadth of bodies involved in</p>

No	Issue	Summary of consultation responses to the updated Environmental Report	Response
			<p>effective strategic planning, the duty to cooperate applies to local planning authorities county councils and public bodies that are prescribed in Local Planning Regulations 2012. These bodies are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Environment Agency; • the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England (English Heritage); • Natural England; • the Mayor of London; • the Civil Aviation Authority; • the Homes and Communities Agency; • Primary Care Trusts; • the Marine Mangement Organisation; • the Office of Rail Regulation; • the Highways Agency; • Transport for London; and • Highway Authorities

No	Issue	Summary of consultation responses to the updated Environmental Report	Response
			<p>The Localism Act also provides an enabling power requiring the bodies that are subject to the duty to have regard to the activities of other bodies when they are preparing their local plans and related activities. Local Enterprise Partnerships and Local Nature Partnerships have been prescribed in the 2012 Regulations for this purpose.</p> <p>These bodies will inform a strategic planning approach lead by local planning authorities which can tackle the environmental issues at a strategic cross boundary level which the Town and Country Planning Association believe is necessary in the absence of Policy 6 and Policy 4 of the North East Regional Strategy.</p> <p>The Government recognises that the duty to co-operate needs to be sufficiently robust to secure effective planning on cross-boundary issues, and the legislative requirement was strengthened during the development of the Localism Act, working with a broad range of external expert bodies. The stronger duty requires councils to demonstrate how they have complied with the duty as part of the independent examination of local plans. This could be, for example, by way of plans or policies prepared as part of a joint</p>

No	Issue	Summary of consultation responses to the updated Environmental Report	Response
			committee, informal strategies such as joint infrastructure and investment plans, or a memorandum of understanding which is presented as evidence of an agreed position. Failure to demonstrate compliance may mean that local authorities plans may not pass the examination process. This is a powerful sanction. Where local planning authorities have failed to co-operate on cross boundary matters it is also likely that their Local Plan will not be deliverable and as such it may be found unsound.
4.	Whether the likely significant effects have been identified, described and assessed: weight applied to the National Planning Policy Framework and duty to co-operate	<p>Natural England acknowledges that the duty to co-operate requires specific bodies (including local planning authorities and Natural England) to collaborate on strategic cross boundary planning issues. However, Natural England is concerned that there will be a delay between the adoption of National Planning Policy Framework compliant local plans and the revocation of the North East Regional Strategy.</p> <p>Environment Agency states that working in partnership across boundaries is crucial in achieving effective environmental mitigation. They agree that the National Planning Policy Framework and other existing policy frameworks, legislative regimes, and partnerships can help enable the</p>	<p>Comments noted.</p> <p>The duty to co-operate underpinned by the National Planning Policy Framework enables local planning authorities along with the other 14 bodies (identified in the duty to co-operate's regulations) to strategically plan to address the types of environmental issues such as climate change, flood risk, waste management and water use identified by Natural England and the Environment Agency. In recognition of the breadth of bodies involved in effective strategic planning, the duty to cooperate applies to local planning authorities county councils and public bodies that are prescribed in Local Planning</p>

No	Issue	Summary of consultation responses to the updated Environmental Report	Response
		<p>protection and enhancement of the environment and ensure development is sustainable. The Environment Agency as a 'named party', will provide evidence that helps local planning authorities to consider cross-boundary strategic planning issues such as climate change, flood risk, waste management and use of water.</p> <p>RenewableUK states that the Government should provide guidance to local planning authorities on the duty to co-operate and commission research to assess how effectively the duty to co-operate is helping the delivery of national outcomes such renewable energy infrastructure.</p>	<p>Regulations 2012. These bodies are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Environment Agency; • the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England (English Heritage); • Natural England; • the Mayor of London; • the Civil Aviation Authority; • the Homes and Communities Agency; • Primary Care Trusts; • the Marine Mangement Organisation; • the Office of Rail Regulation; • the Highways Agency; • Transport for London; and • Highway Authorities <p>The Localism Act also provides an enabling power requiring the bodies that are subject to the duty to have regard to the activities of other bodies when they are preparing their local plans and related activities. Local Enterprise</p>

No	Issue	Summary of consultation responses to the updated Environmental Report	Response
			<p>Partnerships and Local Nature Partnerships have been prescribed in the 2012 Regulations for this purpose.</p> <p>These bodies will inform a strategic planning approach lead by local planning authorities which can tackle the environmental issues at a strategic cross boundary level which Natural England and the Environment Agency believe is necessary in the absence of regional strategies.</p> <p>A report submitted by Lord Taylor of Goss Moor to the Government in December 2012 (the External Review of Government Planning Practice Guidance) includes a recommendation that the duty to co-operate should be one of the areas where the Government should consider providing new guidance as a priority. The conclusions of the Review Group have been generally welcomed by Government and was published on 21 December for an 8 week consultation. The Government will consider the consultation responses before responding to the Group's recommendations.</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework also makes it clear that local planning authorities should work collaboratively with private sector</p>

No	Issue	Summary of consultation responses to the updated Environmental Report	Response
		<p>English Heritage notes that since the previous consultation the National Planning Policy Framework has been published, clarifying and strengthening the historic environment within the sustainable development agenda, in particular they welcome Paragraph 7 of the National Planning Policy Framework.</p> <p>English Heritage also note the National Planning Policy Framework lacks the specificity of the regional strategy however, it does embed the historic environment within sustainable development as a core planning principle.</p>	<p>bodies, utility and infrastructure providers.</p> <p>Paragraphs 126-141 of the National Planning Policy Framework illustrate the key role which local planning authorities have through the development management decisions they take and the local plans they prepare in conserving and enhancing the historic environment. English Heritage is identified as one of the bodies prescribed in regulations made under the duty to co-operate (section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004) which local planning authorities duty to co-operate should work when preparing their local plans. Working in liaison with local planning authorities English Heritage can promote policies, which address the preservation and enhancement of the cultural and historical assets such as historical landscapes and settlements.</p>
5.	Individual Topics Monitoring	Natural England recommends that the monitoring section (Table 5.1) could be extended to address the loss of best and most versatile land, which is identified in Table NTS3 as a significant potential negative. To monitor this impact we suggest the	<p>Comments noted.</p> <p>The Government agrees with Natural England that monitoring should be extended to assess the changes in amount of Best and Most Versatile</p>

No	Issue	Summary of consultation responses to the updated Environmental Report	Response
		<p>use of soil assessments based around land classifications and Best and Most Versatile Land.</p> <p>Environment Agency welcomes the monitoring recommendations that are included within the Environmental Report, and those in place to understand compliance with the duty to co-operate. They strongly recommend closer monitoring of highly complex, cumulative effects on issues such as climate change, water quality and water resource.</p> <p>Town and Country Planning Association welcomes the identification of proposed monitoring indicators set out in Table NTS4. It is however unclear how this monitoring process will be undertaken except for a statement that DCLG will make “periodic reference” to such metrics using certain data sources.</p> <p>RenewableUK welcomes the provisions on monitoring in the Environmental Report, especially those for the monitoring of greenhouse gases, but the provision of renewable energy infrastructure needs to be monitored.</p> <p>English Heritage supported the use of Heritage at Risk data.</p>	<p>Land.</p> <p>Further, the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraphs 126 – 141) illustrates the key role which local planning authorities have through the development management decisions they take and local plans they prepare in conserving and enhancing the historic environment. Naturally local planning authorities will wish to monitor the impact of the planning system upon the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment in their localities. As illustrated local planning authorities must report on their performance against the duty to co-operate in their annual monitoring report. The Government notes that English Heritage welcomes the provisions which have been made on monitoring in the updated Environmental Report about the use of the Heritage at Risk register.</p> <p>The measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the plan to revoke the North East Regional Strategy will be contained in the Post Adoption Statement in Annex C.</p> <p>This monitoring programme will use existing regulatory regimes and data collection processes</p>

No	Issue	Summary of consultation responses to the updated Environmental Report	Response
			<p>to provide information for these potential environmental impacts, including the Department for Communities and Local Government's commitments regarding the local plan making progress by authorities and on compliance with the duty to co-operate. If, as a result of monitoring it becomes apparent that implementation had led to significant negative environmental effects, the Government will consider measures to address or mitigate those effects.</p> <p>Local planning authorities have to produce an annual monitoring report on the implementation of their local plan, this data can be used to flag up the need to review policies within their local plan. If local planning authorities working collaboratively wish to pool their resources to produce joint local plan monitoring and annual reporting mechanisms they can do so.</p> <p>The Government notes that RenewableUK welcomes the provisions which have been made on monitoring in the update Environmental Report and their request for provision of monitoring of renewable energy infrastructure.</p>
6.	Individual	Northumberland County Council cites Policy 28	Comments noted.

No	Issue	Summary of consultation responses to the updated Environmental Report	Response
	<p>Topics</p> <p>Housing numbers and land supply</p>	<p>(Gross and Net Dwelling Provisions) and states that following revocation there is likely to be a policy gap until local planning authorities which adopted local plans before 2008, establish local plan policies, that reflect the needs of their communities.</p> <p>Northumberland County Council state in their area they have agreed that the North East Regional Strategy housing figures will continue to be used as an interim measure to inform the assessment of housing land requirements. The council does not consider that the revocation of the Regional Strategy will have an impact upon dwelling provision in their locality.</p>	<p>The National Planning Policy Framework states that it is 'highly desirable that local planning authorities should have an up-to-date plan in place'. Where plans are absent, silent or out of date, the National Planning Policy Framework's presumption in favour of sustainable development will apply in respect of decision-taking. In particular, where a local authority cannot deliver a five year supply of deliverable sites, the relevant local policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up to date. In such cases, the decision taker will apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development, taking into account all relevant planning considerations. The presumption is clearly set out at paragraph 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework in respect of both plan-making and decision taking.</p> <p>Across the North East region six councils have adopted Local Plans – 46% of councils have a plan adopted post-2004 and overall 54% of councils now have a published plan.</p> <p>From the end of March 2013 transitional arrangements on the implementation of the National Planning Policy Framework will cease to apply. From March 2013 in considering all</p>

No	Issue	Summary of consultation responses to the updated Environmental Report	Response
		<p>Northumberland County Council cites Policy 29 (Delivering and Managing Housing Supply) sets a target for the use of previously developed land, which is 50% in Northumberland. The council states that the target only extends to 2018 hence the impact of revocation is only likely to be in the short term. The council is currently considering updating its policy on the use of previously developed land for its updated local plan. If evidence suggests that previously developed land targets are required, new targets may be set. The Council does not consider that the revocation will have an impact on dwelling provision or topic areas of the Strategic Environmental Assessment.</p> <p>Sunderland City Council states that in relation to quantative based policies such as Policy 29</p>	<p>decisions for planning permission, due weight will be given to relevant policies in all existing plans according to the degree of consistency with the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework. The closer policies are to policies in the National Planning Policy Framework the greater the weight that may be given.</p> <p>The Government notes the comments made by Northumberland County Council and that they consider that there will not be negative effects on Strategic Environmental Assessment topics.</p> <p>The Government notes the comments made by Sunderland City Council about how the housing</p>

No	Issue	Summary of consultation responses to the updated Environmental Report	Response
		<p>(Delivering and Managing Housing Supply) regarding the district housing apportionments, these were based on highly optimistic growth scenarios that economic growth would continue. With the economic downturn, the North East Regional Strategy annualised housing targets are not being delivered across the North East. The Council raise concern that the rolling five year land supply could create significant environmental affects as local authorities catch up on any past underperformance by releasing less suitable sites.</p> <p>Sunderland City Council states that in the absence of the North East Regional Strategy, without a strategic policy framework in place which promotes development in the region's two conurbations there will be increased pressure for development on greenfield sites outside of the conurbations of Tyne and Wear and Teeside. Sunderland acknowledges that the duty to co-operate is the mechanism by which local planning authorities should work together to address these strategic planning challenges. However, Sunderland City Council believe without some form of pan-regional co-ordination, there is no mechanism to monitor the cumulative long term environmental impacts across the region which may</p>	<p>market operates in the North East.</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework makes it clear that local planning authorities, should work collaboratively with other bodies to ensure that strategic priorities across local boundaries are properly coordinated and clearly reflected in individual Local Plans. These strategic priorities include the need to develop strategic policies to deliver homes and jobs needed in the area.</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework recognises that in joint working local planning authorities can consider producing joint planning policies on strategic matters and informal strategies such as joint infrastructure and investment plans.</p> <p>Local planning authorities will be expected to demonstrate evidence of having effectively co-operated to plan for issues with cross-boundary impacts when their local plans are submitted for examination. The local plan will be examined by an independent inspector whose role is to assess whether the plan has been prepared in accordance with the statutory duty to co-operate, legal and procedural requirements, and whether it is sound.</p>

No	Issue	Summary of consultation responses to the updated Environmental Report	Response
		stem from the absence of the North East Regional Strategy.	<p>The National Planning Policy Framework states that local planning authorities may make an allowance for windfall sites in their five-year supply if they are compelling evidence that such sites have consistently become available in the local area and will continue to provide a reliable source of supply. Any allowance should be realistic having regard to the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, historic windfall delivery rates and expected future trends, and should not include residential gardens. This policy, together with the approach to the use of land brownfield land and other policies aimed at the protection and enhancement of the environment, aims to ensure that housing development is located in a way that is consistent with the principles of sustainable development.</p> <p>One of the 12 planning principles set out in the National Planning Policy Framework is that planning should encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value.</p> <p>Local planning authorities have to produce an annual monitoring report on the implementation of their local plans, this data can be used to flag</p>

No	Issue	Summary of consultation responses to the updated Environmental Report	Response
			<p>up the need to review policies within their respective local plans. If local planning authorities working collaboratively wish to pool their resources to produce joint local plan monitoring and annual reporting mechanisms they can do so as. Sunderland City Council can work with local planning authorities in the North East to put joint monitoring and annual reporting arrangements in place in the absence of the North East Regional Strategy.</p> <p>The Government has will responded to the findings of the Strategic Environmental Assessment in Table 3.2 of this Post Adoption Statement, which included the finding that there may be more uncertainty about the nature and scale of positive and negative impacts on the Strategic Environmental Assessment topics in the short and medium term due to the transition period for those local planning authorities that need to establish Local Plan policies that reflect the objectively assessed and up to date needs of their respective local communities.</p> <p>The measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the plan to revoke the North East Regional Strategy are contained in this Post</p>

No	Issue	Summary of consultation responses to the updated Environmental Report	Response
			<p>Adoption Statement in Annex C.</p> <p>This monitoring programme will use existing regulatory regimes and data collection processes to provide information for these potential environmental impacts, including the Department for Communities and Local Government's commitments regarding the local plan making progress by authorities and on compliance with the duty to co-operate. If, as a result of monitoring it becomes apparent that implementation had led to significant negative environmental effects, the Government will consider measures to address or mitigate those effects.</p>
7.	<p>Individual Topics</p> <p>Employment land portfolio and employment locations</p> <p style="text-align: right;">key</p>	<p>Northumberland County Council cite Policy 18 (Employment Land Portfolio) and Policy 20 (Key Employment Locations) stating that policies 18 and 20 of the North East Regional Strategy indicate the general employment land allocation and the allocation at identified key employment locations. Given that existing local plan policies remain extant, the council considers that the effect of using local plan policies until the updated local plan they are preparing is adopted, the loss of policies 18 and 20 will have little impact upon employment land provision in Northumberland.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p> <p>The Government notes Northumberland County Council's statement that the revocation of Policy 18 (Employment Land Portfolio) and Policy 20 (Key Employment Locations) will not have a negative impact on the provision of employment land in Northumberland.</p>

No	Issue	Summary of consultation responses to the updated Environmental Report	Response
		<p>Town and Country Planning Association states that the North East Regional Strategy Policy 20 (Key Employment Locations) identified a small number of key employment sites that were well located and could best meet the needs of modern business. The intention was that by focusing development opportunities in this way this would give a clear signal to investors and reduce the amount of greenfield land that had to be “sacrificed”. The Town and Country Planning Association believe with the revocation of Policy 20 (Key Employment Locations) there is potential for a loss of greenfield land as local planning authorities compete between themselves to attract inward investment.</p>	<p>One of the 12 planning principles set out in the National Planning Policy Framework is that planning should encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value.</p> <p>Strategic planning matters such as the provision of employment land, housing, infrastructure and transport connections are vital to attract inward investment into an area and to promote growth. However, for strategic planning to work on the ground, local planning authorities need to work together and with a range of bodies such as Local Enterprise Partnerships. Many local planning authorities are already working collaboratively to produce sound local plans which are essential for promoting sustainable growth in their areas. The duty to co-operate formalises those arrangements by creating a statutory requirement to co-operate to ensure that local plans are effective and deliverable on cross-boundary matters such as the promotion of growth. The duty requires authorities to work together constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis in relation to strategic cross-</p>

No	Issue	Summary of consultation responses to the updated Environmental Report	Response
			<p>boundary issues in Local Plans. A local authority led strategic planning approach, will mitigate the negative outcomes which the Town and Country Planning Association fear will result from the revocation of Policy 20 (Key Employment Locations).</p> <p>Further, the duty to co-operate reflects the Government's broader approach to locally-driven cooperation to address the challenges of growth , including the strategic role played by Local Enterprise Partnerships. There are two Local Enterprise Partnerships which cover the North East region, the North East Local Enterprise Partnership which covers Northumbria, Durham and Tyneside and the Tees Valley Local Enterprise Partnership covering Teeside. Their remit is to drive growth across their areas making the most of its inherent strengths.</p> <p>The Local Enterprise Partnerships are working to encourage inward investment by encouraging businesses to locate on certain sites. For example the North East Local Enterprise Partnership working with a number stakeholders including local authorities have created an Enterprise Zone which covers 10 sites within 3 area clusters. There is a sector focus on low</p>

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			<p>carbon. Seven are covered by their own Local Development Orders designed to encourage particular types of business to locate in appropriate cluster sites which are also supported by a number of financial incentives.</p> <p>The Tees Valley Local Enterprise Partnership has created the Tees Valley Enterprise Zone which was among the first to be designated by the Government and has already attracted firms to locate in the zone. The zone consists of 12 individual sites with a total area of 423 hectares of new and established business enterprise parks, plus large cleared brownfield sites with access to utilities, port services and logistics. Each of the 12 sites are covered by Local Development Orders.</p> <p>The Tees Valley Local Enterprise Partnership identifies house building and construction as an important contributor to the area's prosperity and is working with local planning authorities to inform planning policies relating to detailed housing allocations for example. The Partnership is also working with local authorities, transport companies and the Highway Agency to deliver on sustainable transport the Tees Valley which has culminated in the publication in March 2011 of the</p>

No	Issue	Summary of consultation responses to the updated Environmental Report	Response
			Statement of Transport Ambition which is the Tees Valley's long-term transport strategy.
8.	<p>Individual Topics</p> <p>Water Management and Water efficiency, River Basin Management Plans and the Water Framework Directive</p>	<p>Environment Agency welcomes the references in the update Environmental Report to the Water Framework Directive and River Basin Management Plans. In the absence of the a strategic steer from the regional strategy they suggest that mechanisms are put in place to build and maintain knowledge of water management issues for local authority planners.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p> <p>The Government welcomes the Environment Agency's comment that the Environmental Report highlights the important role of River Basin Management Plans and that local planning authorities have a significant role to play in planning for managing water resources.</p> <p>The updated Environmental Report clearly set out requirements which apply beyond the National Planning Policy Framework, which itself clearly states that planning policy decisions must reflect and where appropriate promote relevant European Union obligations – which include, for example, obligations under the Water Framework Directive. The National Planning Policy Framework is also clear that local planning authorities should work with other bodies to assess the capacity of water supply and waste water treatment infrastructure, and should set out in the local plan their strategic priorities and policies for the provision of such infrastructure.</p> <p>Other references in the National Planning Policy Framework state that local planning authorities</p>

No	Issue	Summary of consultation responses to the updated Environmental Report	Response
			<p>should adopt strategies to mitigate and adapt to climate change and take full account of water supply and demand considerations. New development should be planned to avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change, which could include more frequent droughts. Where appropriate, risks should be managed through suitable adaptation measures, including through the planning of green infrastructure.</p>
9.	<p>Individual Topics Flood Risk</p>	<p>Environment Agency welcomes reference in the updated Environmental Report to the Flood Risk Regulations 2009 which place a duty on the Environment Agency and Lead Local Flood Authorities to work together to determine whether there are significant flood risks in an area, and if so to prepare flood hazard maps, flood risk management plans. The plans and strategies developed will provide a useful resource for planners.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p> <p>The Government welcomes the Environment Agency's comment regarding updated Environmental Report reference to the work of the Lead Local Flood Authorities. The National Planning Policy Framework contains policies to manage the risk of flooding through the planning system, together with technical guidance on flooding also states that local planning authorities should set out the strategic priorities for their area in their Local Plan. This should include strategic policies to deliver, the provision of infrastructure for flood risk and coastal change management.</p>
10.	Individual	<p>Natural England believe the Strategic</p>	Comment noted

No	Issue	Summary of consultation responses to the updated Environmental Report	Response
	<p>Topics</p> <p>Application of the Habitats Regulation Assessment</p>	<p>Environmental Assessment does not set out the steps that DCLG have undertaken to identify if the revocation of the Regional Strategy will have likely significant effects on the European habitats within the region. DCLG have confirmed to Natural England that a screening process has been undertaken and no likely significant effects have been demonstrated.</p> <p>Natural England recommended that the criteria used in the screening process should be included in the Post Adoption Statement for the Strategic Environmental Assessment, in order to demonstrate that European protected habitats have been considered and are an important part of the evaluation process.</p>	<p>Section 1.4 of the updated Environmental Report addresses the requirements of the Habitats Directive and concludes that ‘the Government’s view is that the revocation of the regional strategies will have no effects requiring assessment under the Habitats Directive’. This conclusion was reached on the basis of a screening exercise: each Regional Strategy policy was reviewed to identify those that referred to the protection of European sites and those which are locationally specific – i.e. they direct development to a particular parcel of land. Policies that were more pervasive in nature or provided a more general requirement for a local planning authority to make provision for a certain type or amount of development, were screened out at that stage, as it is for each local planning authority to decide on a response to the pervasive policies and determine the most suitable locations for the development – taking account, where necessary, of the finding of their own Habitats Regulations Assessment.</p> <p>This exercise identified a number of policies in the North East Regional Strategy which sought to avoid effects on European sites. These policies were generally included as mitigation for</p>

No	Issue	Summary of consultation responses to the updated Environmental Report	Response
			<p>development that the Strategy itself encouraged. They were therefore considered further in order to determine whether it could be concluded that their revocation would not have adverse effects on such sites. Consideration was given, among other things, to the fact that: (i) the 'development policies' in the Regional Strategy they seek to mitigate would cease to apply were the Strategy to be revoked; and (ii) that the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 require that a competent authority, such as a local planning authority, in exercising any of their functions must have regard to the requirements of the Habitats Directive. This exercise did not identify any likely significant effects on European sites.</p> <p>This conclusion was supported by the findings of the Strategic Environmental Assessment. Unlike the Habitats Regulations Assessment screening, which considered the relative effects of revocation compared to retention, the Strategic Environmental Assessment considered the absolute effects (and is perhaps a tougher test as a consequence). The Strategic Environmental Assessment assessed the likely effects of the revocation of the strategy, and the likely effects of</p>

No	Issue	Summary of consultation responses to the updated Environmental Report	Response
			<p>retaining the strategy (and a number of reasonable alternatives involving partial revocation). This assessment was carried out for each policy in the Regional Strategy and for each of the topics set out in Appendix I of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (which included biodiversity, fauna and flora). The assessment uses definitions of significance for each of the 10 assessment topics to aid transparency and consistency in the assessment and minimise the likelihood of any subjectivity. The guidance on a significant effect for biodiversity includes reference to negative and sustained effects on European or national designated sites and/or protected species. No significant negative effects on biodiversity were found, nor were any significant negative effects found from reasonable alternatives. Monitoring measures have been proposed for the effects on biodiversity (as well as the other topics) to help review the effects of the decision.</p> <p>The decision not to undertake a Habitats Regulations Assessment was therefore not taken on the basis that the Habitats Directive does not apply to the revocation of a plan. The view that the revocation of the North East Regional</p>

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			<p>Strategy will have no likely significant effects requiring Habitats Regulations Assessment was reached on the basis of the screening exercise, the conclusions of which were supported by the independent Strategic Environmental Assessment process. The mitigation considered in the Environmental Report is not intended as mitigation to meet the requirements of the Habitats Directive as no likely significant effects on European sites that require mitigation have been identified.</p> <p>The Secretary of State is therefore proceeding on the basis that the Plan to Revoke the North East Regional Strategy is not likely to have a significant effect on a European site or a European offshore marine site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects).</p>
11.	Individual Topics Minerals and Waste planning	Environment Agency states that the Regional Technical Advisory Boards encouraged local waste management organisations to engage in the strategic planning system. They suggest that it would be helpful for the National Waste Management Plan, the intended replacement for Planning Policy Statement 10, to consider the value of retaining the partnership mechanism provided by Regional Technical Advisory Boards.	<p>Comments noted.</p> <p>Comments made by the Environment Agency are noted. The Government aims to consult on the revision of Planning Policy Statement 10 in planning for waste in Spring 2013. Waste planning authorities are already able to work with other authorities to capture data covering more than one waste planning authority area.</p>

No	Issue	Summary of consultation responses to the updated Environmental Report	Response
		<p>Northumberland County Council cites Policy 43 (Aggregate Minerals Provision) which sets out sub regional guidelines for the provision of crushed rock, sand and gravel for aggregate uses. Given that the future provision of these minerals will be informed by Local Aggregate Assessment, prepared by the local planning authority, the council does not consider that the revocation of the North East Regional Strategy will have an impact upon aggregates provision in Northumberland.</p>	<p>The Government notes the statement made by Northumberland County Council that they do not believe the revocation of Policy 43 (Aggregate Minerals Provision) will have an impact upon the provision of aggregates in Northumberland.</p>
12.	<p>Individual Topics</p> <p>Structure Plan Policy S5: Extension to the Green Belt</p>	<p>Northumberland County Council states that the publication of the North East Regional Strategy by the Secretary of State in July 2008 replaced all policies within Northumberland County and National Park Joint Structure Plan First Alteration (February 2005), with the exception of Structure Plan Policy S5 (Extension to the Green Belt). The reason for saving Policy S5 is because it defines the general extent of the Green Belt around Castle Morpeth and it was intended that it was saved until an up to date local plan extending the boundaries of the Green Belt around Castle Morpeth is put in place.</p> <p>The council welcomes the proposed retention of Policy S5 until the new local plan for</p>	<p>Comments noted.</p> <p>The Government notes the three representations received requesting that Structure Plan Policy S5 (Extension to the Green Belt) be retained until Northumberland County Council prepare and adopt their local plan extending the boundaries of the Green Belt around Castle Morpeth.</p> <p>The Government is therefore retaining this policy as proposed in the updated Environmental Report.</p>

No	Issue	Summary of consultation responses to the updated Environmental Report	Response
		<p>Northumberland is adopted. Therefore, the council requests that Policy S5 is retained if the North East Regional Strategy is revoked, until the up to date Northumberland County Council's Core Strategy is adopted.</p> <p>Royal Town Planning Institute, North East states that it does not normally comment on specific policy matters, because of its wider strategic significance to the North East they endorse the intention to retain Structure Plan Policy S5 (Extension to the Green Belt) so as to secure the Green Belt around Castle Morpeth until the completion of the Northumberland updated local plan.</p> <p>Town and Country Planning Association welcomes the proposed retention of the saved Northumberland Structure Plan Policy S5 (Extension to the Green Belt) to give spatial expression to the Green Belt around Castle Morpeth until an up to date local plan is adopted.</p>	
13.	Individual Topic Renewable energy generation and Climate Change	Town and Country Planning Association notes the North East Regional Strategy contained exemplary spatial guidance on areas with the most potential to generate wind energy Key Diagram and Policy 41 (Onshore Wind Energy Development). The loss of the local incentives provided by this	Disagree The Government does not believe that retaining Policy 2 (Sustainable Development), Policy 3 (Climate Change), Policy 24 (Delivering Sustainable Communities), Policy 40 (Planning for Renewables) and Policy 41 (Onshore Wind

No	Issue	Summary of consultation responses to the updated Environmental Report	Response
		<p>spatial guidance, together with consistent criteria on siting as set out in Policy 40 (Planning for Renewables), is likely to reduce the amount of new generation capacity permitted.</p> <p>EDF Energy recognise the valuable role that smaller infrastructure will play in meeting the Government's statutory energy and climate change objectives.</p> <p>RenewableUK the loss of regional strategies will not be helpful in meeting the challenge of Climate Change and will affect the speed and effectiveness of reducing carbon dioxide emissions and renewable energy deployment at the local level. This will have an effect on the environment and human health and wellbeing.</p> <p>A lack of clear policy guidance on renewable energy deployment and associated mechanisms for the translation of national objectives into local deliverables risks the slow down in renewable energy development.</p> <p>The removal of valuable information and guidance contained in Planning Policy Statement 22 on Renewable Energy is also affecting the ability of</p>	<p>Development) is necessary because it will be for local authorities to determine local responses to the issue of renewable energy generation consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework.</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework includes as one of the core land-use planning principles that planning should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, including to "...encourage the use of renewable resources (for example, by the development of renewable energy)". The National Planning Policy Framework makes clear that planning plays a key role in helping shape places to secure radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimising vulnerability and providing resilience to the impacts of climate change, and supporting the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework also contains a number of policies aimed at encouraging the development of renewable energy installations including that local planning authorities should : "have a positive strategy to promote energy from renewable and low carbon sources; design their policies to maximise</p>

No	Issue	Summary of consultation responses to the updated Environmental Report	Response
		<p>local planning authorities to plan for renewable energy infrastructure.</p> <p>RenewableUK states that the following policies from the North East Regional Strategy should be retained:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy 2 (Sustainable Development) • Policy 3 (Climate Change) • Policy 24 (Delivering Sustainable Communities) • Policy 40 (Planning for Renewables) • Policy 41 (Onshore Wind Development) <p>Without these policies remaining in place local planning authorities have nothing to work towards on a local level to deliver renewable energy infrastructure.</p>	<p>renewable and low carbon energy development while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed satisfactorily, including cumulative landscape and visual impacts; consider identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources, and supporting infrastructure, where this would help secure the development of such sources; support community-led initiatives for renewable and low carbon energy, including developments outside such areas being taken forward through neighbourhood planning; and in line with the objectives and provisions of the Climate Change Act 2008.” In addition, National Planning Policy Framework policies on strategic planning for infrastructure include the need to plan for energy infrastructure including heat.</p> <p>Other measures that local authorities will need to respond to include the nationally legally-binding target to ensure 15% of energy comes from renewable sources by 2020 (in accordance with the Renewables Energy Directive (2009/28/EC)), the requirements of the Climate Change Act 2008, the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, the UK Renewable Energy Strategy 2009, the UK National Renewable Action Plan 2010,</p>

No	Issue	Summary of consultation responses to the updated Environmental Report	Response
			<p>the Green Deal and responses to the UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2012.</p> <p>Collectively the legislation and planning policy provides the framework for Government, agencies and local authorities to act in concert to respond to the challenge of climate change.</p> <p>The Government has also provided a response to the findings of the Strategic Environmental Assessment in Table 3.2 of this Post Adoption Statement which included the finding concerning issues, such as, renewable energy, biodiversity enhancement and landscape conservation, which typically benefit from being planned at a wider geographical scale, may not have their full potential realised.</p> <p>A report submitted by Lord Matthew Taylor of Goss Moor to the Government in December 2012 (the External Review of Government Planning Practice Guidance) includes a recommendation that the renewable energy should be one of the priority areas on which the Government should consider providing guidance. The conclusions of the Review Group have been generally welcomed by Government and was published on 21 December for an 8 week consultation. The Government will consider the consultation</p>

No	Issue	Summary of consultation responses to the updated Environmental Report	Response
			responses before responding to the Group's recommendations.

ANNEX C

Monitoring Indicators

Table C1 Strategic Environmental Assessment topics, monitoring indicators and sources of information

SEA Topics	Monitoring Indicators	Source(s) of Information
Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna	<p>Annual (where information allows) trends in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Condition of designated sites • Threatened habitats and species • Populations of countryside birds • Surface water biological indicators 	<p>Joint National Conservation Committee report under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive (completed every 6 years) on the conservation status of protected habitats</p> <p>Joint Nature Conservation Committee http://www.jncc.gov.uk/page-4241 http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-4239 http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-4238 http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-4235 http://www.sssi.naturalengland.org.uk/Special/sssi/report.cfm?category=R,RF</p> <p>Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) http://www.defra.gov.uk/statistics/environment/inland-water/</p> <p>The Environment Agency are responsible for monitoring water quality under the Water Framework Directive</p>
Population	<p>Annual (where information allows) trends in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment Information • Population 	<p>Office of National Statistics reports, specifically Regional Trends and Regional Gross Value Added</p> <p>Department for Communities and Local Government statistics: Annual net additional dwellings, Housebuilding: permanent dwellings completed by tenure and region</p> <p>Department for Communities and Local Government</p>

SEA Topics	Monitoring Indicators	Source(s) of Information
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing and additional net dwellings • Local plan making progress and the duty to co-operate 	Business Plan monitoring
Human Health	<p>Annual (where information allows) trends in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Statistics – Long term illness, etc. • Crime • Deprivation • Access to and quality of the local environment 	<p>Office for National Statistics on health</p> <p>Home Office, Crime Survey for England and Wales</p> <p>Department for Communities and Local Government statistics: Indices of Deprivation</p> <p>Office of National Statistics (proposed measures of wellbeing)</p>
Soil and Geology	<p>Annual (where information allows) trends in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land use • Best and Most Versatile 	<p>Department for Communities and Local Government statistics</p> <p>Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs</p> <p>http://magic.defra.gov.uk/</p>

SEA Topics	Monitoring Indicators	Source(s) of Information
	Land	
Water	Annual (where information allows) trends in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of catchments with good ecological status • Water resource availability • Per capita water consumption • Number of water resource zones in deficit 	Environment Agency and Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs http://www.defra.gov.uk/statistics/environment/inland-water/ Water Resource Plans (available every 5 years) from Northumbria Water.
Air	Annual (where information allows) trends in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of Air Quality Management Areas • Number of Air Quality Management Areas were exceedances occurred. 	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

SEA Topics	Monitoring Indicators	Source(s) of Information
Climatic factors	Annual (where information allows) trends in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emission of greenhouse gases • Installed capacity of sites generating electricity from renewable sources (MW) • Number of properties at risk of flooding 	Department for Energy and Climate Change Statistical Release: Local and regional CO2 emissions Department for Energy and Climate Change Regional Renewable Statistics (from the RSTATS (Renewable Energy Statistics) database and REPD (the Renewable Energy Planning) database, https://restats.decc.gov.uk/cms/welcome-to-the-restats-web-site/ Environment Agency
Material Assets	Annual (where information allows) trends in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volume of construction waste and proportions recycled • Volume of hazardous waste • Volume of controlled wastes and 	Environment Agency Environment Agency Environment Agency North East Mineral Planning Authorities'

SEA Topics	Monitoring Indicators	Source(s) of Information
	proportions recycled <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volume of minerals extracted 	
Cultural heritage, including architectural and archaeological heritage	Annual (where information allows) trends in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of heritage assets of different types that are at risk 	English Heritage 'Heritage at risk report'
Landscape and Townscape	Annual (where information allows) trends in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (area, threats and quality) • Changes in Conservation Areas • Percentage who are very or fairly satisfied with local area • Trend in number of vacant dwellings 	National Association of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and English National Park Authorities Association English Heritage (if 2003 survey repeated) Office of National Statistics (proposed measures of wellbeing) Department for Communities and Local Government http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/housing/xls/1815794.xls

