



## Environmental report on the revocation of the North West of England Plan

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This Environmental Report is a consultation document on the likely significant environmental effects of revocation of the North West of England Plan (the regional strategy in force for the North West of England). Responses on any aspect of the report are invited by Friday 20 January 2012.

A summary of responses to this consultation paper will be published on the DCLG website. Unless you specifically state that your response, or any part of it, is confidential, we shall assume that you have no objection to it being made available to the public and identified on the DCLG website. Confidential responses will be included in any numerical summary or analysis of responses.

Responses and comments about this consultation may be sent by email to [SEAConsultation@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:SEAConsultation@communities.gsi.gov.uk) or by post to:

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# **Environmental Report on revocation of the North West of England Plan**

## **Non-technical summary**

This is a summary of the Environmental Report on the proposed revocation of the Regional Strategy for the North West of England (“the Plan”), published in 2008.

## **Content and objectives and relationship to other plans and programmes**

The Plan was introduced under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and, in accordance with Government policy at the time, provides a broad development strategy for the North West for 15 to 20 years. It includes policies to address housing, environmental protection, transport, infrastructure, economic development, agriculture, minerals, energy and waste, as well as sub-regional policies.

Its revocation is proposed using powers being provided by the Localism Bill, currently before Parliament, in order to give authorities at local level more freedom in their decisions, both through development plans and decisions on planning applications, in the light of local needs and preferences.

Revocation of the Plan should be seen in the wider context of Government policies and legislation to protect and enhance the natural and historic environment, tackle climate change and secure the sustainable use of natural resources.

## **Environmental conditions, trends and problems and areas likely to be affected**

The Environmental Report, including the regional commentary, is largely based on the data and evidence provided in the Plan and the assessments produced to support its preparation. Where possible the data has been updated and from the data available it is considered unlikely that the overall state of the environment in the North West has changed significantly since publication of the Plan.

The North West is the third largest Government region in England. It comprises the counties of Cumbria, Lancashire and Cheshire, the metropolitan districts in Greater Manchester and Merseyside, and the unitary authorities of Blackburn-with-Darwen, Blackpool, Halton and Warrington.

Around 60 per cent of the population of the North West live in Manchester and Liverpool, but much of the North West consists of scattered villages and small towns. The North West contains some of England's richest environmental assets, including Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation and Ramsar sites.

At the time the Plan was in preparation:

- the percentage of car use was high with fewer people using public transport than the national average. Congestion and capacity were key issues affecting the North West transport network;
- water quality had improved against a baseline below the national average;
- the amount of household waste had declined; and although the North West was still second highest in production of household waste recycling was above the national average;
- energy from renewable sources was increasing with the trend set to continue;
- the population of the North West was rising. Life expectancy was increasing slightly although was below the national average;
- areas of deprivation, worklessness and social exclusion were concentrated in disadvantaged areas in and around the cores of Liverpool and Manchester, the inner parts of other older industrial towns, and some coastal towns.

## Environmental protection objectives

Environmental objectives reflected in the Plan include obligations under international commitments such as on climate change under the Kyoto Protocol and from European Directives including those aimed at protecting the natural environment and from domestic policy.

## Likely significant effects on the environment

The revocation of the Plan would decentralise planning powers to local authorities, freeing them to work with their local communities to deliver sustainable development. To support them in both delivering for their local communities and addressing strategic cross-border issues, the Government is proposing a duty on public bodies to co-operate on planning concerns that cross administrative boundaries. Local authorities will be expected to work collaboratively with other bodies to ensure that strategic priorities across local boundaries are properly co-ordinated and clearly reflected in individual local

plans. They will be expected to demonstrate that this is the case when their local plans are examined in public.

The environmental effects of revoking the Plan would reflect future decisions by local authorities, taken individually and collectively. Whilst the environmental effects cannot therefore be predicted in detail at this point, it is clear that the revocation of regional strategies and their top-down targets will provide opportunities for securing environmental benefits because their revocation would remove certain current policies which present a threat to local environments. For example, revocation would remove the top-down pressure on local authorities to review the extent of their Green Belt. Across England this would have been likely to effect more than thirty areas. Protecting the Green Belt brings many environmental benefits including safeguarding the countryside and preventing urban sprawl.

In overall terms, it is reasonable to anticipate that decisions taken locally will look to maximise positive environmental outcomes for the local area. However, even if there were circumstances where this was not the case, strong protections for the environment set out in national planning policy and, in many cases, provided for by national and European legislation means it is highly unlikely that there would be any significant adverse environmental effects resulting from the revocation.

## Methods used and difficulties encountered in assessment

This assessment has been carried out on a voluntary basis, and in line with the process laid down in the Regulations which transpose the European “Strategic Environmental Assessment” Directive into domestic law.

The assessment has taken as a starting point the assessments carried out when the Plan was being prepared. A broad assessment has then been made of the Plan’s objectives, its policies and its predicted environmental effects, and how these effects might be changed if the Plan was revoked. The assessment examines those aspects of the revocation of the Plan which might be expected to lead to significant environmental effects.

## Monitoring

Local authorities will continue to be responsible for monitoring the effects of implementing their own plans, in partnership with agencies which monitor specific impacts or conditions.

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

- 1.1 The Government announced in the Coalition Agreement its intention to “rapidly abolish regional spatial strategies and return decision-making powers on housing and planning to local councils”. Its objective is to make local spatial plans, drawn up in conformity with national policy, the basis for local planning decisions. The Government proposes that regional targets will be replaced with a more localist planning system together with incentives to encourage local authorities and communities to increase their aspirations for housing and economic growth. Local communities will be freed to deliver sustainable development in a way that allows them to control the way in which their villages, towns and cities change. The Localism Bill therefore contains provisions to repeal Part 5 of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009, thereby removing the legal framework for the review of regional strategies, and to revoke the existing regional strategies by order following Royal Assent.

## Policy context

- 1.2 The revocation of regional strategies should be seen in the context of other relevant Government policies and associated legislation aimed at protecting the natural and built environment. In particular, the Government has recently published for consultation a new National Planning Policy Framework. The Government has made it clear that the Framework will maintain existing environmental protections, but will streamline and simplify existing national planning policy so as to make it accessible to all users.
- 1.3 The Framework retains protection and improvement of the natural environment as core objectives for local planning and development management. It 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.
- 1.4 The Framework also contains a new Local Green Space designation to protect locally significant green areas, and including playing fields and open space, reflecting the importance of these areas to the health and happiness of local communities. The protection of heritage and the built environment is also a stated objective of the Framework which also emphasises the importance of design of the built environment.



- 1.5 The Framework proposes new stronger controls on peat extraction, preventing the extension of existing peat extraction and the creation of new sites. Policies to support the development of renewable and low carbon energy – critical to the reduction of carbon emissions, also form a key part of the draft Framework. In addition the Framework maintains policy to ensure we can adapt to an already changing climate by ensuring that strong protections remain in place to prevent the building of inappropriate development in flood risk areas or areas subject to coastal change.
- 1.6 The new National Planning Policy Framework sits within a broader set of national policy and legislation. For instance the Natural Environment White Paper, published in June 2011, sets out the Government's vision for the future of the natural environment in England, and how natural value will be protected through the planning system.
- 1.7 In addition the Government is fully committed to meeting the targets for reducing carbon emissions in the Climate Change Act 2008, and to meeting its binding renewable energy target of 15 per cent of all energy to come from renewable sources by 2020. The Annual Energy Statement, published in July 2010, and more recently the Carbon Plan, published in March 2011, set out the steps being taken to cut carbon emissions and deliver affordable, secure and low-carbon energy.
- 1.8 The Climate Change Act 2008 also created a framework for building the UK's ability to adapt to climate change. The Government is due to publish in January 2012 a UK wide climate change risk assessment, which will allow the Government to understand the level of risk posed by climate change. A national adaptation plan, setting out Government priorities for adaptation and policies and proposals for achieving those objectives, is due to be published in Spring 2013.
- 1.9 Lastly there are numerous international obligations that contribute to the protection of our built and natural environment including international conventions as well as European Directives.

## Background to regional strategies

- 1.10 The background to regional strategies is as follows:
  - The Town and Country Planning Act 1947 required local planning authorities to draft local plans setting out policies for the development and use of land. Prior to the Town and Country Planning Act 1968 which introduced county structure plans to co-ordinate and guide local plans the focus of strategic planning was mainly at the regional level. A number of regional plans were prepared from the 1940s onwards and there were initiatives to link land use planning and regional economic development.

- In 1988 regional planning guidance was introduced to provide a strategic framework for county structure plans. Regional planning guidance was not statutory and therefore structure plans and local plans were not required to be in conformity with it.
- The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 introduced a two tier statutory spatial development plan system consisting of regional spatial strategies and local development frameworks. The counties retained statutory planning powers for minerals and waste plans, but county structure plans were abolished.
- Regional planning guidance was given the legal status of regional spatial strategies, and these were then reviewed, leading in most cases to publication of updated strategies, though only parts of the West Midlands strategy were reviewed, and the review of the South West plan was never completed.
- The Local Democracy Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 combined the existing regional spatial strategy and regional economic strategy to create a regional strategy. These came into existence on 1 April 2010 for the eight English regions outside London. The intent was for the responsible regional authority in each region to take forward a further revision of their existing regional spatial strategy and regional economic strategy combining these plans to create a single integrated regional strategy. In the interim period prior to the responsible regional authority completing the revision of the regional spatial strategy and regional economic strategy and the publication of revised regional strategy, sections 78(5) and 79 of the 2009 Act provide for the existing regional spatial strategy, renamed the regional strategy, to remain part of the formal development plan for local authorities in the region.

1.11 Regional strategies are plans for the purpose of the European Directive 2001/42/EC (the “strategic environmental assessment” Directive<sup>1</sup>) because they are land use plans, are required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions and set the framework for future development consent of projects listed in Annexes I and II of the European Directive on environmental impact assessment<sup>2</sup>. They are also subject to an appraisal of sustainability under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Both requirements were met in a single process called sustainability appraisal, as set out in guidance issued by the then Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in 2005<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Directive 2001/42/EC “on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment”, transposed into English law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (SI 2004 no 1633) – the “Strategic Environmental Assessment Regulations”.

<sup>2</sup> Directive 85/337/EEC on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment, amended by Directives 97/11/EC and 2003/35/EC

<sup>3</sup> *Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents*, ODPM, 2005.

- 1.12 The Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive applies to plans and programmes whose preparation began on or after 21 July 2004, and to those whose formal preparation began before this date but which had not been adopted (in the case of regional strategies, published by the Secretary of State), by 21 July 2006. Sustainability appraisals incorporating strategic environmental assessment were carried out in all regions during the preparation of their regional strategies, but in the South West and West Midlands, where the process was partial or not completed, they could only be applied to the work which was actually done.

## The Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive

- 1.13 The objective of the Directive is stated in Article 1: “to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of certain plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development”.
- 1.14 Article 5 of the Directive therefore requires that
- “An environmental report shall be prepared in which the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme, and reasonable alternatives taking into account its objectives and geographical scope, are identified, described and evaluated. It shall include the information that may reasonably be required taking into account current knowledge and methods of assessment, the contents and level of detail in the plan, its stage in the decision making process and the extent to which certain matters are more appropriately assessed at different levels in that process in order to avoid duplication of the assessment”.
- 1.15 The Directive refers only to plans or programmes, or modifications of them, which are being prepared or adopted, and not to the revocation of a plan or programme. Therefore Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required for the revocation of regional strategies. The Government has nonetheless decided to undertake voluntary assessments of the likely significant environmental effects of revocation of the eight strategies. These assessments are being conducted in line with the procedure set out in the Directive.

## The strategic environmental assessment process

- 1.16 The Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive and Regulations require authorities which prepare and/or adopt a plan or programme which is subject to the Directive to:
- prepare a report on its likely significant environmental effects;
  - consult designated environmental authorities<sup>4</sup> and the public;
  - take into account the report and the results of the consultation during the preparation process and before the plan or programme is adopted; and
  - make information available on the plan or programme as adopted and how environmental considerations were taken into account.
- 1.17 An environmental report should identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan, and those of reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan. It should include the information that may reasonably be required, taking into account current knowledge and methods of assessment, the contents and level of detail in the plan, its stage in the decision making process, and the extent to which certain matters are more appropriately assessed at different levels in that process in order to avoid duplication of the assessment.
- 1.18 Annex I of the Directive sets out the information to be provided. Paragraph (f) states that issues to be considered should include biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage and landscape – a wide-ranging coverage encompassing social and cultural matters.

## Methodology for assessment of revocations

- 1.19 The method adopted to assess the likely significant environmental effects of revoking the regional strategies has been to take as a starting point the environmental assessment components of the sustainability appraisals carried out when the strategies were being prepared. For those regions which had not completed an up-to-date strategy, use has been made of the more recent appraisals of the emerging strategy.
- 1.20 The assessments follow the format set out in Annex I of the Directive, taking into account that local plans<sup>5</sup> would set the framework for

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<sup>4</sup> Designated as “consultation bodies” in the Strategic Environmental Assessment Regulations.

<sup>5</sup> Local plans in this report are the local level component of the development plan ie development plan documents and in some instances, saved plan policies.

decisions on planning applications following the proposed revocation of the regional strategies and saved structure plan policies.

- 1.21 The approaches taken in the appraisals during preparation of the strategies differed to some extent between regions, and the assessments inevitably reflect this. However, as far as possible, a broad assessment has been made of the component policies in the regional strategy, identifying their objectives and any particular issues from the sustainability appraisals, so as to identify the key environmental issues arising in assessing the likely effects of revocation. The assessment focuses on those aspects of the Plan which might be expected to lead to significant environmental effects.
- 1.22 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. 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 reports, while more general issues are discussed below in the context of the limitations of the assessments.

## Limitations of the assessments

- 1.23 Strategic Environmental Assessment is intended to be applied to the preparation and modification of relevant plans and programmes. This informs those preparing the plan and others consulted on it of the potential environmental effects of the proposals, and compares the effects of reasonable alternatives. There are now relatively well established processes available to make such assessments. In contrast, the assessment of the environmental effects of revoking a plan does not fit well with the process required by the Directive and there is no established practice.
- 1.24 The revocation of regional strategies is part of the Government's policy for a more localist planning system. This is supported by the proposed duty for public bodies to cooperate. Local authorities will be expected to demonstrate evidence of having successfully cooperated to plan for issues with cross-boundary impacts when their local plans are submitted for examination. Alongside the Community Infrastructure Levy, the New Homes Bonus and the local retention of business rates are intended to encourage a more positive attitude to growth and allow communities to share the benefits and mitigate the negative effects of growth.
- 1.25 The environmental effects of revoking the Plan will reflect future decisions by local authorities, individually and collectively. While the environmental effects cannot be predicted for certain because they depend on these local decisions, the revocation of regional strategies

and their top-down targets will provide opportunities for securing environmental benefits because their revocation would remove threats to local environments. For example, revocation would remove the top-down pressure on local authorities to review the extent of their Green Belt. Across England this would have been likely to effect more than 30 areas. Protecting the Green Belt brings many environmental benefits including safeguarding the countryside and preventing urban sprawl.

- 1.26 The revocation of regional strategies should be seen in the context of other relevant Government policies and associated legislation aimed at protecting the natural and built environment and this is described in the section on the policy context above. This includes the National Planning Policy Framework mentioned above, published in July for consultation, which sets out the purpose of the planning system which is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It safeguards valued, national protections such as Green Belt, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and Sites of Special Scientific Interest, re-affirms protections for wildlife, bio-diversity and cultural heritage and sets out clear expectations on tackling and adapting to climate change. Additionally, the protections for the environment set out in national planning policy and, in many cases, provided for by national and European legislation means it is highly unlikely that there would be any significant adverse environmental effects resulting from the revocation.

## Assessment of reasonable alternatives

- 1.27 The revocation of the regional strategies is the policy of the Government as set out in the Coalition's programme for Government<sup>6</sup>. The Government has introduced a clause in the Localism Bill to revoke by order individual regional strategies in whole or in part and saved structure plan policies.
- 1.28 The revocation of the eight existing regional strategies has been assessed against the reasonable alternative of not revoking them. This provides the clearest and fullest baseline scenario against which to assess the effect of revocation. Although the revocation of individual policies within each regional strategy have not been presented as separate additional reasonable alternatives, the assessment of the revocation of the North West Plan has included the consideration of its component policies.
- 1.29 Saved structure plan policies are also included within the Environmental Report, and where any of these policies have been identified as still relevant, the environmental implications of their

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[http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/sites/default/files/resources/coalition\\_programme\\_for\\_government.pdf](http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/sites/default/files/resources/coalition_programme_for_government.pdf)

revocation has been included in the overall assessment of the revocation of the North West Plan.

## Habitats Directive

- 1.30 The provisional view is that the revocation of the regional strategies will have no effects requiring assessment under the Habitats Directive<sup>7</sup>. This Directive prohibits the adoption of plans or projects which have an adverse effect on the integrity of European sites unless there are no alternative solutions and the plan or project must be adopted for imperative reasons of overriding public importance. The revocation of regional strategies does not affect the legal requirement set out in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 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 (Regulation 9). Part 6 of the Regulations also contains provisions which require the assessment of implications for European sites of any plan or project, which is likely to have a significant effect on it, before it proceeds in accordance with the Habitats Directive. The views of Natural England, as the statutory nature conservation body, are being sought.

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<sup>7</sup> Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora

## Chapter 2

### The North West of England Plan

- 2.1 The regional strategy under consideration for revocation is the North West of England Plan (the Plan), published by the then Secretary of State in 2008. It can be viewed at:  
<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20100505213210/http://www.gos.gov.uk/gonw/Planning/RegionalPlanning/?a=42496>

### Chronology of preparation of the North West of England Plan

- 2.2 The North West Regional Assembly prepared a draft regional spatial strategy during 2004–06, setting out the scale, priorities and broad locations for future development across the region and providing a framework for where and how much development should take place. It covered a broad range of issues including housing, retail and the environment and included a regional transport strategy.
- 2.3 The draft Plan was submitted to Government in January 2006 along with a sustainability appraisal report. The submitted Plan and sustainability appraisal were subsequently tested at an examination in public during November 2006 - February 2007. A Stage 1 (screening) habitats regulation assessment and appropriate assessment were also carried out but could not be given adequate consideration by the Planning Inspectorate due to time limitations. The Panel report detailing recommendations for changes to the draft Plan was published in early May 2007. The Government Office for the North West subsequently prepared draft proposed changes.
- 2.4 Following the Panel report, a habitats regulation assessment was undertaken on the submitted draft Plan (informed by the previous stage 1 report of January 2007) which provided input and recommendations to the Government Office for the North West in the formulation of the draft proposed changes. A final sustainability appraisal, strategic environmental assessment and habitats regulation assessment were carried out on the draft proposed changes to determine their effects on sustainability, European wildlife sites, equality and health.
- 2.5 The final proposed changes were consulted on for a period of nine weeks. Consultation responses were considered and final amendments made. The published Plan, taking into account these changes, was published in September 2008.



## Chapter 3

# Environmental Report

- 3.1 This chapter presents the information which is required to be included, wherever relevant, in the Environmental Report in accordance with Annex I of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive. The Environmental Report, including the regional commentary, is largely based on the data and evidence provided in the Plan and the assessments produced to support its preparation. Where possible the data has been updated and from the data available it is considered unlikely that the overall state of the environment in the North West has changed significantly since publication of the Plan.

## The North West Region

- 3.2 The North West is the third largest of the nine Government regions in England. It comprises the counties of Cumbria, Lancashire and Cheshire; the metropolitan districts in Greater Manchester and Merseyside; the unitary authorities of Blackburn-with-Darwen, Blackpool, Halton and Warrington. It covers the whole of the Lake District National Park but not those parts of the Yorkshire Dales and Peak District National Parks that fall within the North West Region<sup>8</sup>.
- 3.3 Around 60 per cent of its population in the North West lives in Manchester and Liverpool but much of the North West consists of scattered villages and small towns. Although the North West is generally low-lying, it contains some of the most striking upland landscapes in England, particularly within the Lake District. The northern part of the region is dominated by the Lake District National Park. The North West is rich in areas of biodiversity interest.

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<sup>8</sup> These areas are dealt with in the Regional Strategies for Yorkshire and the Humber and the East Midlands.

# Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive

## Annex 1 (a)

### **Outline of the contents and main objectives of the North West of England Plan and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes**

3.4 The Plan provides a broad framework for development and investment in the North West up to 2021. In accordance with the then Government's policy set out in the applicable national planning policy, it sets out:

- the scale and distribution of provision for new housing;
- priorities for the environment, such as countryside and biodiversity protection; and
- policies for transport, infrastructure, economic development, agriculture, minerals extraction, waste treatment and disposal.

3.5 The Plan's vision for the North West is:

*'By 2021 we will see a region that has acted to deliver sustainable development, leading to a higher quality of life for all, and reduced social, economic and environmental disparities. Development will be seen in a global context, and the region will contribute to the reduction of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions.'*

3.6 At the sub-regional level, the Plan's vision for 2021 is:

- Manchester and Liverpool firmly established as world class cities thanks to their international connections, highly developed service and knowledge sectors and flourishing culture, sport and leisure industries;
- The Central Lancashire city area becomes a focus for economic growth, building on the existing individual strengths of the urban centres around commerce, higher education, advanced manufacturing and resort tourism;
- Big improvement to the economy of Cumbria;
- Towns and cities within the North West to offer strong and distinctive centres for their hinterlands, with attractive, high quality living environments that meet the needs of their inhabitants; and
- The North West rural communities to enjoy increased prosperity and quality of life, whilst respecting the character of their surroundings and natural environment.

- 3.7 The vision set by the Plan is underpinned by the spatial principles covered by the Plan’s policies DP1 to 9<sup>9</sup>, i.e.:
- to promote sustainable communities;
  - to promote sustainable economic development;
  - to make the best use of existing resources and infrastructure;
  - to manage travel demand, reduce the need to travel, and increase accessibility;
  - to marry opportunity and need;
  - to promote environmental quality;
  - to mainstreaming rural issues; and
  - to reduce emissions and adapt to climate change.
- 3.8 The Plan also sets a series of objectives for each of the policy chapters, which are summarised in the following table.

**Table 1: North West Plan – main objectives**

<b>Economic objectives</b>
<p>The Plan seeks generally to strengthen and regenerate the regional economy and address problems of worklessness in line with the overarching spatial principles. Specifically it will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– support the business sectors identified in the regional economic strategy;</li> <li>– make provision for a supply of employment land to ensure that sustainable economic development is not constrained;</li> <li>– establish criteria for the location of regionally significant economic development;</li> <li>– promote strong and viable centres, as locations for the concentration of retail, office and recreational development;</li> <li>– support the sustainable diversification of the rural economy</li> <li>– harness the economic development potential of tourism in preferred locations.</li> </ul>
<b>Social Objectives</b>
<p>The Plan seeks to promote cohesive, mixed and thriving communities, where people will want to live, now and in the future. It aims to deliver the objective of ensuring that everyone can have a decent home, which they can afford, in a secure environment, with reasonable access to health care, educational provision and recreational facilities. It specifically seeks to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– build on current knowledge of housing markets in the North West, so as to deliver a better balance between housing demand and supply;</li> <li>– provide for additional housing, so as to meet changing needs, support economic development, address the requirement for affordable accommodation, and ensure a choice in housing types;</li> </ul>

<sup>9</sup> Chapter 4, North West of England Plan, Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021.

- improve the quality of the housing stock and its environment.

### **Transport Objectives**

The regional transport strategy reflects the Plan's spatial principles (DP1-9) and the regional and sub-regional spatial frameworks (policy RDF1) and sub regional policies. In particular it seeks to:

- maintain existing transport infrastructure in good order;
- improve journey time reliability, tackle congestion and overcrowding in the North West main transport corridors shown on the key diagram, particularly within and between major cities;
- secure a shift towards the use of more sustainable modes of transport
- secure safe and efficient access between residential areas and key destinations, including centres of employment, schools, shops and other services;
- improve surface access and interchange arrangements at the international, national and regional gateways;
- reduce the adverse impacts of transport, in terms of safety hazards, climate change, environmental degradation, residential amenity and social exclusion;
- integrate the management and planning of transport systems.

### **Environmental objectives**

The Plan is committed to using the natural and man-made resources within the North West actively, prudently and efficiently, as well as protecting and enhancing the region's historic, built and natural environmental assets, and unique culture and heritage. It seeks to:

- promote a more integrated approach to delivering a better environment through land and water management, including better relationship of new development to water resources, flood risk and adaptation to the impacts of climate change;
- create multi-functional networks of green spaces;
- produce a concise waste strategy that:
  - breaks the link between economic growth and the environmental impact of waste
  - increases recycling rates in the North West
  - provides a framework in which communities take responsibility for their own waste
  - delivers a pattern of facilities of national regional and sub-regional importance including supporting policies;
- reduce energy demand and break the link between energy demand and economic growth;
- promote and exploit low carbon and renewable energy technologies and increase the amount of electricity and energy for heating from renewable sources supplied and consumed within the North West.

- 3.9 The Plan for the North West sets out the then Government's policies on development at the time of its publication and relates them to the regional context. The Plan incorporates the policies in the regional transport strategy produced by North West' regional planning body (the North West Regional Leaders Forum), and takes due account of the local and regional housing and economic strategies, as well as other various strategies and programmes produced by Government, agencies and partnerships; the utility companies and transport providers; other private businesses and voluntary organisations.
- 3.10 Plans and strategies produced by the following neighbouring regions of relevance to the North West Plan include:
- the regional spatial strategies for the North East of England, for the West Midlands, for the East Midlands and for Yorkshire and the Humber (which are also under consideration for revocation);
  - the National Planning Framework for Scotland;
  - the Wales Spatial Plan;
  - the West Cheshire and North East Wales sub-regional spatial strategy (2004).
- 3.11 The following table illustrates the range of documents considered during the production of the Plan and through the sustainability appraisal process:

**Table 2: List of documents relevant to the preparation of the Plan**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Relevant European policy and directives, covering a range of environmental issues</li> <li>- Planning policy statements and minerals policy statements</li> <li>- UK Sustainable Development Strategy</li> <li>- UK Government 10-Year Transport Plan (2000)</li> <li>- <i>The Future of Air Transport</i> – white paper and the Civil Aviation Bill (December 2004)</li> <li>- <i>Sustainable Communities: building for the future</i> (2003)</li> <li>- <i>Working with the grain of nature: a biodiversity strategy for England</i> (Defra 2002)</li> <li>- Rural Strategy (2004)</li> <li>- <i>The Strategy for Sustainable Farming and Food-Facing the Future</i> (2002)</li> <li>- The First Soil Action Plan for England, 2004-2006</li> <li>- Energy white paper, <i>Our Energy Future: creating a low carbon economy</i> (2003)</li> <li>- The Energy Challenge, Energy Review Report (July 2006)</li> <li>- Energy white paper: <i>meeting the energy challenge</i> (May 2007)</li> <li>- <i>The Historic Environment: a force for our future</i>, DCMS (2001)</li> <li>- <i>Homes for the future: more affordable, more sustainable</i> – Housing green paper (July 2007)</li> <li>- Waste Strategy for England 2007 (May 2007)</li> <li>- Strategic Housing Market Assessments: practice guidance (August</li> </ul> |
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2007)

- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment: practice guidance (July 2007)
- Regional Planning Guidance for the North West (which was revised by the Plan)
- The Regional Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands
- Revised Regional Planning Guidance for the East Midlands
- Action for Sustainability: Regional Sustainable Development Framework
- North West Regional Assembly's Spatial Implications of Climate Change (2003)
- Regional Economic Strategy 2003-2005
- Productivity through employability: the framework for regional employment and skills action
- Innovation Strategy
- Rural renaissance: The Regional Rural Recovery Action Plan
- England's North West Connected: Information Communication Technology (ICT) Strategy
- England's North West Science Strategy
- Regional International Trade Strategy 2001-2005
- The North West Housing Strategy 2005
- Action for Equality: the North West Equality and Diversity Strategy 2005
- Investment for Health: A Plan for the North West of England
- Agri-Food Sector: Strategy for the North West
- Regional Waste Strategy
- Regional Cultural Strategy
- Tourist Strategy for the North West Tourist Board Region
- The North West Plans for Sports and Physical Activity 2004-2008
- North West Objective 3: Regional Development Plan
- North West Objective 2 Single Programme Document 2000-2006
- Merseyside Objective 1 Single Programme Document 2000-2006
- A Greater Manchester Strategy
- Merseyside: Action Plan for the City Region 2002-2005
- West Cheshire – North East Wales Sub-regional Study (October 2004)
- A Sub-regional Strategy for Cumbria
- Lancashire West Matters
- Spatial Implications of Climate Change for the North West and Rising to the Challenge: A Climate Change Action Plan for England's Northwest 2007 – 09 (November 2006)
- North West Sustainable Energy Strategy (July 2006)
- North West Regional Homelessness Strategy (January 2008)
- North West Housing Statement (Oct 2007)
- Housing & Economic Growth in the North West Study –Final Report (May 2008)

## **STRUCTURE PLANS**

- 3.12 In 2007 the Government wrote to local authorities under the transitional provisions of Schedule 8 to the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 to advise them which policies from their existing structure plans would be saved after 27 September 2007. Policies were saved in the expectation that they would be replaced promptly by policies in the regional spatial strategy, or development plan documents for the relevant local authorities. Clause 97 of the Localism Bill provides for the revocation of saved structure plan policies. Where the appraisal at Annex B identified saved structure plan policies as still relevant the environmental implications of their revocation has been included in the overall assessment of the revocation of the regional strategy.
- 3.13 A number of structure plan policies were saved in the North West. Details are set out in Annex B.

## **LOCAL PLANS**

- 3.14 Regional strategies form part of the statutory development plan, under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, until such time as they are revoked. Until then, development plan documents prepared by local authorities are required to be in general conformity with the regional strategy.
- 3.15 On revocation of the 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 under the powers being brought forward by the Localism Bill. Revocation does not affect the statutory duty on local authorities to keep under review the matters which may be expected to affect the development of their area or the planning of its development.
- 3.16 A list of local plans in the North West and their current composition is included at Annex C.

## **Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive, Annex 1 (b)**

### **Relevant aspects of the current state of the environment of the North West of England and the likely evolution without implementation of the Plan**

- 3.17 This section outlines the baseline economic, social and environmental conditions and main objectives driving the North West region at the time of the preparation of the Plan. The information is mostly generic to the North West rather than specific to particular parts of the North West or local areas.

- 3.18 The data here reported is based primarily on the data and evidence provided in the Plan<sup>10</sup> and from the 2006 and 2008 sustainability appraisals and appropriate assessments produced to support the preparation of the Plan. This data, therefore, mostly represents the situation when the Plan was being prepared.
- 3.19 Although the baseline mainly reflects the situation up to 2008, additional, more up to date, data reflecting the situation post the Plan's adoption in September 2008 has been drawn on where possible. For example, new evidence has been drawn from the North West Regional Development Agency's report 'The environment evidence base' published in May 2009; the report produced by Natural England in 2008 setting out the state of the natural environment in the North West; English Heritage web site statistics and trends on heritage risks; and from material provided by the designated Consultation Bodies for Strategic Environmental Assessment.
- 3.20 The key points of the baseline assessment are summarised in Table 3 below. This section does not include a separate description of the likely evolution of the environment without the Plan as the likely significant effects on the environment of the proposed revocation is considered in the Report as whole (bearing in mind that strategic environmental assessment normally applies to plan preparation and the requirement to look at the likely evolution of the environment is to provide a frame of reference to help shape the plan's content). It is also important to acknowledge the limitations of the baseline data as this could have changed over time. But it is considered unlikely that the *overall* state of the environment in the North West has changed *significantly* since publication of the Plan.

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<sup>10</sup> Baseline data extracted from the North West of England Plan Regional Spatial Strategy to 2010, GONW, September 2008.



**Table 3: Summary of baseline conditions in the North West (compiled from various sources noted in paragraphs 3.17 and 3.20)**

<b>Sustainability Issues</b>	<b>Summary of baseline conditions</b>
<b>Economy</b>	<p>At the time of its preparation, the regional economic strategy<sup>11</sup> highlighted the fact that gross value added per head was 12% lower than the average for England, resulting in an output gap of £13bn. However, the regional economic strategy indicated significant variations in gross value added, skills, enterprise and worklessness across the North West.</p> <p>Tourism is a very important sector for the North West worth in excess of £13.6bn. The visitor economy supports over 215,000 jobs and a quarter of all tourism is thought to depend on the natural environment.</p>
<b>Transport</b>	<p>The North West has a high quality network of transport links across much of the North West and with other regions. It lies at the intersection of two internationally important transport corridors running North-South (the M6 and West coast mainline link Scotland to Europe via the channel tunnel and ports in the East and South East) and West-East (from Ireland, through Liverpool and other Irish sea ports across the Pennines to Europe via the North Sea and Baltic Sea ports in a route that has become known as the North European Trade Axis (NETA).</p> <p>At the time the Plan was produced, issues such as congestion on some rail routes, worsening journey times on the motorway network and in urban areas and congestion which was reducing the reliability of road-based public transport were raised. Elsewhere, the main issues related to road safety and the environmental and social impact of traffic in towns, villages and the wider countryside.</p>

<sup>11</sup> The North West Regional Economic Strategy, the North West Regional Development Agency, 2006

<p><b>Biodiversity, fauna, flora</b><sup>12</sup></p>	<p>The North West holds significant proportions of the England resource for some habitats, particularly those found in the uplands, coast and estuaries and lowland wetlands.</p> <p>At the time of preparation, the Plan noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- on average around 60% of this biodiversity habitat area lay within statutory designations of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Special Protection Area (SPA), Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and/or Ramsar Sites and was thus protected by legislation. The remaining 40% of biodiversity habitat area lay outside statutory protected areas and hence was potentially more vulnerable to habitat loss and damage;</li> <li>- of the nine Government regions, the North West contained the largest area of land (200,000 ha) designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest. With 90.25% in favourable or recovering condition;</li> <li>- there were 38 Special Areas of Conservation, 12 special protection areas, two proposed special protection areas and 13 Ramsar sites wholly or partly within the North West<sup>13</sup>.</li> <li>- designated coastal sites included: Solway Firth, Drigg Coast, Duddon Estuary, Morecambe Bay, Ribble and Alt Estuaries, Sefton Coast, Mersey Estuary, Mersey Narrows and North Wirral, and Dee Estuary;</li> <li>- between 1994 and 2006, indices increased for all native bird species (+23%) compared to the national indices, which had seen a slight decline. During the same period indices for woodland birds increased (+32%). The indices for 19 of the 29 individual woodland bird species included in the index increased by 10% or more.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Population</b></p>	<p>At the time the Plan was prepared it was noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the population of the North West had risen by 0.1% between 2001 and 2002 and ageing of the population was identified as a key issue. The Plan (paragraph 2.14) notes that these trends</li> </ul>

<sup>12</sup> 'State of the natural environment in the North West', Natural England, 2008

<sup>13</sup> Summary findings of the Sustainability Appraisal, Habitats Regulations Assessment, Equalities Impact Assessment and Health Impact Assessment of the Secretary of State Proposed Changes to the North West RSS, Government Office of the North West, March 2008

	<p>will bring additional demands on the government region's services, infrastructure and buildings;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the identified gross value added for the North West was 12% lower than the national average. Within the region there were contrasting areas of economic performance, i.e. Cheshire and Manchester outperforming Cumbria and Merseyside.</li> <li>- the North West suffered from pockets of deprivation<sup>14</sup>, with significant disparities between ethnic communities. Most deprived areas are around Liverpool, Manchester, Blackpool, Knowsley, Wigan and Salford.</li> </ul>
<b>Human health</b>	<p>At the time the plan was prepared it was noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- life expectancy was increasing slightly although it was below the national average<sup>15</sup>;</li> <li>- there were pockets of 'lower health' ratios in urban conurbations around Liverpool, Manchester, Knowsley, Wigan and Salford.</li> </ul>
<b>Soil</b>	<p>At the time the Plan was prepared it was noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the North West had some of the most fertile and productive agricultural land in the country and some of the harshest in terms of soils, topography and climate;</li> <li>- between 2004 and 2008, the total amount of derelict land and buildings in England decreased from 19,870 ha to 15,470 ha (a reduction of 22%). The North West in comparison saw a fall from 5,690 ha to 4,150 ha (a reduction of 27%). Despite annual decreases, the amount of derelict land in the North West still remained higher than any other region, and comprised 26.8% of the national total;</li> <li>- the North West had the highest amount of previously developed land in all the Government regions with 38.25% of the national total. The 2006 sustainability appraisal indicated that the number of houses built on previously developed land was increasing whilst the percentage of agricultural land lost to development was decreasing.</li> </ul>

<sup>14</sup> Submitted Sustainability Appraisal of the North West Regional Spatial Strategy, Technical paper, page 1, 2006: 'The North West is one of the most deprived regions in England'

<sup>15</sup> (idem 3), page 1: 'of all local authorities in England and Wales, Manchester, Blackpool and Liverpool have the lowest female life expectancy'

<p><b>Water</b></p>	<p>At the time the Plan was prepared it was noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the 'headline indicator' survey (2007) showed that the chemical quality was better than the average for England (based on rivers achieving a good or fair rating), but was not as good for biological quality. 32% of rivers in the North West were classed as 'good' under the Water Framework Directive. The target was for 36% of rivers in the North West to achieve 'good' status by 2015.<sup>16</sup>.</li> <li>- the North West river basin plan aimed to ensure that water bodies reach good ecological status or better. Assessment results released this year (2011) show that 32% of all water bodies in the North West meet this target. In terms of rivers, 32% by length (2,497 km) are at good ecological status; and 68% by length (5,187 km) fall below this standard. In terms of lakes and reservoirs, 28% of still waters (49 water bodies) are at 'good' ecological status; 72% (125 water bodies) fall below this standard. For transitional and coastal waters, 19% (four water bodies) are at good ecological status; 81% (17 water bodies) fall below this standard. Of the 21 groundwater bodies that were assessed, 15 do not meet 'good' status.</li> <li>- 36 out of 37 bathing sites met European Union water quality standards in 2004 for the third year running (with the exception of Haverigg in Cumbria);</li> <li>- many of the water sources in the North West are located in European habitat sites. At the time the report was prepared, 24% of the water resource management units were classified as over-abstracted or over-licensed at low flows (20 resource management units are over-licensed, 12 resource management units are over-abstracted)<sup>17</sup>.</li> <li>- factors increasing pressure on water resources included population and development growth, climate change, water companies' efficiency targets and meeting the requirements of the Water Framework Directive.</li> <li>- the Habitats Regulation Assessment of the North West Plan indicated that the current abstraction levels were already adversely affecting at least eight European sites in the region.</li> </ul>
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<sup>16</sup> Idem.

<sup>17</sup> Idem.

<p><b>Air and climatic factors (including climate change)</b><sup>18</sup></p>	<p>The appropriate assessment of the draft plan (2007) noted that there were 17 Air Quality Management Areas in the North West including Greater Manchester, Liverpool, Warrington, South Lakes and Lancaster. The growth described in the Plan, in combination with growth proposed in adjoining regions, is likely to mean that air quality continues to be an issue in some areas.</p> <p>Earlier Habitats Regulations Assessment studies concluded that 24 international sites in the North West were experiencing more than twice the critical load for nitrogen deposition and that 12 international sites were experiencing more than five times the critical load for acid deposition. Transport emissions are a key source of air pollution in the North West.</p> <p>At the time the Plan was prepared it was noted that impacts of climate change were set to continue with the North West region's climate likely to become warmer and wetter, with a likely gradual impact on landscape as well as biodiversity and human health. Sea levels were predicted to rise between 12 and 67cm by 2050, which could put all coastal areas at increased risk of flooding, and accelerate coastal squeeze. Lancashire's low-lying coasts are predicted to be under increased threat of flooding as a result of climate change.</p>
<p><b>Pollution</b></p>	<p>At the time the Plan was prepared the North West was identified as a higher than the national average polluter with some areas experiencing air pollution problems.</p> <p>Emissions to the atmosphere were set to increase, primarily from vehicles<sup>19</sup> rather than from industry.</p>
<p><b>Culture and historic environment</b></p>	<p>At the time the Plan was prepared it was noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- there were 25,420 Listed Buildings with the North West representing about 7% of the national stock;</li> </ul>

<sup>18</sup> Draft Regional Spatial Strategy Draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West: Appropriate Assessment, Executive Summary, Dec 2007

<sup>19</sup> Non technical report, Sustainability Appraisal Report on the Regional Spatial Strategy, page 3, 2006: 'Fewer people use public transport in the region than the national average and more use the car to go to work'.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hadrian's Wall and Liverpool Mercantile City were identified as World Heritage Sites, with the Lake District and the Castlefield, Ancoats and Worsley areas of Manchester as Candidate Sites;</li> <li>- there were 859 conservation areas within the North West, 129 registered Parks and Gardens of Historic Interest and 3 Registered Historic Battlefields;</li> <li>- St Bee's Head on the west coast of Cumbria was identified as a Heritage Coast;</li> <li>- historical assets tend to positively affect their local economy, drawing on the local labour force, supporting specialist traditional skills. Although the cultural, historic and built environment in much of the North West was being maintained or enhanced, in some areas they were being either neglected or changing in a way that is inconsistent with their character. They were also at risk from the effects of climate change.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Landscape</b><sup>20</sup></p>	<p>The North West's landscape can be divided into three distinct areas: the uplands of Cumbria and the Pennines, the lowlands plains of West Lancashire and Cheshire and the urban areas of Greater Manchester and other industrial towns. The overall character of the landscape has suffered from development, particularly Greater Manchester, East Lancashire and Merseyside.<sup>21</sup></p> <p>In 2008, 29% of the North West was designated as protected landscape compared to 23% for England overall, with 11% and 18% by area for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and National Parks respectively.</p> <p>In 2009, 29 landscape defining National Character Areas in the North West, 14% which are 'enhanced' in character, 41% 'maintained', 7% 'neglected' and 38% 'diverging' from baseline quality. Areas that are neglected or diverging are largely around major centres of population and transport corridors. Landscape character is being maintained in the protected areas of the North West such as the Cumbria High Fells, which makes up a large part of the Lake District.<sup>22</sup></p>

<sup>20</sup> 'State of the natural environment in the North West', Natural England, 2008

<sup>21</sup> Non technical report, Sustainability Appraisal Report on the Regional Spatial Strategy, page 3, 2006

<sup>22</sup> The Environment Evidence Base (RS2010), North West Regional Development Agency, May 2009 (available at <http://www.nwriu.co.uk/PDF/Environment.pdf>)

	<p>At the time the Plan was prepared it was also noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- there were 187 Sites of Special Scientific Interest designated for their geodiversity, reflecting the variety and complexity of the physical landscape, with 89% in favourable or recovering condition. The North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is also designated as a European Geopark;</li> <li>- there were 22,731 hectares of ancient woodland (10.9% of the national area);<sup>23</sup></li> <li>- it was thought likely that landscape (its character and value) may come under pressure from development within the North West, and is an ongoing risk which will have to be managed.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Waste</b></p>	<p>At the time the Plan was prepared it was noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- since 2003/04 municipal waste arisings in the North West had declined by 14%, but the region remained the second highest producer of residual waste per household. In 2007/08, approximately 4.1 million tonnes of municipal waste was produced in the North West;</li> <li>- the North West showed mixed performance on a number of municipal waste targets, with the largest increase in recycling amongst all of the English regions. In 2007/08 the North West exceeded the national average of 34% by achieving 36% for recycling or composting municipal waste. In contrast the North West performance for recovering value from waste was below the national average. The contribution from energy from waste remained at 2% since 2001. However, it was noted that this performance was expected to improve by the recent award of planning permissions for a number of energy from waste facilities. The North West made a significant reduction in the proportion of waste disposed of to landfill since 2003/04 (down from 80% to 62%).</li> </ul>

<sup>23</sup> Idem.

<b>Energy</b>	<p>At the time the plan was prepared it was noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- in 2008, the North West had an installed capacity of 544.6 MWe from sites generating electricity from renewable sources. This was an increase of 14% on the previous year;</li><li>- the North West and the East of England jointly had the greatest installed capacity with a combined total of 47.9% of England's capacity. In the North West, 62.7% of this capacity was from wind energy, with two-thirds of this being two large offshore wind farms (Burbo Bank and Barrow);</li><li>- wind had significantly overtaken landfill gas (29.5%) as the biggest source of installed renewable electricity capacity within the North West;</li><li>- as well as the massive increase in the generation of wind energy, the North West also contains 20% of England's landfill gas capacity. In addition, 'other biofuels' accounted for 37.4 MWe and hydropower for the remaining 5.4 MWe.</li><li>- the North West should show a considerable increase in capacity, with a new 95 mega watt power plant being built at Ince in Cheshire. The power plant was expected to have the capability of turning 600,000 tonnes of waste each year into electricity and heat. The waste, which would have otherwise gone to landfill, was expected instead be used to generate electricity to power a new Resource Recovery Park. Excess electricity was expected to be exported to the National Grid.</li></ul>
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## Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive Annex 1 (c) and (d)

**The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected and existing environmental problems, which are relevant to the Plan, including in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance such as areas designed pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC**

### **ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES IN THE NORTH WEST**

- 3.21 Drawing from the information provided by the assessments supporting the Plan, the environmental concerns of strategic significance and possible relevance to revocation of the Plan are considered to be:
- promoting environmental quality, respecting protecting and enhancing the built and natural environment, natural resources and biodiversity;
  - adapting to and, as far as possible, reducing, the effects of climate change, i.e. by planning for the efficient use of energy and developing renewable sources;
  - improving air and water quality;
  - managing the fabric of towns and cities and sensitive coastal and rural landscapes and increasing tree cover;
  - protecting wildlife;
  - making better use of existing resources and infrastructure;
  - finding more sustainable ways of dealing with (increasing levels of) waste.

### **AREAS LIKELY TO BE SIGNIFICANTLY AFFECTED BY THE NORTH WEST PLAN**

- 3.22 The Plan identifies a number of specific areas in the North West which are expected to accommodate substantial levels of development and growth. Policy RDF 1 sets out the spatial priorities for growth and development, investment and regeneration for the North West. These are:
- as the first priority, the main centres of Manchester and Liverpool;
  - as second priority, the inner areas surrounding these main centres, with emphasis on areas in need of regeneration and, in particular, Housing Market Renewal Areas;
  - as third priority the towns and cities in the three main major cities: Altrincham, Ashton-under-Lyne, Blackburn, Blackpool, Bolton, Burnley, Bury, Chester, Crewe, Ellesmere Port, Macclesfield, Northwich, Oldham, Preston, Rochdale, Runcorn, St Helens, Skelmersdale, Southport, Stockport, Warrington, Widnes, Wigan; and

- as fourth priority the towns and cities outside the main major cities of Carlisle and Lancaster, with investment encouraged in Barrow-in-Furness and Workington and Whitehaven to address regeneration and worklessness in Furness Peninsula and West Cumbria.
- 3.23 In the third and fourth priorities development is expected to be focused in and around the centres of the towns and cities. Development elsewhere may be acceptable if it satisfies other policies (notably DP1 to 9) aimed at delivering sustainable development. The Plan emphasis is on addressing regeneration and housing market renewal and restructuring.
- 3.24 In environmental terms, the sustainability appraisal of the proposed changes to the Plan (2008) raised concerns over the capacity of certain areas to accommodate the proposed level of development and growth, particularly in Cumbria and Lancashire. The likely effects identified by the sustainability appraisal report included poor air quality, increased emissions from cars, loss of biodiversity and high levels of waste.
- 3.25 The sustainability appraisal report also identified the likelihood of negative effects on biodiversity arising from the cumulative effects of:
- offshore wind farms in the Liverpool Bay area; and
  - proposed expansion of the North West's ports and airports and increase in freight movement, for example:
    - (i) development at Liverpool John Lennon Airport and the proposed expansions at Liverpool, Birkenhead and the Manchester Ship Canal and the 'in-combination' effects on the integrity and conservation objectives of the sites of international importance found within the wider Liverpool Bay
    - (ii) a similar situation with Heysham and Fleetwood, and potential impacts on sites at Morecambe Bay and Liverpool Bay, and
    - (iii) expansion at Carlisle Airport and potential impacts on the sites associated with the Solway.
- 3.26 The North West Plan also identifies a set of discrete sub-regions shown in the sub-regional diagrams accompanied by specific sub-regional policies for the following areas:
- Manchester City Region (including South Cheshire);
  - Liverpool City Region;
  - Central Lancashire City Region;
  - Cumbria and North Lancashire;
  - The rural and coastal areas in the North West.
- 3.27 Overall the sub-regional sections follow the over-arching strategy for the North West, taking a particular focus towards economic growth and regeneration and identifying strategic areas for development and investment.

- 3.28 The sustainability appraisal of the North West Plan indicated the potential imbalances between the economic and transportation emphasis of the sub-regional policies against specific environmental priorities. For example, it identified potential negative effects on biodiversity and landscape of policy South Cheshire (MCR4) and from the high percentage of housing likely to go onto greenfield sites. Furthermore, the sustainability appraisal indicated that the promotion of economic growth and the parallel increase in housing numbers particularly in the main cities might have been undertaken against a background of relatively poor environmental performance. Therefore, the report advised on the need for sub-regions to undertake assessments of the environmental capacity of their areas to better inform their ability to accommodate the level of growth identified in the Plan.
- 3.29 It should be noted that many effects resulting from the implementation of the Plan policies would be determined by local circumstances and influenced by other plans and processes outside the control of the Plan. There are, therefore, considerable uncertainties about the effects of implementing the Plan policies.
- 3.30 In addition, the appropriate assessment undertaken in accordance with the Habitats Regulations identified a number of instances where it was believed that policy changes were needed to ensure that implementation of the Plan would not result in adverse impacts on the integrity of any site, and to ensure it included all necessary mitigation measures, so as to reduce any adverse impacts to an acceptable level. The adopted Plan therefore includes:
- a clear statement in one of the overarching spatial principles of the need to maintain the quality and quantity of biodiversity in the North West, linking this with the production of appropriate assessments, and highlighting the importance of water quality, water levels and air quality for biodiversity (policy DP7);
  - a statement in the supporting text to policy DP7 that development likely to have an adverse effect on the integrity of European sites is “unlikely to be in accordance with the development plan”;
  - strong requirements regarding the phasing of development vis-à-vis provision of infrastructure for water and wastewater treatment (policy EM5);
  - strong support for a reduction in the need to travel, and thus indirectly a reduction in air pollution due to transport (policy RT2);
  - promotion of visitor management to protect European sites from recreational disturbance, including restrictions on visitor access where necessary (policy W7);
  - inclusion of protection and enhancement of European sites as a principle in the development of green infrastructure (policy EM3) and Regional Parks (policy EM4);

- in the policies on airports (policy RT5), ports/waterways (policy RT6) and renewable energy (policy EM17), inclusion of a requirement to consider the developments' impact on the integrity of European sites, and supporting information about the sites potentially affected;
- for air pollution, inclusion of a requirement for lower-level appropriate assessments to consider impacts on air quality; and
- to deal with potential cumulative impacts on European sites in the Mersey area, a combination of changes to the airport, port and tourism policies; inclusion of a requirement for cross-authority working to develop ecological frameworks to address habitat fragmentation etc. (policy EM1B).

3.31 The appropriate assessment of the final Proposed Changes to the Plan concluded that, in line with the requirements of the Habitats Directive and taking account of the amendments mentioned above, it was possible to conclude that the Plan was unlikely to have an adverse impact on the integrity of any international sites.

## Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive Annex 1 (e)

### **Environmental protection objectives established at international, Community or Member State level which are relevant to the Plan and the way they were taken into account during its preparation**

3.32 The legal and policy context applicable to the preparation of the Plan and relevant environmental protection objectives that informed its development are set out in the supporting sustainability appraisal. The way these were taken into account is explained in these appraisals and the assessment at Annex A of this Environmental Report draws out as appropriate how particular policies supported these concerns.

3.33 Revocation of the plan would not mean that relevant environmental objectives are not applied or ignored. Following its revocation, responsibility for ensuring the Town and Country Planning Act regime properly contributes to the delivery of national and international environmental protection objectives would largely fall to local authorities, working where relevant, with the Environment Agency, Natural England and English Heritage. New or revised development plan documents will be subject to sustainability appraisal including strategic environmental assessment and, accordingly, local authorities will need to be able to demonstrate how they have taken account of environmental objectives. They will also have to have regard to national planning policies, including objectives for sustainable development, and locally specific environmental considerations.

3.34 The role of the environment is explicitly recognised in the Plan's spatial principles (policy DP1) which set out the key sustainable elements which should guide development and investment in the North West, including:

- promoting the delivery of sustainable communities;
- making the best use of existing resources and infrastructure
- promoting environmental quality;
- reducing emissions and adapt to climate change;
- managing travel demands, reduce the need to travel, and increase accessibility.

3.35 The Plan includes certain policies and supporting text reflecting on the requirements imposed by certain international and/or national obligations, for example:

- policy EM6 and paragraphs 4.11 notes the requirement to protect international sites in line with the Habitats Directive and the importance of contributing towards national biodiversity targets.
- policy EM5 to assist delivery of the Water Framework Directive's objectives.
- policies W6, EM1(A), EM17 - historic environment. The supporting text (paragraph 2.2) notes the value and importance of maintaining and enhancing the two World Heritage Sites in the North West: Hadrian's Wall and Liverpool City Centre.
- policies DP9, EM15-17 - to contribute towards delivering national targets and international commitments in reducing carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emission. This includes energy generation and supply, buildings and transport.
- policies EM10-13 to assist implement the European Union Waste Framework Directive and Landfill Directive.

## Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive Annex 1 (f) and (g)

### **The likely significant effects of the Plan on the environment and measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the Plan**

3.36 The Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive requires the assessment to consider the likely significant effects on the environment, including on a number of specific issues set out in Annex 1(f) of the Directive, and the interrelationship between these factors. In this case, the assessment considers whether there are likely significant environmental effects of revoking the Plan, but in the context of the continuing existing local plans, and national planning policies together with applicable national and European legislation.

- 3.37 The aim of revoking the Plan is to promote “localism” and free up local communities to shape the future of their areas through local and neighbourhood plans without top-down direction from a higher tier development plan. Revocation of the Plan would leave in place saved local plan policies and adopted development plan documents.
- 3.38 Following the proposed revocation of the Plan, the expectation is that local authorities will continue to work together on cross boundary strategic issues. This will be supported by the new duty to co-operate proposed in the Localism Bill. The duty will ensure that local authorities and other public bodies are involved in a continual process of constructive and active engagement which will maximise effective working on development planning in relation to strategic planning issues that cross administrative boundaries.
- 3.39 Local authorities will continue to be required to prepare their local plans with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development. Plan preparation will be supported by a sustainable development. Plan preparation will be supported by a sustainability appraisal, which incorporates strategic environmental assessment.
- 3.40 National planning policy provides the framework for local planning and development management. The Government has recently published for consultation the new National Planning Policy Framework. Combined with existing legislation, including the need for strategic environmental assessment and sustainability appraisal of local plans, as well as appropriate assessment under the Habitats Regulations, this will ensure that local plans promote sustainable development.
- 3.41 The environmental reports (sustainability appraisal, strategic environmental assessment and appropriate assessments) supporting the preparation of the North West Plan identified the following strengths. Its:
- focus on developing a strong economy through a spatial approach (combined with improving population access to education, housing, services and infrastructure), with the aim of reducing the economic disparities faced by the sub-regions;
  - emphasis on regeneration, particularly in the most deprived urban areas through policies sought to deliver urban renaissance supported by policies promoting environmental (including housing renewal), accessibility and economic improvements;
  - focus on promoting an integrated approach to environmental management and development of multifunctional green spaces (for example, by promoting the use of green infrastructure/technologies and sustainable design and construction, and encouraging the development of integrated networks routes for walking and cycling);

- recognition of the need to tackle climate change within the Plan's core development principles, including reducing the need to travel (for example, by promoting the development of public transport nodes to supplement growth policies); and
- recognition of the importance of phasing delivery of key waste/water infrastructure in advance of new development.

3.42 But the environmental appraisals also recognised a number of key weaknesses with the Plan:

- its concentration of development on urban areas, with less consideration given to rural or remote areas particularly those suffering from poor accessibility (i.e. to jobs, services and affordable housing) which may lead to social exclusion;
- its emphasis upon economic growth within key regional centres, with less attention to lower order settlements;
- although environmental protection policies are included, there were concerns around adequate recognition of the importance of the environment particularly when managing the tension between growth and likely impacts on the local environment. For example, the appraisal raised concerns over areas with poor air quality, emissions from cars, loss of biodiversity, water quality and resources and high levels of waste, particularly in Cumbria and Lancashire where the most significant growth increases are experienced;
- while the importance of tackling climate change was recognised, there were concerns that this seemed not to have been carried through the Plan consistently, particularly in relation to transport policies where the focus on improving connectivity could encourage greater movement, thereby increasing greenhouse gas emissions and impacting on environmental quality; and
- the increase in housing numbers in certain areas was considered as potentially having significant effects on environmental factors, such as on increased levels of emissions, not only from direct sources such as vehicles but also indirectly through increased demand for energy sourced from centralised power generation facilities.

3.43 With regard to international and European Sites, the draft habitats regulations assessment<sup>24</sup> and appropriate assessment<sup>25</sup> of the draft North West Plan indicated that the strategy had the potential to have a range of impacts on European sites in the North West region and Wales in terms of:

- water resources;

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<sup>24</sup> Habitats Regulations Assessment of the North West Regional Spatial Strategy – Consolidated Report, Government Office North West, Sept 2008.

<sup>25</sup> Draft Regional Spatial Strategy Draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West: Appropriate Assessment, Executive Summary, Dec 2007

- water quality;
- air quality;
- disturbance from recreation, energy projects, aircraft, shipping and roads; and
- coastal squeeze and land take.

3.44 Following from this evidence, further changes were made to the draft strategy to ensure that the Plan was in compliance with the Habitats Regulations. The final habitats regulation assessment and appropriate assessment on the final proposed changes concluded that *'with the mitigating and protective measures introduced, the final regional spatial strategy for the North West would not have significant adverse impacts on sites of international importance for nature conservation'*.

3.45 As shown in Table 4, the sustainability appraisals identified significant negative cumulative effects resulting from implementing the Plan in combination with other plans and wider trends. Key effects identified were mostly as a consequence of the level of growth and development proposed in the Plan, particularly in relation to the proposed housing provision targets and transport policies on airports, ports and freight. These are:

- a potential increase on travel by car and air, with associated air and light pollution;
- general pressure on biodiversity and the integrity of sites of national and/or international importance, which highlights the tension between habitat protection and policies in the Plan promoting development in/around airports/ports, proposals for inter-modal freight terminals, as well as policies promoting development particularly around coastal areas for economic development and tourism;
- a potential increase on greenhouse gas emissions from housing and travel;
- increased pressure on the environmental capacity of some areas to accommodate the level of growth and development proposed, particularly in relation to:
  - pressure on water demand and water treatment capacity (a particular tension about the demands on Welsh water from growth in Merseyside)
  - increased waste generation and disposal to landfill
  - landscape impacts and added pressure to revise Green Belt boundaries (for example, the Lake District National Park)
  - management of the effects of flood risk on development, especially on the Manchester area and coastal areas.

3.46 Policy EM1(b) indicates that active arrangements may be needed to address ecological cross-boundary issues with areas such as the Pennines, Solway Firth, the Mersey Estuary, the Lune Estuary, the River Dee Estuary and the Cheshire Meres and Mosses, as well as



including biodiversity policies in any developing Marine Spatial Planning System in the Irish Sea.

- 3.47 A summary of the environmental effects identified in the sustainability appraisal of the Plan are set out in Table 4 below, together with an assessment of any likely significant environmental effects of its proposed revocation. This draws from the more detailed assessment of policies at Annex A. The Table is set out by reference to the issues listed in Annex 1(f), with the exception of material assets. This has been considered where relevant as part of the assessment of the other Annex 1 (f) issues rather than being dealt with separately.
- 3.48 The assessment's conclusion is that revocation of the Plan is unlikely in itself to result in *significant* environmental effects. In reaching this conclusion the assessment has considered as appropriate the inter-relationship between the Annex 1(f) issues and taken into account likely significant effects from secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long term permanent and temporary, both positive and negative.

**Table 4: Summary assessment of the environmental implications of North West Plan policies and likely significant environmental effects of revocation of the Plan**

<b>Strategic Environmental Assessment topic</b>	<b>Implications of Plan policies</b>	<b>Likely significant environment effects of revocation</b>
<b>Biodiversity, fauna and flora</b>	<p>There are a number of policies in the Plan that aim to improve or maintain the quality and/or quantity of biodiversity, fauna and flora.</p> <p>These include :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Policy DP 7 which seeks to maintain and enhance the quantity and quality of biodiversity and habitat;</li> <li>- Policy EM3 which requires maintenance and enhancement of existing, and creation of new, green infrastructure to deliver multiple benefits (e.g. formal &amp; informal recreation, wildlife habitat, flood management);</li> <li>- Policy EM1 which sets out an integrated approach to identifying, protecting, enhancing and managing environmental assets from landscape, to natural environment, historic environment and woodlands of the North West. The policy aims to achieve, as a minimum, no net loss in resources – i.e. any development proposal should at least maintain levels of environmental quality and quantity, and ideally enhance them.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Revocation is unlikely to have any significant environmental effects on biodiversity, flora and fauna.</b></p> <p>Nationally and internationally designated sites will continue to be subject to statutory protection. Under the Habitats Regulations, where necessary, local authorities are required to undertake habitats regulation assessment of their local plans. Other than in exception circumstances, they must not grant planning permission for a proposed development unless they have certainty that it will not, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, adversely affect the integrity of the European site concerned.</p> <p>National planning policy on biodiversity will still apply and so local authorities will need to continue to have regard to policies aimed at the conservation and enhancement of the natural and local environment by minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible. Local authorities can still develop local biodiversity action plans, in cooperation with Natural England, and prepare similar</p>

Strategic Environmental Assessment topic	Implications of Plan policies	Likely significant environment effects of revocation
	<p>Positive impacts also expected from policies EM4 (regional parks) and policies on coastal and rural areas (EM6) (which reference habitats sites)</p> <p>The sustainability appraisals identified potential negative effects on biodiversity arising from the proposed level of development and growth promoted by the Plan particularly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- in South Cheshire (associated with policy MCR4);</li> <li>- the potential cumulative effects of offshore wind farms in the Liverpool Bay area.;</li> <li>- the development of airport and freight infrastructure in the North West (RT5 to RT8), i.e. (i) development at Liverpool John Lennon Airport and the proposed expansions at Liverpool, Birkenhead and the Manchester Ship Canal and the 'in-combination' effects on the integrity and conservation objectives of the sites of international importance found within the wider Liverpool Bay; (ii) development at Heysham and Fleetwood and associated potential impacts on sites at Morecambe Bay and Liverpool Bay; (iii) expansion at Carlisle Airport and potential associated impacts on the sites associated with</li> </ul>	<p>policies with the North West Plan.</p> <p>Local authorities are expected to continue to work together, and with communities, on conservation, restoration and enhancement of the natural environment including biodiversity. Authorities will be able to continue to draw on available information, including data from partners, to address cross boundary issues such as the provision of green infrastructure and wildlife corridors. The proposed 'duty to cooperate' will play a key role in enabling local authorities to proactively and positively address these issues.</p> <p>In addition local plans are subject to sustainability appraisal and strategic environmental assessments which includes an assessment of the effects on biodiversity.</p>

Strategic Environmental Assessment topic	Implications of Plan policies	Likely significant environment effects of revocation
	<p>the Solway; and (iv) Policy RT6 which seeks to optimise the use of ports and waterways for trade and leisure, whilst protecting the environment and the integrity of their biodiversity.</p>	
<p><b>Population</b></p>	<p>There are a number of policies aimed at supporting measures to promote regeneration including access to public transport; address social and economic exclusion; and promote better access to services and affordable housing.</p> <p>For instance, policies in the economic chapter (combined with RDF1-2, DP3 and the sub-area sections) aim to strengthening the economy in the North West with sub-regional policies promoting business, the reduction of sub-regional disparities, the marketing of the North West's image and the promotion of local labour markets, investment and regeneration.</p> <p>The inclusion of public transport nodes to supplement growth policies provides increased access to jobs, services and housing (policy W2). In addition policies CNL1-4 (Cumbria and North Lancashire) aim to bring positive benefits through tackling areas of social and economic exclusion, the</p>	<p><b>Revocation is unlikely to have any significant environmental effects on the population.</b></p> <p>It will be for local authorities, working collaboratively with neighbouring authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships to determine the regeneration needs of their areas. The proposed duty to co-operate could assist with this. Local Enterprise Partnerships can play a key role in assisting local authorities deliver the regeneration needs for their areas.</p> <p>The Government's economic white paper (published October 2010) sets out the Government's vision for local growth, shifting power away from central government to local communities, citizens and independent providers. This means recognising that where drivers of growth are local, decisions should be made locally.</p> <p>National planning policy will still apply, and local authorities will need to have regard to policies on housing supply and transport. In addition the proposed</p>

<b>Strategic Environmental Assessment topic</b>	<b>Implications of Plan policies</b>	<b>Likely significant environment effects of revocation</b>
	<p>promotion of better access to services, regeneration and affordable housing.</p> <p>The sustainability appraisals identified that the Plan had the potential to impact negatively on service delivery in rural areas, although policies RDF2 and DP8 are aimed at mitigating this unbalance. These appraisals also indicated that the proposed concentration of growth in urban centres, close to public transport links, might leave economically deprived areas which suffer from a lack of infrastructure and poor access at a disadvantage.</p>	<p>duty to co-operate will play a key role in enabling local authorities to proactively and positively address these issues.</p> <p>In addition local plans are subject to sustainability appraisal and strategic environmental assessments which includes an assessment of the effects on the population.</p>
<b>Human health</b>	<p>The Plan seeks to address existing problems of housing affordability, which threaten the wellbeing of a widening section of the population. Likewise, it seeks to improve sustainable transport and manage transport demand, which has the potential to enhance healthy lifestyles and reduce adverse health impacts associated with traffic growth and low levels of physical activity.</p> <p>Policy L1 sets out the principles for ensuring appropriate provision of health, cultural, recreational, sport, education and training provision</p>	<p><b>Revocation is unlikely to have any significant environmental effects on human health.</b></p> <p>Local authorities are best placed to deliver planning policies to support the health and well being of local communities. National planning policies will be carried forward by local authorities, other relevant bodies and communities as best fits the local area.</p> <p>National planning policy will still apply including for housing supply. It will be for local authorities to establish the right level of local housing provision in their area, including affordable housing. They will also need to continue to identify a long-term supply of</p>

<b>Strategic Environmental Assessment topic</b>	<b>Implications of Plan policies</b>	<b>Likely significant environment effects of revocation</b>
	<p>for all members of the community in the North West.</p> <p>Policy L3 seeks to improve the conditions of existing housing stock. Research in 2004 concluded that the poor state of the North West region's housing stock should be recognised as one of the most significant factors detracting from the health of North West residents.</p> <p>Policy RT4 seeks plans and strategies for managing traffic to focus on improving road safety, reducing traffic growth and maintaining a high quality environment through mitigating the impacts of road traffic on air quality, noise and health.</p> <p>Policy RT9 promotes the development of integrated networks of continuous, attractive and safe routes for walking and cycling to widen accessibility and capitalise on their potential environmental, social and health benefits.</p> <p>It was noted that the proposed levels of development and economic growth may increase emissions and air pollution, affecting the quality of the environment, and that Airport expansion can give rise to some adverse effects such as air quality,</p>	<p>housing land as well as to determine their other development needs including to support sustainable transport.</p> <p>National planning policy relevant to health and well-being, which underpins the concept of sustainable development, should be reflected in local plan policies for local communities. Local plans will continue to be subject to sustainability appraisals which include an assessment of the impact of options on human health.</p> <p>Also the various European Union and national standards for reducing air and water pollution and greenhouse gas emissions being taken forward by local authorities and other agencies should help contribute to the improved health of the population. Local authorities should therefore be able to contribute to the improved health of the population by contributing to the achievement of European Union and national standards for air and water quality.</p>

Strategic Environmental Assessment topic	Implications of Plan policies	Likely significant environment effects of revocation
	noise, severance and visual intrusion.	
<b>Soil</b>	<p>The Plan refers to land management (including heritage, biodiversity, woodlands, contaminated land, green infrastructure and regional parks).</p> <p>Policy EM2 encourages the remediation of contaminated land.</p> <p>There is no specific mention in the Plan on the protection of higher quality agriculture land, although policies W1 and RDF2 support traditional economic activities such as farming, where they are sustainable in nature and contribute to the rural environment and economy.</p> <p>Policy EM 7 (minerals extraction) makes reference to the national significance of the North West reserves of peat and the need to ensure sensitive environmental restoration and aftercare of sites.</p>	<p><b>Revocation is unlikely to have any significant environmental effects on soil.</b></p> <p>Soil impacts are locally specific and appropriately considered at the local level. The revocation of the Plan should not have an effect on local authorities' capacity and responsibilities to deal with contaminated land including securing remediation as part of the redevelopment of brownfield and contaminated land. For development on agricultural land, local authorities should continue to have regard to national planning policies, including policies to protect the best and most versatile land to support food production. Policies to reduce urban sprawl including Green Belt will also help protect soils. Local authorities should also continue to have regard to national planning policies on peat extraction.</p> <p>Local plans are subject to sustainability appraisal and strategic environmental assessments which includes an assessment of the effects on soil.</p>

Strategic Environmental Assessment topic	Implications of Plan policies	Likely significant environment effects of revocation
<p><b>Water</b></p>	<p>Policy EM5 promotes a more integrated approach to delivering a better environment through land and water management, including the planning of new development and the need for water resources, flood risk, management and wider adaptation to the impacts of climate change.</p> <p>The implication of the Plan on the water environment were noted in the sustainability appraisals<sup>26</sup> and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- whether the water infrastructure in the North West has the capacity for the planned growth proposed in the Plan;</li> <li>- the increased risk of water pollution as a consequence of increased urban run-off, and increased discharges from waste-water treatments works and leachate from redevelopment of contaminated land and dredging of contaminated sediments.</li> <li>- the need to manage the effects of flood risk on development, especially on the Manchester area and coastal areas.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Revocation is unlikely to have any significant environmental effects on water.</b></p> <p>Regulatory mechanisms exist to ensure an adequate, safe and sustainable water supply. National policy already gives the Environment Agency, water and sewerage companies, developers, landowners, local authorities and others an important role in taking a proactive approach and work together to identify, characterise, plan and manage the water environment taking into account biodiversity sites of international importance. The proposed duty to cooperate will play a key role in enabling local authorities to proactively and positively address these issues.</p> <p>The Plan (see policies PD7 and EM5) highlights the importance of local authorities considering the likely effects of development on sites of international importance, including potential effects on sites outside the North West e.g. effects on the neighbouring coastal and inland waters in Wales. This is expected continue and where appropriate, local authorities will, as now, work in partnership with the Welsh Authorities and</p>

<sup>26</sup> Draft Regional Spatial Strategy Draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West: Appropriate Assessment, Executive Summary, Dec 2007.

<sup>27</sup> 'Cost of environmental infrastructure needs to meet the North West Regional Spatial Strategy', the Environment Agency, July 2009



<b>Strategic Environmental Assessment topic</b>	<b>Implications of Plan policies</b>	<b>Likely significant environment effects of revocation</b>
	<p>These appraisals also highlighted the need for more detailed assessment at a local level of the potential effects of the proposed housing distribution, and other growth policies. For instance, policy W5 on retail development; W6 on tourism; and RT5 on airports could all lead to a minor and/or localised increases in water use.</p> <p>In addition work by the Environment Agency and others has demonstrated that current water resource provision in the North West is impacting on several European sites, notably rivers in the Lake District, the River Dee and wetlands in Cheshire.</p> <p>The Environment Agency carried out further research<sup>27</sup> which estimated the total costs of providing water quality infrastructure for the Northwest in 2029 will be £12,827m under the rate of housing growth projections in the North West Plan (23,000 homes/annum). The report also indicated that current water company plans suggest that water resource and waste water infrastructure to support the Plan's levels of growth will be planned and provided for up to 2015.</p>	<p>statutory nature conservation bodies in Wales in considering wider cross-boundary effects of their local plans. It is expected that this will include the consideration of potential impacts on the water quality of rivers that flow into Wales or potential additional abstractions from water resources in Wales.</p> <p>Statutory requirements under the Water Framework Directive will continue to apply and be implemented principally in accordance with River Basin Management Plans, supported by national planning policy. Local authorities should work co-operatively with other authorities, the Environment Agency and water companies to ensure the spatial planning aspects of River Basin Management Plans are applied.</p> <p>The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 contains provisions for regional working and co-operation such as the establishment of regional flood and coastal committees and the bringing together of lead local flood authorities, who will have a duty to cooperate, to develop local strategies for managing local flood risk. In addition, the Flood Risk Regulations 2009 impose a duty on the Environment Agency and lead local flood authorities to take steps to identify and prepare for</p>

Strategic Environmental Assessment topic	Implications of Plan policies	Likely significant environment effects of revocation
		<p>significant flood risk.</p> <p>Water Company Water Resource Management Plans set out how water companies aim to ensure there will be sufficient water to meet potable demand without environmental consequences during the plan period. Local authorities should continue to plan for and address water infrastructure implications of development through policies in their local plans, reflecting local circumstances and priorities and to actively engage with interested parties. Water companies will have an opportunity to work with local authorities on water infrastructure implications as part of local plan preparation.</p> <p>The location of development will be a critical component of this. River Basin Management Plans for the region identify the pressures that the water environment faces and include action plans requiring cross boundary and input from a range of organisations. The proposed duty to co-operate will play a key part in supporting local authorities to address these issues.</p> <p>Local plans are subject to sustainability appraisal, strategic environmental assessments and, where</p>

Strategic Environmental Assessment topic	Implications of Plan policies	Likely significant environment effects of revocation
		appropriate, habitats regulation assessment of their local plans which includes an assessment of water issues.
<b>Air</b>	<p>A number of policies in the Plan seek to address air pollution issues by seeking to curb traffic growth. The environmental, minerals, waste and energy objectives of the Plan seek to curb traffic growth by supporting the introduction of new, and improvement of existing, sustainable transport nodes such as cycling, walking, bus and rail. The Plan also encourages new development to be accessibility by public transport, walking and cycling.</p> <p>The growth proposed in the North West Plan, in combination with growth proposed in adjoining regions, is likely to result in a continuation of the issues with air pollution. Notwithstanding the location of the development and measures to reduce car use already included within the Plan, the proposed level of growth might lead to increased levels of emissions, not only from direct sources such as vehicles but also indirectly through increased demand for energy sourced from</p>	<p><b>Revocation is unlikely to have any significant environmental effects on air.</b></p> <p>National planning policies, including those on air quality, sustainable development and transport, will continue to apply and inform local plan policies and development management decisions. The benefits of more sustainable transport provision and infrastructure and sustainable locations for development should be supported locally through land use and transport planning. Furthermore, in areas of poor air quality - including those within, or adjacent to, an Air Quality Management Area - local authorities will need to work closely with relevant partners to ensure that development has taken proper account of relevant air quality matters.</p>

<b>Strategic Environmental Assessment topic</b>	<b>Implications of Plan policies</b>	<b>Likely significant environment effects of revocation</b>
	<p>centralised power generation facilities. Furthermore, the sustainability appraisals argued that greater concentration of development might increase existing levels of air pollution and have other detrimental impacts on local environmental quality.</p> <p>The potential for negative effects resulting from the Plan's approach to airports is also identified (RT5).</p>	
<b>Climatic factors (including climate change)<sup>28</sup></b>	<p>Policy DP9 sets the strategic key priorities for the North West to reduce carbon dioxide emissions and adapt to climate change.</p> <p>Policies EM15 (A framework for Sustainable Renewable Energy in the North West) seeks to promote the production and consumption of renewable energy; EM 16 (Energy Conservation &amp; Efficiency) seeks to minimise energy consumption through efficient energy distribution and improvements to energy efficiency in domestic and non-domestic buildings. Policy EM17 (Renewable Energy) sets targets for the renewable electricity supply in the North West and sets out criteria that should be taken into account when planning</p>	<p>Through their local plans, local authorities should contribute to the move to a low carbon economy, cut greenhouse gas emissions, help secure more renewable and low carbon energy to meet national targets, and to adapt to the impacts arising from climate change.</p> <p>Local authorities are expected to have regard to policies which require them to consider how their proposed provision of new development, its spatial distribution, location and design should be planned to and low carbon energy, limit carbon dioxide emissions, and ensure new development should be planned to minimise future vulnerability in a changing climate.</p>

<sup>28</sup> Draft Regional Spatial Strategy Draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West: Appropriate Assessment, Executive Summary, Dec 2007

<b>Strategic Environmental Assessment topic</b>	<b>Implications of Plan policies</b>	<b>Likely significant environment effects of revocation</b>
	<p>renewable energy supply. Policy EM18 (Decentralised Energy Supply) sets a requirement for local authorities to set local targets for decentralised renewable energy supply in support of policy EM 17.</p> <p>Policy EM5 includes policies to address flood risk assessments guided by the Regional Flood Risk Appraisal.</p> <p>Policy EM6 (Managing the North West's Coastline) seeks to support the long term management of flood and coastal erosion risk, including mitigating and adapting to natural coastal change and the predicted effects of climate change.</p> <p>The Plan notes that rural areas are more dependent on agriculture and farm based tourism, which renders them more vulnerable to the potential physical impacts of climate change on agriculture. The Plan aims to support traditional economic activities as farming, where sustainable, whilst diversifying the economy in these areas, for example, by promoting a flexible approach to the reuse of existing buildings for non agricultural use.</p>	<p>It is expected that local authorities will continue to work together across administrative boundaries to plan development that properly minimises the impact of the changing climate, particularly from flooding and coastal change. For flooding matters, local authorities already have a duty to cooperate under the Floods and Water Management Act 2010. This contains provisions that cover regional working and co-operation such as the establishment of Regional Flood and Coastal Committees and the bringing together of lead local flood authorities (unitary and county councils), who will have a duty to cooperate, to develop local strategies for managing local flood risk.</p> <p>In addition, the Flood Risk Regulations 2009 imposes a duty on the Environment Agency and lead local flood authorities to determine whether a significant flood risk exists in an area and if so to prepare flood hazard maps, flood risk maps and flood risk management plans.</p> <p>In addition local plans are subject to sustainability appraisal and strategic environmental assessments which includes an assessment of the effects on climatic factors including climate change.</p>

Strategic Environmental Assessment topic	Implications of Plan policies	Likely significant environment effects of revocation
<p><b>Cultural heritage and the historic environment</b></p>	<p>The Plan is supportive of the preservation of historic environments and cultural assets and supports environmental improvements. Policy EM1 proposes to exploit the regeneration potential of the maritime heritage of the coast in a ‘conservation-led’ manner.</p> <p>Policies W6 on tourism and the visitor economy reflect the importance of Hadrian’s Wall and the Liverpool World Heritage Sites in supporting the economy of the North West.</p> <p>Policy W7 on the principles for Tourism Development support the provision of distinct tourism resources that harness the potential of sites and their natural attributes, including built heritage and cultural facilities.</p> <p>Policy EM1 (A) states that plans should be informed by and recognise the importance of World Heritage sites. Policy EM1 (C) sets out the wider objectives of the Plan with respect to the Historic Environment.</p> <p>Policy EM17 on renewable energy identifies that the potential effects on World Heritage sites needs to be taken into account when considering proposals and schemes for renewable energy.</p>	<p><b>Revocation is unlikely to have any significant environmental effects on cultural heritage.</b></p> <p>The most important heritage sites are subject to statutory protection. This is supported by national planning policy on the protection and conservation of the historic environment as a whole, which inform local plans and development management decisions.</p> <p>It is expected that local authorities will continue to work together, and with communities, on conservation, restoration and enhancement of the heritage and historic environment. The proposed duty to co-operate will assist with this. Authorities can continue to draw on available information, including data from partners, to address cross boundary issues.</p> <p>In planning for the historic environment, local authorities should still liaise with English Heritage to identify and evaluate areas, sites and buildings of local cultural and historic importance, and explore ways for the management, enhancement and regeneration of those areas. Such proposals should inform development plans and planning decisions.</p> <p>In addition local plans are subject to sustainability appraisal and strategic environmental assessments</p>

Strategic Environmental Assessment topic	Implications of Plan policies	Likely significant environment effects of revocation
		which includes an assessment of the effects on cultural heritage and the historic environment.
<b>Landscape</b>	<p>Policy EM1 encourages an integrated approach to conserving and enhancing the landscape, natural environment, historic environment and woodlands of the North West. Policy EM1 (A) on landscape seeks to protect, maintain and enhance natural, historic and other distinctive features that contribute to the character of landscapes and places in the North West.</p> <p>Policy EM3 promotes the conservation and enhancement of cultural, historical and natural environmental assets, including land and seascapes.</p> <p>To date, concerns over the introduction of large numbers of onshore wind farms have focused on the landscape impacts of the structures.</p>	<p><b>Revocation is unlikely to have any significant environmental effects on landscape.</b></p> <p>Nationally designated areas (including National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty) will still be subject to statutory protection, supported by national planning policies.</p> <p>In addition the revocation of top down targets will remove pressure to review Green Belt to accommodate growth. Protecting the Green Belt brings many environmental benefits including safeguarding the countryside and preventing urban sprawl.</p> <p>It is for local authorities to review their Green Belt boundaries, having regard to relevant national policy. Current planning policy and the draft National Planning Policy Framework which contain strong policies protecting the Green Belt from inappropriate development.</p> <p>Potential significant effects on landscapes should be identified by local authorities through the strategic environmental assessments of their local plans, as well</p>

<b>Strategic Environmental Assessment topic</b>	<b>Implications of Plan policies</b>	<b>Likely significant environment effects of revocation</b>
		as environmental impact assessment and appropriate assessment of specific projects.



## Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive Annex I (h)

### **Outline of reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with and description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information**

- 3.49 The reasonable alternatives to revocation of the Plan and difficulties in undertaking the assessment are considered in Chapter 1.

## Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive Annex I (i)

### **Description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring**

- 3.50 Having regard to the fact that revocation of the Plan would mean there would no longer be a Plan whose implementation could be monitored, and that it is not proposed to require monitoring at a regional level, this Environmental Report does not set out any envisaged measures for monitoring. This does not mean however that the effects of implementing planning policies in the North West will no longer be monitored.
- 3.51 Local authorities in the North West will continue to monitor their own plans in line with the statutory expectations placed on them, including those arising from the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive and the requirements in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 to keep under review the matters which may be expected to affect the development of their area or the planning of its development. These matters include the principal physical, economic, social and environmental characteristics of the area and, in keeping them under review, local authorities can examine relevant matters in relation to any neighbouring area to the extent that they may be expected to affect their area.

## Annex A

### Regional Strategy policies and effects of revocation

This table sets out the policies of the North West of England Plan with their objectives and the sustainability issues which they raise, including the environmental issues identified in sustainability appraisals of the strategy. The right-hand column provides a commentary on the key environmental issues arising in assessing the likely effects of revocation.

The commentary reflects the Government's view that the issues for sustainability identified in the assessment, where not removed by revocation of the Regional Strategy, can be mitigated by means other than through a regional strategy including through a combination of national planning policy, local authorities working collaboratively with other bodies to ensure that strategic priorities across local boundaries are properly co-ordinated and the protections provided for by national and European legislation. This assumption is applicable throughout the commentary and not repeated for every policy under consideration.

Plan policies	Objectives	Sustainability appraisal issues	Revocation – key environmental issues
<b>Regional spatial framework</b>			
<b>RDF1: Spatial priorities</b>	Policy RDF1 details the spatial priorities for growth and development, investment and regeneration in the North West region, following a phased approach to development, i.e. priority on the regional centres (Manchester and Liverpool regional centres), then inner areas surrounding regional centres, followed by towns and cities in the three city regions, and finally outside city regions.	The proposed spatial priorities aim to respond to the key sustainability issues for the North West region, with the main focus on addressing regeneration and deprivation issues, housing market renewal and restructuring.	Revocation of the Plan would mean that it is for local authorities to determine the priorities for their communities, addressing local issues, needs and circumstances. Local authorities will be able to address strategic spatial issues locally, working with neighbouring authorities and other bodies as needed, supported by the proposed duty to cooperate.
<b>RDF2: Rural areas</b>	Policy RDF2 sets out the Plan priorities for rural areas, including supporting sustainable farming and food and enhancing the value of the rural environmental inheritance.  It aims to concentrate rural		This policy can be delivered through means other than a regional strategy as the concentration of development at the proposed services centres depend on implementation through local plans.

Plan policies	Objectives	Sustainability appraisal issues	Revocation – key environmental issues
	<p>development around key service centres and local service centres, which should act as hubs for the provision of services, facilities and public transport. These will be defined in local development frameworks.</p>		
<p><b>RDF3: The coast</b></p>	<p>Policy RDF3 sets out the Plan priorities to enhance the economic importance of the coast and the regeneration of coastal communities in ways that safeguard, restore or enhance and make sustainable use of the natural, built and cultural heritage assets of the North West coast and address issues of environmental and socio-economic decline.</p>	<p>The policy aims to support adaptation to climate change. The low lying nature of the coast makes it particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change, including rising sea levels and increasingly stormy conditions. It also aims to improve the economic performance of the North West. The coastal areas (its ports and fisheries, major resort towns and</p>	<p>The policy itself does not include any specific spatial proposal but the policy objectives are aimed at supporting the management of the coast. These policy objectives can be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.</p> <p>Shoreline Management Plans and Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM (2002/413/EC) still applies and would assist to minimise conflict and maximise cooperation, to sustain and realise the value of coastal areas. This is recognised by the Plan in paragraph 9.17.</p> <p>The North West Coastal Forum, an independent partnership of coastal stakeholders, has been developed in response to this need, with the support of coastal communities, local authorities and others. This partnership could still make important contributions to promoting sustainable development and use of the coast.</p>

Plan policies	Objectives	Sustainability appraisal issues	Revocation – key environmental issues
		<p>clusters of industry) have been instrumental in driving its economy and enhancing the quality of life</p> <p>The coastal zone contains a wide range of cultural, heritage, economic and environmental assets</p>	
<p><b>RDF4: Green Belt</b></p>	<p>Policy RDF4 proposes to maintain the general extent of the Green Belt. There is no need for any exceptional substantial strategic change to Green Belt and its boundaries in the North West within set timescales. After that period the presumption is against exceptional substantial strategic change to the Green Belt</p> <p>The policy allows Local Development Frameworks to provide for detailed</p>	<p>To assist in improving the economic performance of the North West</p>	<p>The revocation of the Plan removes top down pressure on local authorities to review their Green Belt boundaries.</p> <p>The boundaries of Green Belts are set out in local plans and local authorities are responsible for defining the extent of the Green Belt in their localities consistent with national planning policy. The proposed National Planning Framework published in July for consultation maintains strong protection for the Green Belt</p> <p>Any proposals to review the green belt boundaries coming through the local plan process will be subject to sustainability appraisal, strategic environmental assessment and must be compliant with Habitat regulations.</p>

Plan policies	Objectives	Sustainability appraisal issues	Revocation – key environmental issues
	<p>changes in Green Belt boundaries to accommodate the expansion of Manchester Airport and Liverpool John Lennon Airport; and to provide for an inter-modal freight terminal at Newton-Le-Willows.</p>		
<b>Spatial Principles</b>			
<p><b>DP1: Spatial principles (these are further amplified under policies DP2 to 9)</b></p>	<p>Policy DP1 sets out the key sustainability elements that underpin the Plan and should guide all development and investment decisions within the North West. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- promote sustainable communities (DP2)</li> <li>- promote sustainable economic development (DP3)</li> <li>- make the best use of existing resources and infrastructure (DP4)</li> </ul>	<p>As per the proposed spatial principles.</p> <p>Policy DP1 sets out the overall vision for the North West, defined by the proposed development principles. The proposed spatial principles reflect the Plan’s promotion of sustainable development. Associated policies DP2-9 provide further</p>	<p>These policies could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy</p> <p>Local planning authorities are expected to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Development plan policies should seek to take into account the needs of all the community and will be subject to strategic environmental assessment and habitat assessment where appropriate. Relevant national policy on the support of economic growth and the promotion of environmental protection and enhancement , including on climate change mitigations and adaptation, will apply.</p> <p>Supporting text (4.11) to policy DP7 highlights the importance for local authorities to consider likely effects of development on sites of international importance for nature</p>

Plan policies	Objectives	Sustainability appraisal issues	Revocation – key environmental issues
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- manage travel demand, reduce the need to travel, and increase accessibility (DP5)</li> <li>- marry opportunity and need (linking areas of economic opportunity with areas in need of economic, social and physical regeneration and restructuring) (DP6)</li> <li>- promote environmental quality (DP7)</li> <li>- mainstreaming rural issues (DP8)</li> <li>- reduce emissions and adapt to climate change (DP9)</li> </ul>	<p>background on the proposed development principles that should underpinning implementation of the Plan's policies. Paragraph 4.1 indicates that these principles should also be applied to all plans and strategies in the North West that affect the development and management of different land uses, as well as to individual proposals.</p>	<p>conservation. This will also include, where relevant, the potential effects on sites outside the North West region e.g. effects of development in the North West on neighbouring coastal and inland waters in Wales. Local authorities are expected to continue to work in partnership with Welsh and Scottish authorities and statutory nature conservation bodies in considering wider cross-boundary effects of their local plans.</p> <p>With regard to DP9, 2005-2007 data reveals that carbon dioxide emissions are generally improving, showing a positive reduction within industry sectors. This could have been partly as result of the Plans policies, but there is no reason why improvements could not be made and targeted through local plans.</p>

<b>Sub-area sections</b>			
<p><b>MCR1-6: Manchester city region</b></p> <p><b>LCR1-5: Liverpool city region</b></p> <p><b>CLCR1-3: Central Lancashire city region</b></p> <p><b>CNL 1-4: Cumbria and North Lancashire</b></p>	<p>The sub area sections set out the development priorities within the sub-regions, including environmental priorities for conserving and enhancing the North West's valued environmental and cultural assets and addressing the issue of climate change.</p>	<p>The sustainability appraisal indicates the overall economic and transport focus of the city region's policies. It also highlights the imbalance between the economic and transportation emphasis of the sub-regional policies against specific environmental priorities. The sustainability appraisal advises on the need for sub-regions to undertake assessments of the environmental capacity of their areas to better inform their ability to accommodate the level of growth identified in the Plan. It also identifies potential negative effects on biodiversity/landscape of policy South Cheshire (MCR4) and from the high percentage of</p>	<p>These policies could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.</p> <p>It will be for local authorities to determine which areas to focus their development needs to meet the needs of their communities.</p> <p>The relevant local plans require a strategic environmental assessment, sustainability appraisal and appropriate assessment. Relevant projects an environmental impact assessment and must comply with the Habitat regulations</p> <p>The proposed duty to cooperate is expected to play a key role in supporting the co-ordinated effort and cross boundary working needed to better align the growth and development priorities of neighbouring areas.</p>
	<p>In general, the sub-regional policies replicate most of the other policies in the Plan. These policies identify the following strategic areas for development and investment:</p> <p><b>MCR 1-6:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Manchester city region</li> <li>- South Cheshire (in Crewe)</li> <li>- Warrington (in Knowsley, Halton, St Helens and Wigan)</li> </ul>		



	<p><b>LCR 1-5:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Liverpool city region (with focus on Birkenhead and Bootle, New Heartlands Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder, Sefton, and Wirral, Mersey Ports and Waterfront Regional Park.</li> <li>- West Cheshire – NE Wales (with focus on Ellesmere Port, regeneration in Northwich, transport links in NE Wales)</li> </ul> <p><b>CLCR 1-3:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Central Lancashire city region (in Blackburn, Blackpool and Burnley)</li> <li>- Forest of Bowland, Regional Parks (East Lancashire, Ribble Estuary, Morecambe Bay) identified as key to deliver the region’s green infrastructure</li> </ul>	<p>housing likely to go onto green field land.</p> <p>Furthermore, the sustainability appraisal indicates that the promotion of economic growth and the parallel increase in housing numbers particularly in the city regions will be undertaken against a background of relatively poor environmental performance. The report highlights the need for the responsible authorities to continue to improve their environmental performance and ensure that sufficient and appropriate infrastructure is in place to accommodate the level of development proposed and promote ‘environmental excellence’.</p>	
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	<p><b>CNL 1-4:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cumbria (in West Cumbria, Furness, Carlisle, Workington, Whitehaven, Cleator Moor/Maryport, Barrow-in-Furness and Kendal/Penrith)</li> <li>- Lake District</li> <li>- North Lancashire (in Morecombe, Port of Heysham)</li> </ul>		
<b>Economy</b>			
<p><b>W1: Strengthening the regional economy</b></p>	<p>Policy W1 sets out the key priorities for strengthening the economy of the North West region, mainly around the main cities of Liverpool, Manchester and Central Lancashire), increasing prosperity at Carlisle and Lancaster; economic regeneration in Barrow-in-Furness, and West Cumbria (Workington and Whitehaven).</p> <p>The policy outlines the principles that should be</p>	<p>Improving regional economic performance; tackling social inequalities/economic exclusion issues</p>	<p>This aspiration policy sets out the vision for delivering a more successful and competitive regional economy. This could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy. Delivery of the Plan policy objectives would be highly dependent on implementation of this policy through local plans.</p> <p>The Government's economic white paper (published in October 2010) sets out its vision for local growth, shifting power away from central government to local communities, citizens and independent providers. This means recognising that where drivers of growth are local, decisions should be made locally.</p> <p>The <i>Plan for Growth document</i> (included in the Budget 2011) confirms the Government's commitment to ensuring</p>

	<p>applied in finding sustainable locations for economic growth, focusing on the re-use of land and links to public transport.</p>		<p>that the planning system supports growth. National planning policy requires local authorities to have regard and consider the contribution of the natural environment when setting out the economic vision and strategy for their areas.</p> <p>National planning policy addresses economic impact issues, including town centre hierarchies and sustainable patterns of economic growth and employment. These will continue to inform the preparation of local plans and the development management process.</p> <p>Local plans will continue to be subject to sustainability appraisal which will assess how sustainable development has been integrated into plans, and the impact of policy options.</p> <p>The proposed duty to cooperate and local enterprise partnerships are expected to play a key role in ensuring economic strategic priorities and infrastructure delivery is properly coordinated.</p>
<p><b>W2: Locations for regionally significant economic development</b></p>	<p>Policy W2 provides a framework for the location of employment sites in the North West, taking account of RDF1 and DP1-9 policies. The policy advocates for regionally significant economic development to</p>	<p>See policy W1.</p>	<p>Comments on policy W1 will apply.</p> <p>These policies could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy</p>

	be located close to sustainable transport nodes within the urban areas of Manchester, Liverpool and Central Lancashire city regions and Lancaster, Carlisle, Barrow-in-Furness and Workington and Whitehaven.		
<b>W3: Supply of employment land</b>	Policy W3 aims to assist local authorities to safeguard employment land in specified areas, taking account of RDF1 and DP1-9 policies.	See policy W1.	
<b>W4: Release of allocated employment land</b>	Policy W4 sets out the principles for guiding the release of allocated employment sites for other uses, in particularly housing and retail development.		
<b>W5: Retail development</b>	Policy W5 promotes retail investment where this assisted the regeneration and economic growth of the North West's towns and city centres.	See policy W1.	<p>Comments on policy W1 will apply.</p> <p>These policies could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.</p> <p>Although broad locations for promoting retail development</p>

	<p>Manchester/Salford and Liverpool city centres are identified as the region's primary retail centres.</p>		<p>are set out in the Plan it would be for local authorities, working with adjoining authorities, to determine the growth needs for their areas.</p> <p>The proposed duty to cooperate and local enterprise partnerships are expected to play a key role in ensuring economic strategic priorities and infrastructure delivery is properly coordinated.</p> <p>Local planning authorities will still have to prepare retail need assessments for their local development frameworks, in line with the current policy and any relevant policy in the national planning policy framework in due course.</p>
<p><b>W6: Tourism and the visitor economy</b></p>	<p>Policy EW6 seeks to strengthen the tourism economy in the North West, focusing on the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- regeneration of Blackpool and the North West's coast</li> <li>- regional centres of Manchester, Liverpool and Preston</li> <li>- historic towns of Chester, Carlisle, Bolton, Birkenhead, Lancaster and Kendal</li> <li>- national and regional parks, Hadrian's Wall</li> </ul>	<p>See policy W1</p>	<p>Comments on policy W1 will apply.</p> <p>These policies could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.</p> <p>The Plan identifies the role that heritage can play in the future development of the North West. In this respect, local authorities should still liaise with English Heritage to identify and evaluate areas, sites and buildings of local cultural and historic importance, and explore ways for the management, enhancement and regeneration of those areas. Such proposals should inform development plans. Designated areas and important sites receive statutory protection.</p>

	and Liverpool World Heritage sites		
<b>W7: Principles for tourism development</b>	<p>Policy E7 sets out the principles for improving the tourism offer in the North West in a sustainable manner.</p> <p>The Plan (paragraph 6.30) identifies that whilst the benefits of tourism and the 'visitor economy' are numerous there are potential impacts (particularly on the environment, transport infrastructure and access to local services and facilities) that need to be managed. Ensuring environmental conservation and the long-term sustainability of both tourist attractions and the tourist economy must be a priority.</p>	<p>See policy W1.</p> <p>The Plan identifies the role that heritage can play in the future economic development of the North West. But it also recognises the importance of avoiding the potential negative impacts as a consequence of encouraging tourism and recreation, which this policy aimed to address (as well as policies DP4 and EM1).</p>	<p>These policies could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.</p> <p>Local planning authorities are expected to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Development plan policies should seek to reduce and mitigate any likely negative effects on the environment.</p> <p>Local authorities are also required to undertake sustainability appraisals of their development plan policies. This should consider the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the plan and will be able to act upon any likely effects identified with the plans proposed policies relating to the conservation, restoration and enhancement of the natural environment.</p>

<b>Environment</b>			
<p><b>EM1: Integrated enhancement and protection of the region's environmental assets:</b>  <b>(A) Landscape</b>  <b>(B) Natural environment</b>  <b>(C) Historic environment</b>  <b>(D) Trees, woodlands and forests</b></p>	<p>Policy EM1 outlines the priorities for the management of the North West environmental land assets as well as species through a more integrated approach to the management of the landscape, the natural/historic environment and woodland assets (as per areas in diagram 9.1), within both rural and urban areas, given special consideration to the impacts of climate change and adaptation measures.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mitigating/adapting to climate change</li> <li>- improve quality of life/well-being</li> <li>- contribute towards the regional economic regeneration</li> </ul>	<p>These policies could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.</p> <p>The proposed duty to cooperate in the Localism Bill will play a key role in addressing this issue by encouraging strategic approaches to the management, protection and enhancement of the environment.</p> <p>National planning policy on the conservation of the natural environment, landscape ancient woodland and heritage will continue to apply.</p> <p>Local plans will continue to be subject to strategic environmental assessment and habitat regulation assessment where appropriate.</p>
<p><b>EM2: Remediating contaminated land</b></p>	<p>Policy EM2 promotes the adoption of sustainable remediation technologies, in managing the region's legacy of contaminated land.</p>	<p>See policy EM1</p>	<p>This policy could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.</p> <p>The Contaminated Land Regime (required by Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990) Circular 02/2000, <i>Contaminated Land</i> will still apply, as will national planning policy and guidance on the relationship between planning control and the contaminated land regime and on the requirements and good practice in dealing with these</p>

			issues through planning control.
<b>EM3: Green infrastructure</b>	Policy EM3 sets out the framework for the conservation, creation and enhancement of green infrastructure within the North West region, including proposal for local authorities to produce 'Local delivery of green infrastructure plans' working in partnership with relevant partners.	See policy EM1	<p>This policy could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.</p> <p>The Plan indicates that a partnership and cross disciplinary approach would be required for the identification, management and creation of a network of green infrastructure within the North West.</p> <p>Local authorities will still need to have regard to national policy to support the delivery of sustainable development; including on green infrastructure. The Government's June 2011 white paper, <i>The Natural Choice</i>, sets out proposals to support the development of green infrastructure, including the establishment of a Green Infrastructure Partnership. Accordingly, local authorities may wish to continue to pursue this policy approach through their local development documents, working co-operatively with other authorities and bodies on cross-boundary networks. The proposed duty to cooperate will play a key part in supporting this.</p>
<b>EM4: Regional Parks</b>	Policy EM4 identifies three parts of the North West region as likely locations for designated Regional Parks (the North West Coast, the Mersey Basin and east Lancashire) and sets out local development frameworks' role in assisting delivery and management of identified parks. This policy is essential for delivering	<p>Issues include:</p> <p>Enhance/protect biodiversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- improve regional economic performance (by promoting outdoor recreation, leisure and sporting activities)</li> <li>- conservation of landscapes.</li> </ul>	



	policy EM3.		
<b>EM5: Integrated water management</b>	Policy EM5 sets out a list of requirements for local planning authorities and developers to take account of in order to protect the quantity and quality of surface, ground and coastal water resources, and manage flood risk.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mitigate/adapt to climate change, including risk of increased of emergency storm sewerage events.</li> <li>- -Manage the limited water resources (concern over whether water infrastructure in the North West has the capacity for the planned growth in the Plan). Current abstraction levels mainly for domestic water use are already adversely affecting at least eight European sites in the North West.</li> </ul>	<p>This policy could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.</p> <p>In achieving integrated water management and delivery of the European Union’s Water Framework Directive, plans and strategies should have regard to River Basin Management Plans, Water companies’ asset management plans, Catchment Flood Management Plans, and the Regional Flood Risk Appraisal.</p> <p>National policy already gives the Environment Agency, water and sewerage companies, developers, landowners, local authorities and others an important role in taking a pro-active approach and work together to identify, characterise, plan and manage the water environment taking into account biodiversity sites of international importance.</p> <p>Building regulations (set at national level) already encourage water conservation measures, and the Environmental Agency’s Regional Water Resources Strategy (2002) and related Catchment Abstraction Management Strategies identify water sensitive areas and provide for appropriate development accordingly.</p> <p>On flooding matters, local authorities already have a duty to cooperate under the Floods and Water Management Act 2010. National planning policy on flooding aims to ensure that flood risk is taken into account at all stages of the</p>

			<p>planning process to avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding and to direct development away from areas of highest risk. Local planning authorities must consult the Environment Agency on most development proposals at risk from flooding under changes to the General Development Procedure Order.</p> <p>Supporting text to the policy (paragraph 9.11) highlights the importance for local authorities to consider likely effects of development on sites of international importance for nature conservation will also include, where relevant, the potential effects on sites outside the North West region e.g. effects of development in the North West on coastal and inland waters in Wales. Local authorities should work in partnership with Welsh Authorities and statutory nature conservation bodies in Wales in considering wider cross-boundary effects of their local plans. The proposed duty to cooperate will assist on this issue.</p>
<b>EM6: Managing the North West's coastline</b>	Policy EM6 sets out the framework to deliver a strategic and integrated approach to the long-term management of flood and coastal erosion risk, including managed-realignment where appropriate.	<p>Mitigate/adapt to climate change.</p> <p>The majority of the coastal zone is low lying (below the 10m contour), comprised of soft sediments and therefore vulnerable to coastal erosion and flooding.</p>	<p>This policy could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy. National planning policies on flooding and coastal change will apply and in due course those set out within the proposed National Planning Policy Framework.</p> <p>The Environment Agency's flood and coastal risk management investment strategy (2010-2035) will also apply.</p> <p>Shoreline Management Plans and Catchment Flood Management Plans will provide a strategic approach to the</p>

			assessment of options within a broader planning matrix which will include River Basin Management Plans and Integrated Coastal Zone Management strategies.
<b>EM7: Minerals extraction</b>	Policy EM7 provides the framework for safeguarding mineral resources whilst ensuring a steady/adequate supply of minerals to meet the North West region's needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Managing natural resources</li> <li>- improving landscape (by restoring mineral extraction sites)</li> <li>- promoting regional economic prosperity</li> </ul>	<p>The objective of this policy could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.</p> <p>National planning policy already provides for development control related considerations. Technical advice provided by the Aggregate Working Parties, including their current work in sub-apportioning the Department for Communities and Local Government's guidelines for 2005-2020 to planning authority level, will still apply. Mineral planning authorities can choose to use alternative figures for preparing their plans if they have new or different information and a robust evidence base.</p> <p>Mineral planning authorities will have responsibility for continuing to plan for an adequate and steady supply of aggregate minerals to support economic growth, and they should do this within the longstanding arrangements for minerals planning. This includes receiving technical advice from Aggregate Working Parties, whose members include officers from mineral planning authorities and the minerals industry</p>
<b>EM8: Land-won aggregates</b>	Policy EM8 requires mineral planning authorities to continue to work together to make	See policy EM7	<p>This policy could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.</p> <p>National planning policy provides guidance for the</p>

	provision for the agreed regional apportionment of land-won aggregate requirements to 2016.		provision of construction aggregates in England, which is based on technical advice from the Regional Aggregates Working Parties and studies into long-term demand.
<b>EM9: Secondary and recycled aggregates</b>	Policy EM9 aims to maximise the use of secondary and recycled sources of aggregates in meeting the North West region's requirements.	Best use of resources (current re-use of construction, demolition and excavation waste at 46% is below the national average of 50%)	<p>Comments on EM8 will apply.</p> <p>This policy could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.</p> <p>The proposed 'duty to cooperate' should assist in ensuring minerals planning authorities work together with the industry to maximise the use of secondary and recycled sources of aggregates.</p>
<b>EM10: A regional approach to waste management</b>	Policy EM10 sets out the framework for delivering the regional strategy for waste, including the identified regional targets for waste minimisation, recycling and recovery (energy) from both commercial and industrial waste and municipal waste. Local waste plans should promote and require the provision of sustainable new waste management	<p>Waste; minimise waste production and promote recycling/recovery production and management; mitigating/adapting to climate change.</p> <p>The sustainability appraisal indicates that the expected net increase in waste treatment capacity in the North West will have implications, particularly</p>	<p>These is policies could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.</p> <p>The European Union Waste Framework Directive sets the overall statutory requirements. Revoking the regional strategy will not impact on these requirements. The focus for delivering spatial waste plans and implementing the directive lies at the local authority level. Waste planning authorities are expected to continue to take forward their waste plans to provide land for waste management facilities, to support the sustainable management of waste. Data and other information prepared by partners, including the Environment Agency and other waste planning authorities will continue to assist in this process.</p>

	infrastructure, facilities and systems.	in Cumbria and Lancashire where the most significant increases will be expected.	
<b>EM11: Waste management principles</b>	Policy EM11 sets out the general principles and process for minimising waste, and maximising the recovery and re-use of recycled material.	See policy EM10	
<b>EM12: Locational principles</b>	Policy EM12 sets out broad locational criteria to guide waste planning authorities in identifying potential locations for waste facilities.	See policy EM10	
<b>EM13: Provision of nationally, regionally and sub-regionally significant waste facilities</b>	Policy EM13 sets out the general framework for identifying and safeguarding sites for waste management facilities to deliver enough capacity to deal with the indicative volumes of non-hazardous commercial and industrial waste, hazardous waste and municipal waste	See policy EM10.  The sustainability appraisal indicates that the North West currently provides commercial and industrial waste management facilities that are important on a national scale (UK) (see also policy EM14	Comments on policy EM10 will apply.  The objective of this policy could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.

	in each sub-region up to 2020.	<p>bellow). Additional development of such strategic facilities should be assessed in the national (UK) context of sustainability.</p> <p>Development of new waste management facilities also has the potential to improve the local and regional environment (through better designed facilities, and reduced carbon emissions), and the economy (through the generation of employment and gross value added).</p>	
<b>EM14: Radioactive waste</b>	Policy EM14 aims to continue supporting the North West as a centre of national and international expertise in the fields of nuclear fuel fabrication, reprocessing, radioactive waste management and decommissioning.	See policy EM10	<p>This policy could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.</p> <p>Arrangements for the long-term management and disposal of radioactive wastes are a national issue. The Nuclear Decommissioning Authority is responsible for implementing the Government's policy on the long-term management of nuclear waste. It is responsible for six nuclear sites in the Northwest including, non-operational sites, fuel plants,</p>

	<p>National and regional partners should work together to promote an agreed solution to the safe long-term management of radioactive waste, based on consultation with all relevant interests. This should incorporate a long-term commitment to the reduction of radioactive discharges and to radioactive waste minimisation, management and safe storage techniques.</p>		<p>decommissioned research sites and the Low Level Waste Repository.</p> <p>The West Cumbria Managing Radioactive Waste Safely Partnership has been formed and includes community representatives and other appropriate stakeholders. The Nuclear Decommissioning Authority has been tasked with delivering the geological deposit facility.</p>
<p><b>EM15: A framework for sustainable energy in the North West</b></p>	<p>Policy EM15 promotes sustainable energy production and consumption in accordance with the principles of the energy hierarchy which seeks to prioritise the minimisation of demand and cut the unnecessary use of energy.</p>	<p>Ability to mitigate and adapt to climate change, i.e. delivery of the proposed targets will lead to wider economic and environmental benefits, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, provision of a diverse energy supply for businesses and residents and reduced instances of fuel poverty.</p>	<p>The policy objectives promoted by policy EM15 and 16, for example, the production of less or no air pollution and promotion of energy conservation and efficiency, could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.</p> <p>National planning policy expects local authorities to actively support energy efficiency improvements to existing buildings and the delivery of low carbon and renewable energy.</p> <p>Local authorities may find it useful to draw on data compiled by regional authorities, including assessments of the potential for renewable and low carbon energy. The</p>

<p><b>EM16: Energy conservation and efficiency</b></p>	<p>Policy EM16 requires local plans to facilitate energy reductions through a variety of means including encouragement for effective provision of sustainable travel, reducing emissions from (non-)domestic building and access via public transport. The policy places particular emphasis on eradicating fuel poverty.</p>	<p>See policy EM15.</p> <p>The Plan indicates that in the short to medium term, the majority of the power generated in the North West will continue to come from the large-scale nuclear, coal and gas-fired power stations that supplied around 80% of the North West electricity in 2001.</p>	<p>proposed duty to cooperate and local enterprise partnerships can play key roles in ensuring economic strategic priorities and infrastructure delivery is properly coordinated.</p>
<p><b>EM17: Renewable energy</b></p>	<p>Policy EM17 promotes and encourages, rather than restricts, the use of renewable energy resources.</p>	<p>See policy EM15.</p> <p>Concern about the substantial shortfall between current renewable energy generation within the North West region and the 2010 target advocated in policy EM17.</p>	
<p><b>EM18: Decentralised energy supply</b></p>	<p>Policy EM18 encourages the use of decentralised and renewable or low-carbon energy in new development in order to</p>	<p>See policy EM15.</p>	



	contribute to the achievement of the regional targets.		National planning policy on climate change expects that local authorities to identify opportunities where development can draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon supply systems.
<b>Housing - Living in the North West – Ensuring a Strong, Healthy and Just Society</b>			
<b>L1: Health, sport, recreation, cultural and education services provision</b>	Policy L1 sets out the principles for ensuring appropriate provision of health, cultural, recreational, sport, education and training provision for all members of the community in the North West (including older people, disabled people and the black and minority ethnic population), improving access and addressing spatial disparities in services/facilities provision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improving quality of life by tackling socio/economic inequalities</li> <li>- assist improve regional economic competitiveness</li> </ul>	<p>The policy reiterates the spatial development principles covered by policy RDF1 and DP1-9.</p> <p>Comments on RDF1 and DP1 will apply.</p>
<b>L2: Understanding housing markets</b>	Policy L2 requires local authorities to develop an understanding of local and sub-regional housing markets by undertaking strategic housing market assessments.	See policy L1.	<p>The policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.</p> <p>This policy reiterates national planning policy that Local plans should be informed by a robust evidence base, in particular, of housing need and demand, through a strategic housing market assessment and land availability, through a strategic housing land availability assessment.</p>

<p><b>L3: Existing housing stock and housing renewal</b></p>	<p>Policy L3 sets out the principles for managing and improving the conditions of existing housing stock in the North West, focusing on market renewal/pathfinder areas and areas in need of housing regeneration/market restructuring.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improving quality of life by tackling socio/economic inequalities</li> <li>- assisting improve regional economic competitiveness</li> <li>- adapting to climate change (to improve energy efficiency of buildings, and water conservation/efficiency)</li> </ul> <p>Research in 2004 concluded that the poor state of the North West housing stock should be recognised as one of the most significant factors detracting from the health of North West residents.</p>	<p>The policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy</p> <p>It will be for local authorities, working with adjoining authorities where appropriate, to determine the housing regeneration needs within their areas. Local enterprise partnerships can play key roles in meeting any housing regeneration needs identified.</p>
<p><b>L4: Regional housing provision</b></p>	<p>Policy L4 outlines the proposed housing provision for the North West region for 2003-2021, and the approach for monitoring and managing the availability of land to</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The scale of housing provision and its distribution seeks to support regional economic growth, focusing the majority of new housing in the</li> </ul>	<p>The policy objectives promoted by these policies could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy</p> <p>National planning policy will still apply including for housing supply. It will be for local authorities to establish the right level of local housing provision in their area, including affordable housing. They will also need to continue to</p>

	<p>assist delivery of housing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- three city regions tackling social inequalities while responding to demographic trends</li> <li>- general concerns regarding water demand and capacity; waste production; transport;</li> </ul> <p>The sustainability appraisal identified a series of concerns arising from the proposed level of development, i.e.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- potential environmental impacts on an increase on waste volume</li> <li>- pressure on waste-water treatment capacity and infrastructure issues</li> <li>- effects on air quality and biodiversity from focussing significant housing growth in conurbations</li> </ul>	<p>identify a long-term supply of housing land as well as to determine their other development needs including to support sustainable transport.</p> <p>Removing the phasing of development gives local authorities greater flexibility to deliver a wide range of housing sites to meet their requirements.</p> <p>The proposed duty to cooperate in the Localism Bill will ensure strategic approaches to considering long-term infrastructure provision. The Community Infrastructure Levy and the New Homes Bonus will also encourage a more positive attitude to growth and allow communities to share the benefits of growth.</p>
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		<p>(particularly in parts of the North West that already significantly under-perform in comparison to the regional average on these issues)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- increased recreational pressure on European sites</li> </ul>	
<b>L5: Affordable housing</b>	Policy L5 requires local authorities to set out in their local plans requirements and delivery mechanisms to secure the provision of affordable housing.	Tackling socio/economic inequalities	<p>The policy objectives promoted by these policies could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy</p> <p>National policy already requires local authorities to plan for the housing needs of their communities, including for affordable housing.</p>
<b>The Regional Transport Strategy</b>			
<b>RT1: Integrated transport networks</b>	Policy RT1 promotes a multi-modal approach to delivering sustainable, integrated and accessible transport in the North West.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improving the efficiency, connectivity and accessibility of transport networks</li> <li>- assisting improve the economic prosperity of the North West</li> </ul>	<p>The policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.</p> <p>The Transport Act 2000 makes the preparation of local transport plans a statutory requirement. Local authorities should continue to ensure their land use and local transport plans are mutually consistent, and deliver the most sustainable and effective development for their area. The proposed 'duty to cooperate' should assist in ensuring local</p>

			<p>authorities and public authorities work together to deliver the most efficient management, operation and improvement required by the North West transport networks. The Local Transport white paper (published in January 2011) sets out the Government's vision for a sustainable local transport system that supports the economy and reduces carbon emissions. It explains how the Government is placing localism at the heart of the transport agenda, taking measures to empower local authorities when it comes to tackling these issues in their areas. The white paper also underlines central government's direct support to local authorities, including through the Local Sustainable Transport Fund.</p>
<p><b>RT2: Managing travel demand</b></p>	<p>Policy RT2 promotes a coordinated approach to managing travel demand in the most sustainable way, i.e.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- discouraging car use</li> <li>- promoting public transport, walking and cycling</li> <li>- parking policies</li> <li>- In rural areas, the focus is on major tourist areas where visitor pressure is threatening the local environment and quality of life.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- assisting improve the economic prosperity of the North West</li> <li>- Improving the efficiency, connectivity and accessibility of transport networks</li> <li>- -improving people's social well being and quality of life</li> <li>- adapting to climate change (by reducing emissions)</li> </ul>	<p>Comments on policy RT1 will apply.</p> <p>The policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.</p> <p>It will be for local authorities to determine the best way manage travel demand including parking policies. Local Authorities already have a range of powers to control parking provision and enforcement, through national planning policy and powers under Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004.</p>

<b>RT3: Public transport framework</b>	Policy RT3 requires local authorities to introduce measure in local plans to enhance the accessibility by public transport within their areas.	See policy RT2. Policy particularly important in rural areas.	Comments on RT1 apply  The policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.
<b>RT4: Management of the highway network</b>	Policy RT4 promotes the efficient management of the sub-regional and local road networks (as defined in local transport plans), in partnership with the Highways Agency and Local Highway authorities.	See policy T2. – manage impacts on the natural, built and historic environment; – tackling road safety, poor air quality, noise, severance and visual intrusion.	Comments on policies RT1 will apply.  The policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.
<b>RT5: Airports</b>	Policy RT5 aims to optimise the growth generated and sustained by the North West airports, whilst improving public transport links and mitigating any environmental effects resulting from development at/around airports.	Accessibility, connectivity and congestion; poor air quality, noise, severance and visual intrusion affecting the quality of life and health of neighbouring communities.	Comments on RT1 apply.  Any proposed revision of boundaries for airport expansion should be set out in local plans. Any potential significant effects on the environment resulting from airport expansion should be identified by local authorities through the strategic environmental assessment of their local plans, and environmental impact assessment and habitat assessments of specific projects.
<b>RT6: Ports and waterways</b>	Policy RT6 aims to optimise the use of the North West ports and waterways assets, for trade	Accessibility, connectivity and congestion; poor air quality, noise, severance	Comments on RT1 apply.  The policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.

	<p>and leisure, whilst at the same time protecting the environment and the integrity of their biodiversity.</p> <p>The policy includes a presumption in favour of making best use of existing infrastructure where possible, and to secure opportunities to transfer port-related freight from road to rail or water.</p> <p>Particular focus on the Port of Liverpool (key international sea port) and the Manchester Ship Canal.</p>	<p>and visual intrusion affecting the quality of life and health of neighbouring communities.</p>	
<b>RT7: Freight transport</b>	<p>Policy RT7 promotes the development of an integrated freight distribution system to encourage a shift from road based transport to freight moved by short-sea, coastal shipping and inland waterways.</p>	<p>See policy RT6.</p>	<p>Comments on policy RT1 will apply.</p> <p>The policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.</p>

<p><b>RT8: Inter-Modal freight terminals</b></p>	<p>Policy RT8 aims to facilitate the transfer of freight from road to rail and/or water by the identification of sites for inter-modal freight terminals, and by encouraging greater use of existing terminals and private sidings.</p>	<p>Accessibility and connectivity; assist improve regional economic competitiveness. The Plan argues that the transfer of movement of freight from the highway network to rail or water could potentially yield substantial benefits in reducing carbon emissions, and easing road congestion.</p>	<p>Comments on policy RT1 will apply. The policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.</p>
<p><b>RT9: Walking and cycling</b></p>	<p>Policy RT9 promotes the development of integrated networks of continuous, attractive and safe routes for walking and cycling to widen accessibility and capitalise on their potential environmental, social and health benefits.</p>	<p>Congestion (reducing car travel); enhancing accessibility, improving community health, and supporting eco-tourism.</p>	<p>Comments on policy RT1 will apply. The policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.</p>
<p><b>RT10: Priorities for transport management and investment</b></p>	<p>Policy RT10 aims to take forward and secure delivery of the transport investment and management priorities of regional significance.</p>	<p>Improving transport accessibility, connectivity; assist improve the North West economic competitiveness.</p>	<p>Comments on policy RT1 will apply. The policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a Regional Strategy</p>



		<p>Projects promoted by the Plan would support some long-distance inter-regional travel (particularly in relation to airport and rail policies), with associated environmental effects related to congestion and carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions.</p>	
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## Annex B

### Saved structure plan policies

County level structure plans were abolished under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, but the policies in them remained in force until the new regional spatial strategies were published. In 2007 the Government wrote to local authorities to advise them which policies would be saved after 27 September 2007. Some of these policies remain in force as they have not been replaced by policies in either in regional spatial strategies or development plan documents. This annex lists the policies for the North West and where they remain relevant considers the environmental implications of their revocation.

Policy	Policy has been implemented or expired	Generic policy	Applicable national policy in place	Superseded by local plan policy	Still relevant –environmental implications of revocation
<b>Joint Cumbria and Lake District Structure Plan<sup>29</sup> (adopted in April 2006), 21 extended policies</b> Policies relating to the Lake District National Park may be regarded as superseded by the core strategy for the Park. These policies are: H20, H21 and H22. Similarly all policies relating to minerals and waste will have been superseded by Cumbria Minerals and Waste Development Plan Documents: these policies are R47, R48, R49, R50 and R51.					
ST4 Major Development Proposals			X		

<sup>29</sup> For full policies link to Cumbria extended policies, see below:  
<http://www.planningcumbria.org/adopted/adoptedsp.asp>

Policy	Policy has been implemented or expired	Generic policy	Applicable national policy in place	Superseded by local plan policy	Still relevant –environmental implications of revocation
<p>The policy sets out criteria to help local planning authorities determine planning applications or their response to consultations on major development. The criteria aim to test the benefits of the proposal against the extent of harm.</p>					
<p><b>ST5</b>  New Development and Key Service Centres outside the Lake District National Park.  These are:  – City of Carlisle  – North Cumbria  – Furness and West Cumbria  – South and East Cumbria  –</p>			X		
<p><b>EM13</b>  Employment Land Provision</p>			X		
<p><b>EM16</b>  Tourism</p>		X			

<b>H19</b> Affordable housing outside the Lake District National Park			X		
<b>H20</b> Housing in the Lake District National Park				X	
<b>H21</b> Allocation of sites within the Lake District National Park				X	
<b>H22</b> Exception sites within the Lake District National Park				X	
<b>T29</b> Safeguarding Transport Schemes		X			
<b>T31</b> Travel Plans		X			
<b>T33</b> Telecoms		X			
<b>E35</b> Areas and features of nature conservation interests other than of national and international importance		X			
<b>E37</b> Landscape character		X			

<b>E38</b> Historic environment		X			
<b>R44</b> Renewable energy outside the Lake District National Park				X	
<b>R45</b> Renewable energy in the Lake District National Park				X	
<b>R47</b> Mineral Extraction outside the Lake District National Park				X	
<b>R48</b> Mineral extraction in the Lake District National Park and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs)				X	
<b>R49</b> Waste recovery facilities				X	
<b>R50</b> Thermal waste and energy recovery from waste plants				X	

<b>R51</b> Residual waste and landfill				X	
<b>Joint Lancashire Structure Plan<sup>30</sup> (March 2005), 1 extended policy.</b>					
<b>Policy 29</b> Sites for Gypsies and Traveller families.			x		
<b>Cheshire Structure Plan (December 2005) 11 extended policies relating to local issues.</b>					
<b>GEN 5</b> Jodrell Bank Zone		X			
<b>GEN 6</b> Regional Parks		X			
<b>HOU 6</b> Caravan sites for Gypsies			X		
<b>T4</b> Strategic improvements to transport network		X	X		
<b>T5</b> Former railway infrastructure		X	X		
<b>T7</b> Parking			X		
<b>T8</b> Improvements to rail network			X		

<sup>30</sup> For full policy link to Joint Lancashire Structure Plan, see below:  
<http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/corporate/web/?siteid=3654&pageid=11649&e=e>

<b>T9</b> Motorway and trunk road schemes			X		
<b>T10</b> Roadside services			x		
<b>TR3</b> Visitor services		X			
<b>TR4</b> 1 Golf courses and other extensive outdoor recreation		X			

# Annex C

## North West: local plans (as at August 2011)

The following comprise the local development frameworks, including mineral and waste development frameworks and saved local plan policies, which would form the relevant development plan for the areas in question in the North West of England, if the North West Plan is revoked.

<b>NORTH WEST</b>		
Allerdale	Local Plan Saved Policies	
Barrow in Furnace	Local Plan Saved Policies	Barrow Port Area Action Plan
Blackburn with Darwen UA	Core Strategy	Local Plan Saved Policies
Blackpool UA	Local Plan Saved Policies	
Bolton	Core Strategy	Local Plan Saved Policies
Burnley	Local Plan Saved Policies	
Bury	Local Plan Saved Policies	
Carlisle	Local Plan Saved Policies	
Cheshire East UA	Local Plan Saved Policies	Cheshire (Replacement) Minerals and Waste Local Plans Congleton Local Plan Crewe and Nantwich Local Plan Macclesfield Local Plan
Cheshire West & Chester UA	Local Plan Saved Policies	Cheshire Waste and Chester Minerals and Waste Local Plans Existing Local Plans for Chester, Ellesmere Port and Neston, Vale Royal
Chorley	Local Plan Saved Policies	Sustainable Resources



Copeland	Local Plan Saved Policies	
Cumbria CC	Waste & Minerals Core Strategy	Generic Development Control Policies; Minerals and Waste Site Allocations; Local Plan Saved Policies
Eden	Core Strategy	Local Plan Saved Policies
Fylde	Local Plan Saved Policies	
Halton UA	Local Plan Saved Policies	
Hyndburn	Local Plan Saved Policies	Lancashire Minerals and Waste Plans
Knowsley	Local Plan Saved Policies	
Lancashire County Council	Waste & Minerals Core Strategy	Local Plan Saved Policies
Lancaster City	Joint Lancashire Core Strategy	Local Plan Saved Policies
Liverpool	Local Plan Saved Policies	
Manchester	Local Plan Saved Policies	
Oldham	Local Plan Saved Policies	
Pendle	Local Plan Saved Policies	The Joint Lancashire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (Adopted 2001) partly replaced by the Joint Lancashire Minerals and Waste Local Development Framework (Core Strategy - Adopted 2009)
Preston	Local Plan Saved Policies	
Ribble Valley	Local Plan Saved Policies	
Rochdale	Local Plan Saved Policies	
Rossendale	Local Plan Saved Policies	
Salford	Local Plan Saved Policies	
Sefton	Local Plan Saved Policies	

South Lakeland	Core Strategy	Local Plan Saved Policies Cumbria Minerals and Waste Local Plan
South Ribble	Local Plan Saved Policies	Lancashire Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2006
St Helens	Local Plan Saved Policies	
Stockport	Core Strategy	Local Plan Saved Policies
Tameside	Local Plan Saved Policies	
Trafford	Local Plan Saved Policies	
Warrington UA	Local Plan Saved Policies	
West Lancashire	Local Plan Saved Policies	
Wigan	Local Plan Saved Policies	
Wirral	Local Plan Saved Policies	
Wyre Forest	Core Strategy	Fleetwood/Thornton Area Action Plan; Local Plan Saved Policies