



## Environmental report on the revocation of the North East 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 East of England Plan (the regional strategy in force for the North East 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 East 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 East 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, to provide a broad development strategy for the north east region for 15 to 20 years. In particular, the Plan sets out the region’s scale and distribution of housing provision to 2021; and the priorities for the region’s environment, economic development, retail growth, transport, infrastructure, minerals extraction and waste treatment and disposal.

Its revocation is proposed under the Localism Bill, currently before Parliament, in order to give authorities at the local level more freedom, 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 East has changed significantly since publication of the Plan.

The North East has some of the UK’s finest high quality, diverse countryside and natural and built heritage, including a varied coastline. National nature reserves and sites of special scientific interest cover around 13 per cent of the

region's land area. However, the condition of sites of special scientific interest has been found to be worse than for England as a whole.

The environmental conditions of strategic significance at the time the Plan was in preparation included that:

- There had been a declining trend in carbon dioxide emissions in recent years, and the region as a whole had a relatively low level of emissions;
- Air quality continued to improve as emissions of smoke and acid gases have fallen;
- Water quality had improved, although fewer than 50% of the region's rivers were at good or better ecological status;
- There had been a continuing trend of rising sea levels on the North East coast, with a future predicted sea level rise of 4mm per year;
- The region contained two World Heritage Sites, but around 8 per cent of designated grade I or grade II\* listed buildings were considered to be 'at risk'; and a relatively high number of the region's scheduled ancient monuments were at risk;
- Deprivation and low demand for housing were issues in some areas - the region's most deprived wards were concentrated in the urban and former coalfield areas;
- The region had an improving and increasingly diverse and knowledge-based economy, with a decreasing emphasis on traditional industries. But the average gross weekly earnings for full-time adult employees lay between 10 per cent (males) and 13 per cent (females) below UK levels. Unemployment rates in the North East were much higher than in the country as a whole.

## 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% 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 thirty 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 East of England 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 East of England 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 East of England Plan

- 2.1 The regional strategy under consideration for revocation is the North East 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/nestore/docs/planning/rss/rss.pdf>

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

- 2.2 The former Regional Planning Guidance for the North East (known as ‘RPG1’) became the statutory regional spatial strategy in September 2004 when the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act came into force. The North East of England Plan (“the Plan”) replaced the regional planning guidance.
- 2.3 The North East Assembly prepared a draft revision to the initial regional spatial strategy called *VIEW: Shaping the North East*, which was issued for consultation in December 2004. The draft revision was submitted to Government by the assembly in June 2005 and, following public consultation, an examination in public was held before an independent panel in 2006 to test the soundness of the draft regional spatial strategy. The report of the examination panel was published in August 2006. This report recommended a number of changes to the submission draft. Two rounds of consultation then followed in 2007 and 2008 and the Plan was finalised after consideration of responses to those consultation exercises.
- 2.4 The preparation of the Plan was informed by sustainability appraisals and Habitat Regulations assessments and by a strategic environmental assessment. A table summarising the regional spatial strategy and sustainability appraisal process, including the various sustainability appraisal reports produced at different stages of the strategy process, is included in the *Consolidated Sustainability Appraisal Report* (Environ UK Ltd, June 2008) which can be accessed via the following link:  
<http://www.strategyintegrationne.co.uk/document.asp?id=1247>
- 2.5 These documents and others from earlier stages have been used in compiling this Environmental Report.

## 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 East has changed significantly since publication of the Plan.

## The North East

- 3.2 The North East covers an area of around 850,000 hectares and comprises Northumberland, County Durham, Tyne and Wear and the Tees Valley. The region has a population of close to 2.5 million, primarily concentrated in the two conurbations of Tyne and Wear and Tees Valley. Two-thirds of the region, primarily to the north and west, are rural in character, sparsely populated with large tracts of attractive upland and coastal countryside. Economic activity is focused within the region's two conurbations and its main settlements.

## Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive Annex I (a)

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

- 3.3 The North East of England Plan ("the Plan") sets out a broad development strategy for the North East for the period up to 2021. In particular, the Plan sets out a vision for the North East:

*'The North East will be a region where present and future generations have a high quality of life. It will be a vibrant, self reliant, ambitious and outward looking region featuring a dynamic economy, a healthy environment, and a distinctive culture. Everyone will have the opportunity to realise their full potential.'*

- 3.4 The Plan explains that the achievement of this vision will require a step change in activity and a renaissance throughout the region by:

- delivering sustainable and inclusive economic prosperity and growth;
  - delivering sustainable communities;
  - conserving, enhancing and capitalising upon the region's natural and built environment, heritage and culture; and
  - improving connectivity and accessibility within and beyond the region.
- 3.5 Accordingly, the spatial strategy for all future development in the North East was to be based on the following principles:
- to promote an urban and rural renaissance;
  - to contribute to the sustainable development of the region;
  - to reflect a sequential approach to land allocations; and
  - to include appropriate phasing and plan, monitor, manage mechanisms for planning and implementation of new development
- 3.6 The Plan contains:
- a summary of the region's main characteristics and key challenges;
  - the international, national and regional planning policy context;
  - the economic growth and population and housing assumptions;
  - 57 specific policies for achieving the regional vision; and
  - an implementation, monitoring and review framework.
- 3.7 The Plan reflects the national policies on development at the time of its publication. It incorporates the regional transport strategy and it provides the spatial context for the delivery of other regional strategies. Those of most importance to the preparation of the Plan were:
- regional economic strategy;
  - regional housing strategy ;
  - regional transport strategy;
  - integrated regional framework (the sustainable development framework);
  - regional planning guidance for the North East.
- 3.8 Neighbouring strategies include the National Planning Framework for Scotland and the regional strategies for the North West of England and for Yorkshire and the Humber. Both the neighbouring regional strategies are also under consideration for revocation.
- 3.9 Additional policy documents with targets/objectives of relevance to the Plan included:
- *Our Towns and Cities: the Future* (the "urban white paper", 1999);
  - *Our Countryside: the Future* (the "rural white paper", 1999);
  - *Quality and Choice: a decent home for all* (the "housing green paper", 2003);

- *Transport 2010 – the 10 Year Plan* (2000);
- *Our Energy Future – creating a low carbon economy* (the “energy white paper”, 2003);
- *Waste Strategy 2000*;
- *Working with the grain of nature: a biodiversity strategy for England* (2002).

## **STRUCTURE PLANS**

- 3.10 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.
- 3.11 A number of structure plan policies were saved in the North East. Details are set out in Annex B.

## **LOCAL PLANS**

- 3.12 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.
- 3.13 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.
- 3.14 A list of local plans in the North East and their current composition is included at Annex C.

# Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive Annex I (b)

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

- 3.15 A review of data on environmental, social and economic conditions within the region was undertaken to inform the sustainability appraisal of the *Submission Draft* version of the Plan. (The full review of baseline conditions in the North East was presented in Annex B to the 2005 *Final Sustainability Appraisal Report*). Appendix B to the final (June 2008) *Sustainability Appraisal Report of the Adopted Plan* sets out an update of these baseline conditions.
- 3.16 A summary of the main environmental, social and economic characteristics of the region and baseline conditions, including trends, is set out below. These have been derived from the final adopted Plan and the 2005 and 2008 sustainability appraisal reports, and so mostly represent the situation at the time the Plan was being prepared.
- 3.17 The key points of the baseline assessment are summarised 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 East has changed *significantly* since publication of the Plan.

### ***Environmental conditions***

- 3.18 At the time of its preparation, the Plan highlighted:
- that the North East had some of the UK's finest high quality, diverse countryside and natural and built heritage, including a varied coastline, and two World Heritage sites;
  - over 30 European sites of nature conservation importance, amounting to around 91,000 hectares.
- 3.19 The June 2008 update of baseline conditions noted that:
- the region contained 14 national nature reserves and some 251 sites of special scientific interest, covering around 109,000 hectares (13 per cent of the region's land area). The condition of

sites of special scientific interest was worse than for England as a whole, with 25 per cent classified as 'favourable';

- there had been a declining trend in carbon dioxide emissions in recent years, and the region as a whole had a relatively low level of emissions;
- there was a clear trend of rising sea levels on the North East coast over the last 100 years, with a future predicted sea level rise of 4mm per year;
- an estimate of around 16,000 properties at risk of flooding from rivers and the sea;
- air quality in the region continued to improve as emissions of smoke and acid gases had fallen. Air quality management zones had been declared by three authorities;
- ambient air quality for sulphur dioxide was relatively low across most parts of the region, but that the UK standard may have been exceeded in some areas to the east and south of the region during the course of that year;
- ambient levels of nitrogen oxide were high across the region, rising in the east and south, where UK standards may have been exceeded during the course of that year, and appeared to be related to traffic pollution;
- river water quality in the North East was generally good. Water quality in urban areas was significantly poorer than in rural areas. Investment in sewage infrastructure had brought about an improvement in bathing water quality, and quality standards were now achieved in almost all locations;
- around 265,000 tonnes of hazardous waste were produced in the North East in 2004;
- around 70 per cent of all waste generated in the region was disposed to landfill; deposits peaked in 2005 and had shown an accelerating decline since then and, in 2008, were at their lowest level since 2000-01. In 2008, the construction and demolition sector was responsible for the greatest proportion of waste sent to landfill - over 50 per cent by weight;
- the region contained two World Heritage Sites, and 8.5 per cent of buildings were designated grade I or grade II\* listed, but 8.25 per cent of these were at risk (2003); and a relatively high number of the region's scheduled ancient monuments were at risk.

3.20 River Basin Management Plans (for Northumbria and the Solway Tweed basins in the North East) are now the main tool for delivering the Water Framework Directive, which aims to protect and improve the water environment. They set out the status of water bodies, the main issues affecting the water environment (e.g. rural and urban diffuse pollution), and the actions needed to address the issues. The

Environment Agency has drawn attention to the fact that water quality has improved since the Plan was prepared, although fewer than 50% of the region's rivers are at good or better ecological status. (The Water Framework Directive requires 100% to be good or better by 2027.)

### ***Social conditions***

3.21 The Plan reported:

- a housing stock characterised by geographical areas of varying demand;
- continuing problems of deprivation in some areas;
- a long-term trend of falling population, mainly due to net out-migration from the North East, but with the latest projections suggesting that the region could expect to grow to about 2.64 million people by 2028.

3.22 The June 2008 update of baseline conditions noted:

- problems of deprivation, particularly health deprivation, with most deprived wards concentrated in the urban and former coalfield areas;
- 20 per cent of the region's housing stock was, or was at risk of, experiencing problems of low demand. Around 26 per cent of houses did not meet the 'decent homes' standard;
- the majority of wards had good access to services, but with some rural areas suffering from poor access.

### ***Economic conditions***

3.23 The Plan noted an improving and increasingly diverse and knowledge-based economy with a decreasing emphasis on traditional industries such as mining, steel, shipbuilding, chemicals and heavy engineering.

3.24 The June 2008 update of baseline conditions noted:

- 'gross value added' – a key measure of economic performance – in the North East had risen steadily between 2000-2005, but was still below the national average;
- the average gross weekly earnings for full-time adult employees were between 10 per cent (males) and 13 per cent (females) below UK levels;
- unemployment rates in the North East were higher than in Great Britain as a whole.

## Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive Annex I (c) and (d)

**Relevant aspects of the current state of the environment of the North East and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the Plan**

**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 designated pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC**

3.25 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:

- areas affected by poorer local air quality;
- areas at risk of flooding;
- sites of national and international conservation importance;
- protected areas, including the Northumberland National Park, two areas of outstanding natural beauty, and three sections of heritage coast;
- areas of Green Belt and common land;
- areas of economic and social deprivation, including housing and health deprivation.

3.26 The areas most likely to be affected are those where the Plan seeks to focus most housing and economic development. These are in or around the existing main settlements and in particular, what the Plan refers to as the Tyne and Wear and Tees Valley City-Regions, as the region's population and economic activity is mainly concentrated in these areas. Whilst the region's richest natural environments are elsewhere, these urban areas possess specific sites of particular importance in terms of wildlife and biodiversity. They also contain important historic assets, and two world heritage sites are also found in urban situations. Parts of the City-Regions have been affected by major industrial changes, including the decline of the coal mining industry. The Plan notes that parts of the North East, concentrated within the two conurbations and former coalfield and heavy industrial areas in south east Northumberland, County Durham and Redcar and Cleveland, experience socio-economic deprivation and dereliction.

3.27 In general, the Plan's policies are intended to protect and enhance areas and sites of high environmental and heritage value (although they also go wider than this to address the wider natural and historic environment), and to address areas of deprivation. The final (2008) sustainability appraisal report concluded that:

“in the main, the later stages of the development of the Plan have moved the strategy towards a stronger model of sustainability which embraces environmental, social and economic facets of sustainable development”.

- 3.28 The Habitats Regulations Assessment accompanying the Plan identified some potential effects of development on internationally designated nature conservation sites, including potential adverse effects from air pollution and disturbance – this is set out in more detail paragraph below.
- 3.29 A summary of the key sustainability issues arising from the review of baseline conditions which are likely to relate to the Plan was set out in Table 4.1 of the ‘final’ *Sustainability Report of the Submission Draft* regional spatial strategy. Some of the information included in this table was subsequently updated, but there were few (if any) substantial differences.
- 3.30 In commenting on policy 37: air quality, the Plan (paragraph 3.164) says that the appropriate assessment undertaken in accordance with the Habitats Regulations had identified a number of instances where it was believed that emissions from developments and traffic movements were already having an impact on internationally designated sites of nature conservation importance, and points to the risk that these impacts may increase. The sites affected are:
- Border Mires Kielder-Butterburn Special Area of Conservation;
  - Borders Woods Special Area of Conservation;
  - Castle Eden Dene Special Area of Conservation;
  - Harbottle Moors Special Area of Conservation;
  - Ford Moss Special Area of Conservation;
  - Moor House-Upper Teesdale Special Area of Conservation;
  - North Northumberland Dunes Special Area of Conservation;
  - North Pennine Dales Meadows Special Area of Conservation;
  - North Pennine Moors Special Area of Conservation;
  - North York Moors Special Area of Conservation;
  - Simonside Hills Special Area of Conservation;
  - Tyne and Allen River Gravels Special Area of Conservation;
  - Tyne and Nent Special Area of Conservation;
  - Langholm - Newcastleton Hills Special Protection Area;
  - North Pennine Moors Special Protection Area;
  - North York Moors Special Protection Area; and
  - Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast Special Protection Area.
- 3.31 The Plan (paragraph 2.87) notes that this issue is partly addressed in the air quality policy (policy 37), and that many of the policies put in place to address sustainable development issues and climate change in particular, are likely to contribute to dealing with this issue. It also states (paragraph 2.85) that in preparing strategies, plans and programmes and considering planning proposals, local authorities will

need to consider avoidance and mitigation of potential impacts on these sites identified in the appropriate assessment.

- 3.32 The appropriate assessment under the Habitats Regulations concluded that the Plan should not have adverse effects on the integrity of European sites, provided that mitigation is implemented as suggested. Further more detailed appropriate assessments will be required when policies are implemented and information is available at scales and locations of proposed development, in order to ensure that there will be no adverse effects on the integrity of European sites in the region. This will remain the case following revocation of the Plan.

## Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive Annex I (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**

- 3.33 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.
- 3.34 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.
- 3.35 The Plan covers a wide range of environmental and other sustainability issues in the North East. Accordingly, a number of international protection objectives and requirements were considered relevant to different aspects of the Plan, including:
- waste: European Union Framework Waste Directive; Directives on the Landfill of Waste (99/31/EC), Packaging and Packaging Waste (94/62/EC);

- **air:** EU Air Quality Framework Directives (96/62/EC) and (1999/30/EC), (2002/3/EC);
- **water:** EU Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC), Nitrates Directive (91/676/EEC), Bathing Water Quality Directive (76/160/EEC), Drinking Water Directive (98/83/EC);
- **biodiversity:** EU Directives on the Conservation of Wild Birds (79/409/EEC), the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (92/43/EEC);
- **landscape:** European Landscape Convention;
- **historic environment:** UNESCO World Heritage Convention and management plans for World Heritage Sites;
- **pollution:** EU Directive on Assessment and Management of Environmental Noise (2002/49/EC).

3.36 The sustainability appraisal also reviewed the suite of national planning policy guidance and statements in existence at the time. Additional policy documents with targets/objectives of relevance to the Plan include those listed in paragraph 3.10 above.

3.37 The sustainability appraisal report states that a detailed review of all these plans and strategies was undertaken to identify the different objectives and indicators that could be used to describe, analyse and compare environmental, social and economic effects in the sustainability appraisal. Although the sustainability appraisal report does not specifically comment on how these objectives were taken into account in the preparation of the Plan, the supporting text to the policies in the Plan itself reflects on the requirements imposed by certain European Union directives and other international obligations, and relates these to the relevant Plan policies. These include:

- policy 31 - historic environment: The supporting text (paragraph 3.124) notes the value and importance of maintaining and enhancing the region's two World Heritage Sites – Hadrian's Wall and Durham Castle and Cathedral.
- policy 34 - the aquatic and marine environment: Paragraph 3.144 of the Plan notes the objectives of the European Water Framework Directive and how these are being integrated into the Northumbria River Basin Management Plan being drawn up by the Environment Agency. To ensure the planning system can positively facilitate the delivery of the Directive's objectives and the river basin management plan can take account of local priorities, frequent dialogue between the Environment Agency and local authorities at all stages in the planning cycle will be essential.
- policies 45-47 - waste management: The supporting text notes that the North East Regional Waste Management Plan will have regard to the policy principles and targets set out in the

government's 2007 waste strategy, (which seeks to implement the European Union Waste Framework Directive) and the European Union Landfill Directive.

- 3.38 In addition, following the examination in public of the draft Plan and the publication of the examination panel report, a full appropriate assessment under the European Habitats Directive was undertaken to assess the potential effects of the Plan on European sites of nature conservation importance. The results of this were taken into account in the preparation of the *Proposed Changes* (May 2007) and *Further Proposed Changes* (February 2008) versions of the Plan, and also in final amendments to the Plan.

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

### **The likely significant effects of the Plan on the environment**

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

- 3.39 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.
- 3.40 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.
- 3.41 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.
- 3.42 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 sustainability appraisal, which incorporates strategic environmental assessment.

- 3.43 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.
- 3.44 The 2005 sustainability appraisal report identified several potential environmental problems, commenting that the rate of development proposed by the Plan would inevitably cause:
- pressure on water resource infrastructure (e.g. wastewater treatment);
  - increased waste arisings; and
  - increased energy use and emissions of greenhouse gases
- 3.45 Furthermore, the 2005 sustainability appraisal report noted, if the Plan policies were not implemented through other regional, sub-regional and local strategies, plans and programmes, it was likely that aspects of the region's environmental performance would worsen. Other potential problems included:
- increased road traffic and congestion
  - reduced tranquillity
  - damage to biodiversity; and
  - inappropriate development in floodplains
- 3.46 For the later stages of development of the Plan, the sustainability appraisal focussed on those areas where suggested changes would be likely to alter the spatial strategy, such that the Plan would have different strategic effects than was reported by the sustainability appraisal of the *Submission Draft*. Accordingly, it was not within the scope of the later assessments to undertake a full appraisal of the overall Plan. Nor did the final sustainability appraisal comment further on cumulative impacts.
- 3.47 As noted previously, the final (2008) sustainability appraisal report concluded that, in the main, the later stages of the development of the Plan had moved the strategy towards a stronger model of sustainability which embraces environmental, social and economic facets of sustainable development.
- 3.48 The assessment draws on the sustainability appraisals supporting the preparation of the North East Plan and advice from the SEA consultation bodies. A summary of the environmental effects identified in the sustainability appraisal of the North East Plan are summarised in

the table below, with an assessment of any likely significant environmental effects of its proposed revocation.

- 3.49 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 1: Summary assessment of the environmental implications of North East of England Plan policies and likely significant effects of revocation of the Plan**

<b>Strategic Environmental Assessment topic</b>	<b>Implications of Plan policies</b>	<b>Likely significant environmental effects of revocation</b>
<p><b>Biodiversity, fauna and flora</b></p>	<p>Policy 33: Biodiversity and geodiversity;            Policy 34: The aquatic and marine environment;            Policy 36: Trees, woodlands and forests;            (Policy 37: Air quality – as a mitigation measure)</p> <p>The North East has a higher than average proportion of land designated as national nature reserves and sites of special scientific interest. However, the condition of sites of special scientific interest is worse than for England as a whole, with 25% classified as ‘favourable’ (cf 45% for England) by a report compiled August 2007.</p> <p>The majority of farmland bird species, as a key biodiversity indicator, have been decreasing.</p> <p>The appropriate assessment raised concerns over the effects of ‘coastal squeeze’ and air pollution on protected (Natura 2000) sites as a result of increased development and traffic generation, but concluded these impacts should be negated by Policy 37 (in relation to air quality) and other mitigating measures.</p>	<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 applies 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.</p> <p>Local authorities are expected to work together, and with communities, on conservation, restoration and</p>

	<p>(Policy 10: Tees Valley City-Region: The appropriate assessment did initially raise concerns about this policy, but these were allayed by subsequent changes to the Plan. However, the appropriate assessment agreed with the Plan that development proposals in areas affecting the Tees Estuary will need to be subject to the most rigorous examination).</p>	<p>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>
<p><b>Population</b></p>	<p>Recent trend of falling population in the North East, mostly due to out-migration. But this appears to have changed and the population is now expected to grow by around 2.6m by 2028. The North East has just 10% of its population living in rural districts.</p> <p>The Plan contains various policies on sustainability, employment, housing provision, accessibility, etc., which are intended to have positive effects on the population. These are summarised in Policy 2: Sustainable development – including:</p> <p>2.2a - to tackle social, economic and environmental impacts of multiple deprivation;</p> <p>2.2c - to ensure everyone has the opportunity of living in a decent and affordable home;</p> <p>2.2g - to ensure good accessibility to jobs, facilities</p>	<p><b>Revocation is unlikely to have any significant environmental effects on the population.</b></p> <p>A central theme of the Plan is the need to achieve and maintain a high quality of life for all, now and in the future, through a major economic, social and environmental renaissance throughout the region.</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</p>

	<p>and services, particularly by public transport, walking and cycling;</p> <p>2.3a - to ensure high and stable levels of employment so everyone can share and contribute to greater prosperity.</p>	<p>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 applies, and local authorities will need to have regard to policies on housing supply and transport. In addition the proposed 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>
<p><b>Human Health</b></p>	<p>The sustainability appraisal identified a number of policy areas including those relating to accessibility to services, better housing and jobs and promotion of cycling and walking and green infrastructure as likely to improve health and reduce inequalities in health. These are also the objectives of Policy 2 (2.2f).</p> <p>Other policies that could be particularly beneficial for healthy living include:</p> <p>Policy 34: The aquatic and marine environment.</p> <p>Policy 35: Flood risk.</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 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</p>

	<p>Policy 37: Air quality.</p>	<p>which include an assessment of the impact of options on human health.</p> <p>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>
<p><b>Soil</b></p>	<p>Little reliable data is available on the extent of contaminated land within the region.</p> <p>Broadly, Policy 2: Sustainable development: (1) (c) seeks to protect and enhance geodiversity and soil quality.</p>	<p><b>Revocation is unlikely to have any significant environmental effects on soil.</b></p> <p>Soil impacts are 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 help protect soils.</p>

<p><b>Water</b></p>	<p>River water quality in the North East is generally good. However, at present, less than half the region's rivers meet the ecological standards required by the Water Framework Directive. Investment in sewage infrastructure has ensured an improvement in bathing water quality, and quality standards are now achieved in almost all locations.</p> <p>The Kielder reservoir supports much of the region's rivers and public water supply, which means the North East tends not to experience water restrictions as seen elsewhere.</p> <p>Policy 24 (f): Delivering sustainable communities.</p> <p>Policy 34: The aquatic and marine environment.</p> <p>Policy 35: Flood risk.</p>	<p><b>Revocation is unlikely to have any significant environmental effects on water.</b></p> <p>Water quantity and quality is less an issue in the North East than for some other regions, and this is reflected in how the issue is addressed in the Plan.</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 pro-active 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>Statutory requirements under the Water Framework Directive apply and will 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-</p>
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		<p>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 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.</p> <p>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.</p>
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		Local plans are subject to sustainability appraisal, strategic environmental assessments and, where appropriate, habitats regulation assessment of their local plans which includes an assessment of water issues.
<b>Air</b>	<p>There has been a dramatic fall in industrial emissions of smoke and acid gases. Air quality management zones have been declared by three authorities. Emissions from road traffic are a principal cause of the problems. Projections suggest that air quality will continue to improve.</p> <p>Air emissions from waste treatment technologies will also increase as these are introduced as alternatives to landfill.</p> <p>Policy 37: Air quality.</p> <p>And in broad terms:</p> <p>Policy 7: Connectivity and accessibility.</p> <p>Policy 9: Tyne &amp; Wear City Region and Policy 10: Tees Valley City-Region:</p> <p>Policy 21: Airports.</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 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>Climatic factors (climate change)</b>	<p>The region has been home to a large number of fossil-fuelled power stations, but there has been a declining trend in carbon dioxide emissions in recent years. The region has considerable potential for renewable energy, particularly offshore and onshore wind.</p>	<p><b>Revocation is unlikely to have any significant environmental effects on climatic factors (including climate change).</b></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</p>

	<p>16,000 houses are at risk from flooding; predicted sea level rises will increase flood risk across the region, particularly in tidal river estuaries such as the Tees.</p>	<p>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 national 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> <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</p>
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		<p>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 assessment which includes an assessment of the effects on climatic factors including climate change.</p>
<p><b>Cultural Heritage</b></p>	<p>The North East is comparatively rich in heritage assets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8.5% of buildings are designated Grade I or II* listed, but 8.25% were at risk (2003)</li> <li>• it contains two world heritage sites</li> <li>• 11% of England’s heritage coast is found in the region.</li> </ul> <p>However, a relatively high number of the region’s scheduled ancient monuments are at risk.</p> <p>Policy 16: Culture and tourism.</p> <p>Policy 32: Historic environment.</p>	<p><b>Revocation is unlikely to have any significant environmental effects on heritage and the historic environment.</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>Local authorities are expected 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 liaise with English Heritage to identify and evaluate areas, sites and buildings of local cultural and historic importance, and explore</p>

		<p>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 which includes an assessment of the effects on cultural heritage and the historic environment.</p>
<p><b>Landscape</b></p>	<p>Key land use trends since 1980 have included an increase in agricultural land and woodland, and a small decrease in urban land.</p> <p>41% of land is covered by statutory designations, such as national park, areas of outstanding natural beauty etc. There are two community forests.</p> <p>Policy 9: Tyne &amp; Wear City-Region and Policy 10: Tees Valley City-Region (including in relation to Green Belt, strategic gaps, green infrastructure).</p> <p>Policy 31: Landscape character.</p> <p>Policy 36: Trees, woodlands and forests.</p> <p>And in broad terms:</p> <p>Policy 6: Locational strategy;</p> <p>Policy 8: Protecting and enhancing the environment</p>	<p><b>Revocation is unlikely to have any significant environmental effects on landscape.</b></p> <p>National planning policies provide for countryside protection, including protections for valued landscapes and nationally designated areas (which are also subject to statutory protection).</p> <p>In addition the Government intends to revoke top down targets in Regional Strategies which 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 contain strong policies protecting the Green Belt from inappropriate development.</p> <p>Potential significant effects on landscapes should be</p>

		identified by local authorities through the strategic environmental assessments of their local plans, environmental impact assessment and appropriate assessment of specific projects.
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## 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**

- 3.50 The reasonable alternatives to revocation of the Plan and difficulties in undertaking the assessment are considered in Chapter 1.
- 3.51 The description of how the assessment was undertaken, including any difficulties encountered, is discussed in paragraphs 1.24-1.27 above.

## Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive Annex I (i)

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

- 3.52 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 East will no longer be monitored.
- 3.53 Local authorities in the North East 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 themes and effects of revocation

This table sets out the themes and policies of the North East of England Plan with their objectives and the sustainability issues which they raise, including environmental issues identified in sustainability appraisal and strategic environmental assessment 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><i>Development principles and locational strategy</i></b>			
This section sets out a vision for a renaissance throughout the region through implementation of four sustainability themes – see Policy 1 objectives.	The spatial strategy for all future development in the North East is based on the following planning principles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to promote an urban and rural renaissance</li> <li>• to contribute to the sustainable development of the region</li> </ul>	See below.	See below.

Plan policies	Objectives	Sustainability appraisal issues	Revocation – key environmental issues
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to reflect a sequential approach to land allocations; and</li> <li>• to include appropriate phasing and plan, monitor, manage mechanisms for planning and implementation of new development</li> </ul>		
<b>Policy 1: North East renaissance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivering sustainable and inclusive economic prosperity and growth</li> <li>• delivering sustainable communities</li> <li>• conserving, enhancing and capitalising upon the region’s natural and built environment, heritage and culture; and</li> <li>• improving connectivity and accessibility within and beyond the region</li> </ul>	<p>Broadly covers all environmental, social and economic sustainability issues.</p>	<p>These policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.</p> <p>These broad objectives are consistent with the aims of national planning policy. The revocation of the Plan should not significantly affect the ability of local authorities to deliver the objectives through their local plans. Other strategies (e.g. transport) and mechanisms, including the availability of funding and public/private investment decisions will also be important. The proposed duty to cooperate will support their approach.</p> <p>It is not possible for this assessment to predict future policy priorities and decisions taken by the local</p>

Plan policies	Objectives	Sustainability appraisal issues	Revocation – key environmental issues
			<p>authorities, or their likely impacts on the environment. These impacts will, however, be considered as part of sustainability appraisal and strategic environmental assessment of development plan documents.</p>
<p><b>Policy 2: Sustainable development</b></p>	<p>Planning proposals and local development frameworks should support sustainable development and construction through the delivery of a range of environmental, social and economic objectives (as set out).</p>	<p>Covers a wide range of sustainability issues including: air, water and soil quality; biodiversity; waste and use of resources; rural and urban landscapes; development in flood plains; derelict land; cultural heritage; promoting green infrastructure; deprivation; housing; human health; sustainable transport; employment and economic growth.</p> <p>Final sustainability appraisal says: “the policy now recognises some important principles that will help to ensure protection of the environment and consideration of sustainable development and wider social issues within development</p>	<p>These policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.</p> <p>Local authorities have an obligation to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Policy objectives can be delivered through local plans, which are subject to sustainability appraisal and strategic environmental assessment, and development management, as informed by national planning policy and other guidance.</p>

Plan policies	Objectives	Sustainability appraisal issues	Revocation – key environmental issues
		planning.”	
<p><b>Policy 3: Climate change</b></p>	<p>All strategies, plans and programmes in the region shall contribute to mitigating climate change and assisting adaptation to the impacts of a changing climate by:</p> <p>3.1. Helping the region to contribute to meeting national policy as set out in the energy white paper towards ... cutting carbon dioxide emissions;</p> <p>3.2 Planning for the successful adaptation to the impacts of climate change in the region;</p> <p>3.3 Helping the region mitigate and adapt to climate change.</p>	<p>Climate change impacts and adaptation; emissions to air; human health; sustainable transport; renewable energy; spatial sustainability considerations. Specific threats to the region include sea level rises along the North East coasts; increased flood risk; increased risk of storms and other severe weather; climate changes affecting biodiversity, habitats and agriculture.</p> <p>The 2005 sustainability appraisal noted that existing fossil-fuelled power stations mean that the North East has the highest carbon dioxide emissions per head of all the English regions, (though this appears to be declining).</p> <p>The Plan overall aimed to lessen the causes / impacts of climate change, but questioned whether these measures could deliver significant greenhouse gas</p>	<p>These policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.</p> <p>Most climate change impacts are beyond the scope of control by the Plan and depend on national and global measures. However, it should still be possible to contribute to addressing climate change, including through local development frameworks, taking account of national planning and climate change policies and strategies.</p> <p>Item 3 in the policy required the regional planning body to work with regional and local partners to ensure a co-ordinated approach to the development of a regional greenhouse gas emissions inventory, data collection and monitoring and a regional climate change action plan. Revocation of the Plan will not prevent local and other relevant authorities and bodies working together to address climate change issues, in accordance with</p>

Plan policies	Objectives	Sustainability appraisal issues	Revocation – key environmental issues
		<p>emissions reductions compared to regional targets; and also saw tension with the economic growth objectives.</p> <p>Final (2008) sustainability appraisal notes: “This <u>new</u> policy strengthens the Plan in seeking to tackle such a key issue, and to ensure that the effect of development on climate change is reduced. It also seeks to ensure that development takes into account the need to adapt to the impacts of climate change. The policy is comprehensive in making references to national policy targets.”</p>	<p>national planning policy and the Government’s wider climate change strategy.</p>
<p><b>Policy 4: Sequential approach to development</b></p>	<p>Local development frameworks should adopt a sequential approach to give priority to previously developed land and buildings in the most sustainable locations. And avoid areas at the highest risk from flooding, having regard to the vulnerability of the proposed development to flooding.</p>	<p>Use of resources (land); sustainable transport; climate change adaptation.</p>	<p>The policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.</p> <p>This approach is consistent with current national planning policy and can still be delivered through local development frameworks. In terms of flood risk they will need to have regard to national policy and advice from the Environment Agency. The</p>

Plan policies	Objectives	Sustainability appraisal issues	Revocation – key environmental issues
			Flood Risk Regulations 2009 impose a duty on the Environment Agency and lead local flood authorities to take steps to identify and prepare for significant flood risk.
<b>Policy 5: Phasing and plan, monitor and manage</b>	Sets out a regional policy approach: 5.1 Regional planning body to produce an annual monitoring report on the delivery of the Plan’s locational strategy and policies; 5.2 local development frameworks to plan for the managed release of land for development over set periods; 5.3 local authorities to take account of changing circumstances and needs identified through the Plan, local development frameworks and monitoring reports; ensure phasing of major developments; and assessment of major greenfield housing developments.	Broad sustainability issues including housing; employment; population.	The policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.  This is a framework policy in line with general sustainability principles. It will be for local authorities to carry forward this approach through local development frameworks, as they consider appropriate for their communities and having regard to national policy.

<p><b>Policy 6: Locational strategy</b></p>	<p>Plans, strategies and programmes to maximise the major assets and opportunities available in the North East and to regenerate areas affected by social, economic and environmental problems: Supporting polycentric development of the city-regions; allowing appropriate development in “regeneration towns” and rural service centres to meet local needs; maintaining vibrant rural areas, markets towns, villages; conserving and enhancing biodiversity, heritage, landscapes; improving connectivity and accessibility.</p>	<p>Broad sustainability issues including housing; economic (re)development; employment; population; biodiversity; protected areas; rural and urban landscapes; cultural heritage.</p>	<p>The policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.</p> <p>Revocation of the Plan would not affect the ability of local authorities to deliver these objectives through local development frameworks, supported by the proposed duty to co-operate, national planning and other policies, and statutory requirements.</p>
<p><b>Policy 7: Connectivity and accessibility</b></p>	<p>Improving connectivity and accessibility within and beyond the region to contribute towards a North East renaissance; to the successful integrated delivery of the other three themes in Policy 1; to ensure that the North East has a high quality, integrated network of transport infrastructure and services that</p>	<p>Sustainable transport planning/ reducing need to travel; and links to delivery of broader sustainability objectives.</p>	<p>The policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.</p> <p>Revocation of the Plan would not affect the ability of local authorities to deliver these through local planning.</p> <p>Local authorities will need to work cooperatively with transport</p>

	support the region's regeneration and economic growth.		providers and operators to deliver sustainable transport and accessibility objectives.
<b>Policy 8: Protecting and enhancing the environment</b>	<p>High level objectives and principles for protecting and enhancing the environment, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promoting high quality and sympathetic design</li> <li>• protecting special qualities of designated areas (national parks, areas of outstanding natural beauty)</li> <li>• conserving and enhancing historic features</li> <li>• protecting important sites for biodiversity</li> <li>• protecting woodland, implementing forestry strategies</li> <li>• having regard to aquatic and marine environments</li> <li>• supporting the establishment of green infrastructure and strategic wildlife corridors</li> </ul>	<p>Biodiversity, fauna and flora; water and climatic factors; landscapes; cultural heritage; material assets; human health; social benefits (recreation).</p> <p>The North East has a higher than average proportion of land designated as national nature reserves and sites of special scientific interest. However, the condition of sites of special scientific interest is significantly worse than for England as a whole.</p> <p>41% of land is covered by statutory designations, such as national park, areas of outstanding natural beauty etc, twice the England-wide average. <i>(2005 sustainability appraisal)</i>.</p>	<p>The policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.</p> <p>Local authorities and their partners should still be able to deliver these objectives through local plans and development management, under national planning policies and through implementation of statutory protection of designated areas and important sites. Appropriate assessment under the Habitats Directive will be carried out where appropriate.</p> <p>The delivery of green infrastructure, strategic wildlife corridors and regional forestry strategies should be achieved through partnership working between authorities and other relevant bodies, supported by the proposed duty to cooperate. 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</p>

			Green Infrastructure Partnership.
<b>Policy 9: Tyne and Wear City-Region</b>	Extensive, detailed policy to support the polycentric development of the Tyne and Wear City-Region including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• regeneration</li> <li>• economic prosperity</li> <li>• sustainable communities</li> <li>• connectivity</li> <li>• Green Belt; and</li> <li>• environment</li> </ul>	Broad range of economic, social and environmental sustainability issues.  Final sustainability appraisal notes: “The policy also strengthens the plan’s consideration of sustainable construction, environmental and green infrastructure issues and focuses on a strategic approach to delivering green infrastructure and environmental improvements.”	The policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.  Local Authorities have to have regard to national policies on all the matters covered by this policy. There is no reason why they should not be able to pursue appropriate objectives through their local plans in the absence of a Regional Strategy. The proposed duty to cooperate will support their approach.
<b>Policy 10: Tees Valley City- Region</b>	Extensive, detailed policy to support the polycentric development and redevelopment of the Tees Valley City-Region, including same aspects as Policy 9, but with strategic gaps instead of Green Belt.	As for Policy 9.  (The final sustainability appraisal additionally notes the strengthening of consideration of strategic gaps.)	The policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.  See comments for Policy 9.
<b>Policy 11: Rural areas</b>	To support the development of a vibrant rural economy that makes a positive contribution to regional prosperity, whilst protecting the region’s environmental assets from inappropriate development, covering: regeneration; economic prosperity; sustainable	As for Policy 9.  Many rural areas within the region suffer very poor access to services.	The policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.  See comments for Policy 9.  Local authorities can pursue the aims and objectives of this policy through their local plans in consultation with rural communities

	communities; connectivity.		and businesses, and with regard to advice from bodies such as Natural England and English Heritage.
<b><i>Delivering an urban and rural renaissance</i></b>			
<b>Theme 3A: Delivering economic prosperity and growth</b>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• achieve accelerated economic growth and reduce disparities between the North East and other regions</li> <li>• improve the range and quality of employment opportunities available</li> <li>• broaden the region's economic base and attract mobile investment</li> <li>• focus development, investment and policy in support of the growth of key regional economic drivers</li> <li>• encourage the creation, growth and survival of new and existing enterprises</li> <li>• facilitate the continuing adaptation and restructuring of</li> </ul>	<p>The North East has the highest levels of socio-economic deprivation of all the regions of England. It is the most deprived region in England in terms of health. 50% of the population live in wards that are classified in the 10% of most health deprived wards in England. Life expectancy and coronary heart disease rates are significantly behind England-wide averages. <i>(2005 sustainability appraisal).</i></p>	See general comments for Policy 1.

	<p>the region's economy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• improve the health of the region to produce a healthier workforce; and</li> <li>• provide appropriate economic development within the urban and rural centres with the overall aim of achieving sustainable communities</li> </ul>		
<b>Policy 12: Sustainable economic development</b>	<p>To focus economic growth in the most sustainable locations which maximise regional economic growth and wider regeneration priorities, whilst safeguarding the environment.</p>	<p>Regeneration, economic development, employment; sustainable communities; sustainable transport; human health.</p>	<p>The policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.</p> <p>See comments for Policies 1 and 9.</p> <p>The Government expects planning to provide for sustainable development and economic growth. The approach will be set out in the new National Planning Policy Framework which will inform local plan making. Local authorities will need to plan for the well-being of their communities, including for employment, in partnership with business. Local authorities, business, and civic leaders, working together strategically through Local Enterprise Partnerships, are best placed to understand the needs of their area. The Government expects</p>

			these Partnerships will drive sustainable economic growth and create the conditions for private sector job growth in their communities.
<b>Policy 13: Brownfield mixed-use locations</b>	To support brownfield mixed use developments in sustainable locations throughout the region; identifying broad locations for major mixed-use regeneration projects; policy for local development frameworks to provide for regeneration schemes within these broad locations.	Regeneration, economic development, employment; housing; sustainable communities.	See comments for Policies 1, 4 and 12.  It will be for local authorities to determine their approach to brownfield mixed use locations, according to their priorities.
<b>Policy 14: Supporting further and higher education</b>	To support the growth and increasing role of universities and colleges in the regional economy.	Economic development, employment, population skills/education.	The policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.
<b>Policy 15: ICT networks</b>	To provide flexible responses to rapidly changing physical and social demands for ICT business – promoting broadband infrastructure for all communities; flexi-working; ICT training and skills; etc.	Economic and employment benefits; education and skills; accessibility to services; reducing need to travel.	The policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.
<b>Policy 16: Culture and tourism</b>	To promote culture and tourism, including provision for sport and leisure and the resources which support these, including:	Economic development and employment; cultural and heritage assets; human health; landscapes; biodiversity;	The policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.  These objectives could be delivered

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensuring that the development of culture, sports, leisure, tourist facilities protects and enhances the region's natural, built and heritage environments, and that adverse effects on internationally designated nature conservation sites are avoided or mitigated</li> <li>• ensuring that the planning and development of these facilities of regional and sub-regional significance is coordinated, including working across local authority boundaries</li> <li>• ensuring all major facilities are accessible by a range of transport modes to develop the region as an integrated visitor destination.</li> </ul>	sustainable transport.	through local development frameworks, supported by the proposed duty to co-operate, having regard to national planning policies, and any other relevant strategies (e.g. culture, sport and recreation, tourism). Statutory protection will continue to apply to designated areas and the most important historic environment assets.
<b>Policy 17: Casino development</b>	To establish the need for, impact and accessibility of casino development.		Not now relevant.
<b>Policy 18: Employment land portfolio</b>	To ensure the scale and quality of the employment land provision assists the accelerated growth in the regional economy, and that the regional economic strategy	Regeneration, economic development, employment.	The policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.  It will still be possible for local authorities working in partnerships to

	and other strategies can be delivered effectively.		deliver these aims. The proposed duty to cooperate will support their approach.
<b>Policy 19: Office development outside of city and town centres</b>	To steer such development into central locations and where these opportunities are limited, to favour locations on the edge of such centres and the brownfield, mixed-use development locations identified in Policy 13.	Economic development; employment;  Accessibility through sustainable transport.	The policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy. The proposed duty to cooperate will support their approach.
<b>Policy 20: Key employment locations</b>	To enable the accelerated growth in the regional economy to be maximized, strategies, plans and programmes should focus appropriate investment towards the “Key Employment Locations” shown.	Economic development; employment;  Accessibility; encouraging low-carbon emissions; sustainable transport.	See comments for Policy 12.  Decisions on key employment locations will be for local authorities and business partners. Environmental protection measures will continue to apply.
<b>Policy 21: Airports</b>	To support the development of both North East airports, including sustainable expansion of facilities and airport related development, and improving access links.	Economic development; employment;  Accessibility; transport; climate change impacts.	The policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.  Future development at and related to these airports will continue to be driven by evolving national aviation policy / strategy and National Policy Statements (and commercial operator’s decisions), with or without the regional strategy. The relevant local authorities will decide what policies are appropriate to support the airports (e.g. housing for

			employees) informed by local needs and national policies on sustainable development. It seems unlikely that revocation of the regional policy will in itself have any significant environmental effects in regard to the future of airports in the North East.
<b>Policy 22: Ports</b>	To support the growth of the region's ports, including safeguarding adjacent sites for port operational uses and where appropriate protecting sites of nature and heritage conservation importance.	Economic development; employment;  Accessibility; transport; biodiversity; heritage.	The policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.  Statutory protection for habitats and heritage sites continues to apply.
<b>Policy 23: Chemical and steel industries</b>	For Hartlepool, Stockton-on-Tees and Redcar and Cleveland Local Development Frameworks to safeguard land for these industries.	Economic development; employment.	This issue is being considered at the local level through the Stockton local development plan (framework). Whether to retain the same area of land as set out in the North East Plan will be for local decision.
<b>Theme 3B: Delivering sustainable communities</b>			
	In pursuit of delivering sustainable communities, which thrive on the opportunities offered by a diverse economy, a high quality environment and a multi-cultural, inclusive and cohesive society, the main	Broad range of sustainability considerations.	The objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.

	<p>objectives are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• stabilise and then increase the region's population</li> <li>• focus housing development on previously developed land and buildings in sustainable locations</li> <li>• focus all types of retail, commercial, leisure, recreation and service development, particularly high trip generating uses, within city, town and rural service centres</li> <li>• provide a more appropriate mix of type, size, tenure and affordability of decent, high quality homes</li> <li>• reduce the amount of vacant housing in the region to 3% by 2011</li> <li>• promote new development where jobs, housing, key services and facilities are accessible by public transport; and,</li> <li>• build to design standards that minimise the consumption of natural resources and</li> </ul>		
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	contribute to stimulating local economies		
<b>Policy 24: Delivering sustainable communities</b>	Strategies, plans/programmes and planning proposals should assess the suitability of land for development and the contribution that can be made by design in relation to a number of listed sustainability criteria.	Sustainable locational criteria for development, including accessibility to sustainable transport; population, human health; employment; biodiversity; landscapes; natural resources; cultural assets.  Final sustainability appraisal notes: "The policy will help to plan for sustainable communities by ensuring that appropriate infrastructure [including green infrastructure] is provided."	See comments for Policies 1 and 2.
<b>Policy 25: Urban and rural centres</b>	The scale of new development within town and other centres should be based on the sequential approach and locational strategy to reflect their role in the region; to provide a network of centres and enable informed strategic choices of where growth should be located, whilst supporting growth across a range of centres; to protect existing facilities in small settlements. Such an approach will allow future retail and leisure	Range of economic and social sustainability considerations.	The policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy. These objectives will still be achievable through local development frameworks, local partnerships, supported by the proposed duty to co-operate.

	investment to assist in achieving a rural and urban renaissance.		
<b>Policy 26: Metrocentre</b>	No provision for additional retail or leisure development at the MetroCentre or the surrounding retail complex.		No effect
<b>Policy 27: Out-of-centre leisure developments</b>	Local development frameworks to ensure that leisure developments are of an appropriate scale in relation to nearby settlements, and not provide for new out-of-centre leisure developments unless there are benefits that contribute to the sustainable growth of the local economy.	Economic development; employment; Accessibility.	These policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.
<b>Policy 28: Gross and net dwelling provision</b>	Improving and increasing the housing stock: targets for new and replacement dwellings.	Housing; population; social benefits.  Final sustainability appraisal notes that: "Combined with further strengthening of other policies related to rural housing affordability the policy should help to contribute to the development of more sustainable rural communities."	These policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.  The new homes bonus and other Government measures are intended to incentivise communities and local authorities to plan for more houses, driven by local assessment of need.  Actual environmental impacts will therefore depend on decisions taken by local authorities and their communities.

<p><b>Policy 29: Delivering and managing housing supply</b></p>	<p>Targets for housing development on previously developed land and through re-use of buildings; ensuring the necessary infrastructure and services are provided and co-ordinated with the development of new housing; densities; phasing of land release.</p>	<p>Housing; population; sustainable land use.</p> <p>Final sustainability appraisal notes that increased brownfield land targets will help to ensure that land resources are used sustainably.</p>	<p>These policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.</p> <p>In line with current planning policy, local plans should have set their own local targets and strategies for bringing previously-developed land into housing use. Although the Government has indicated its intention to remove the national brownfield target through the National Planning Policy Framework, this would not prevent local authorities setting their own target.</p>
<p><b>Policy 30: Improving inclusivity and affordability</b></p>	<p>Policies to provide an adequate supply and appropriate mix of dwelling type, size and tenure in sustainable locations, to provide sufficient choice; create inclusive, mixed-income communities; improve quality of life and reduce social polarisation. And specific provision of sites for gypsies and travellers.</p>	<p>Housing; tackling inequalities; social benefits; human health.</p>	<p>These policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.</p> <p>The Government considers that local authorities are best placed to determine how to meet their housing needs – including the right level of site provision for travelling sites. Local authorities have a statutory duty to assess accommodation needs of travellers as part of their wider housing needs assessments. There is national planning policy for the provision of traveller sites. The Government has consulted on a new</p>

			planning policy for traveller sites. Under this Local Authorities are expected to assess the needs for traveller sites and to use this to identify land in their development plan documents.
<b>Theme 3C: Conserving, enhancing and capitalising upon the region’s diverse natural and built environment, heritage and culture</b>			See comments for Policy 8
<b>Policy 31: Landscape character</b>	To promote development appropriate to the Northumberland National Park, areas of outstanding natural beauty and Heritage Coasts; have regard to landscape character assessments and areas of outstanding natural beauty and national park management plans; promote integrated management initiatives to sustain “valued landscapes”; recognition of role of design statements in promoting high quality development that respects local character and distinctiveness; and incorporate the findings of shoreline management plans and catchment flood management plans.	Landscapes; cultural heritage; social well-being; human health.	These policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.  Local authorities, Natural England and other local partners should continue to work collaboratively to maintain the impetus to deliver these policies, as they see appropriate in line with their responsibilities for communities and the environment. They will also have obligations under the proposed duty to co-operate once introduced, subject to Parliamentary approval.

<p><b>Policy 32: Historic environment</b></p>	<p>To conserve and enhance the historic environment of the region</p>	<p>Cultural and historic heritage.</p>	<p>These policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.</p> <p>In planning for the historic environment local authorities should work cooperatively with English Heritage and other knowledgeable groups and communities to identify and ensure the protection, appropriate use and management of historic and cultural assets.</p>
<p><b>Policy 33: Biodiversity and geodiversity</b></p>	<p>To ensure that the region's ecological and geological resources are protected and enhanced to return key biodiversity resources to viable levels.</p>	<p>Biodiversity, geodiversity; fauna and flora.</p>	<p>These policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.</p> <p>Local authorities, Natural England and other local partners should continue to work collaboratively to maintain the impetus to deliver biodiversity and geodiversity objectives in line with national policy. The proposed duty to cooperate will support their approach.</p>
<p><b>Policy 34: The aquatic and marine environment</b></p>	<p>Range of policies relating to different aspects, including water supply; management of water bodies, groundwater, coastal/marine areas; water quality; sustainable drainage; coastal nature conservation sites;</p>	<p>Water resources; human health; cultural (marine) heritage; economy.</p>	<p>These policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.</p> <p>River basin management plans, shoreline management plans, etc. will continue to exist and be developed. Local authorities and</p>

	water-based recreation.		other relevant bodies including the Marine Management Organisation. will need to consider what approaches are needed to deliver the integration of onshore and offshore planning.
<b>Policy 35: Flood risk</b>	Strategies, plans and programmes should adopt a strategic, integrated, sustainable and proactive approach to catchment management to reduce flood risk within the region; local development frameworks should follow the sequential, risk-based approach to development and flood risk set out in Planning Policy Statement 25.	Human health; water resource management; climate change adaptation; sustainable locations for development.	<p>These policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.</p> <p>National planning policies will apply. 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 significant flood risk.</p>

<p><b>Policy 36: Trees, woodlands and forests</b></p>	<p>Strategies, plans/programmes and planning proposals should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be in line with the North East Regional Forest Strategy to maximise the social, economic and environmental opportunities of trees, woodlands and forests</li> <li>• support the expansion of community forestry</li> <li>• facilitate the expansion of tree cover, to provide accessible leisure, recreation and environmental education opportunities</li> <li>• support the establishment of integrated timber processing facilities, including related industries such as renewable energy</li> <li>• maximise the tourism development opportunities of woodlands and forests, and identify and protect ancient woodland</li> <li>• ensure that proposals for expansion of tree cover do not</li> </ul>	<p>Biodiversity; flora and fauna; soil, water, air and climatic factors; human health and well-being; landscape; economic benefits; cultural heritage</p>	<p>These policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.</p> <p>National policies will apply and local authorities will need to formulate appropriate policies in their local plans. They will be able to draw on the Government's White Paper, <i>The Natural Choice</i>, which recognises and supports the protection and improvement of woodland and forests.</p>
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	adversely affect internationally designated sites of nature conservation importance		
<b>Policy 37: Air quality</b>	<p>Strategies, plans/programmes and planning proposals should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• contribute to sustaining the current downward trend in air pollution in the North East</li> <li>• consider the potential effects of new developments and increased traffic levels on air quality, and on internationally designated nature conservation sites, and adopt mitigation measures</li> </ul>	<p>Air quality; human health; biodiversity.</p> <p>(2005 sustainability appraisal noted: “transport and locational policies are the key issues for air quality. Overall, under the Plan air quality across the region is likely to remain good. ... The air quality impacts of airport expansions are unclear”).</p> <p>Final sustainability appraisal notes: “The [new] policy will assist in consideration of the effect of the spatial strategy on air quality and the effect on internationally designated wildlife sites.”</p>	<p>These policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.</p> <p>National planning policies, including those on air quality, sustainable development and transport, will 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> <p>Local authorities will also continue to need to consider carefully the potential adverse impacts of air quality on designated nature</p>

			conservation sites through their Habitats Regulation Assessments when developing their local plan policies.
<b>Policy 38: Sustainable construction</b>	To encourage and promote opportunities for new developments or the redevelopment of existing buildings to achieve high energy efficiency; promote and secure greater use of local renewable energy in new development, including through development plan documents.	Sustainable use of natural resources; reducing emissions to air – climate change impacts; human health.  Final sustainability appraisal notes: “The inclusion of a broad policy on sustainable construction will support the sustainable regeneration of the region and changes ... bring it in line with government policy.”	These policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.  National policies will apply and local authorities will be able to reflect local circumstances and priorities in their local plans.
<b>Policy 39: Renewable energy generation</b>	Set renewable energy generation targets for the North East, and minimum sub-regional targets, by 2010; and aspirational target for 2020.	Sustainable use of natural resources; reducing emissions to air – climate change impacts; human health; impact on biodiversity site, heritage sites and landscapes; economic development and employment.	The objectives of policies 39 - 41 could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.  National policy will apply. Local authorities are expected to have local plans in place which 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 should have regard to national policy in preparing these plans. Local authorities may find it useful to draw
<b>Policy 40: Planning for renewables</b>	Support and encourage renewable energy proposals and identify renewable resource areas. In assessing proposals for renewable energy development significant weight should be given to the wider environmental, economic and social benefits arising, taking account of the	Final sustainability appraisal notes: “The removal of the Tees Estuary [from list of potential areas for development] will help to protect the Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast Special Protection Area.”	

	criteria set out in Policy 40.		
<p><b>Policy 41: Onshore wind energy development</b></p>	<p>Provide a positive policy framework to facilitate onshore wind energy development within the broad areas of least constraint for such developments, as identified by the policy. These areas to be identified in local development frameworks (using Policy 40).</p>		<p>on any relevant data held by regional or other bodies, including assessments of the potential for renewable and low carbon energy. The Government has already provided support to groupings of local authorities and their partners for the assessment of renewable energy potential in parts of the country. This evidence could help with planning for renewables at the local level. It is expected that local authorities and their partners will consider whether to maintain databases on renewable and low carbon energy on a strategic scale as part of their strategic planning function.</p> <p>Local authorities already work together on strategic issues that cross local authority boundaries. It is expected that they continue to do this after regional strategies are abolished, including in relation to evidence bases. The proposed duty to cooperate will support this approach.</p> <p>Local authorities in coastal areas may need to consider whether to bring forward any new policies on</p>

			on-shore infrastructure development to support off-shore energy schemes, having regard to national policies on renewable energy in England and Scotland, and other relevant strategies such as Marine Scotland's Offshore Wind Plan.
<b>Policy 42: Overall minerals strategy</b>	<p>The overall objective for minerals policy in the region is to ensure the prudent use of its indigenous natural resources in line with sustainable development objectives; i.e., while delivering the minerals that the region and the nation reasonably needs, extraction, processing and transport should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• safeguard the region's naturally occurring minerals and encourage the use of alternative materials where appropriate</li> <li>• protect the environment and local amenity</li> <li>• minimise the adverse impacts of the transport of minerals and minerals products</li> </ul>	Sustainable use of natural resources; protection of air and water quality and landscapes; sustainable transport; economic development and employment.	<p>These policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.</p> <p>These are fairly broad objectives which can be achieved through local minerals development framework policies, having regard to national policy.</p>

<p><b>Policy 43: Aggregate minerals provision</b></p>	<p>Mineral development frameworks and local development frameworks to provide to maintain a landbank of planning permissions for primary aggregates sufficient to deliver the amounts set out in the policy over the 2001-2021 period, based on the stated apportionment to sub-regional areas; to reduce the need for primary aggregates by facilitating the increased use of secondary and recycled materials; reducing the demand for primary aggregates where practicable; and safeguarding handling wharves for imported marine sand and gravel.</p>	<p>Essentially the same as for Policy 42.</p>	<p>These policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.</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. They should do this within the longstanding arrangements for minerals planning including receiving technical advice from Aggregate Working Parties. Work with the minerals industry and local government to agree how aggregate minerals planning arrangements should operate in the longer term is ongoing.</p>
<p><b>Policy 44: Opencast coal</b></p>	<p>Mineral development frameworks and local development frameworks to identify acceptable areas for the opencast extraction of coal, subject to individual proposals meeting relevant development control criteria. A presumption against opencast coal extraction unless: the proposal is, or can be made to be, environmentally acceptable;</p>	<p>Essentially the same as for Policy 42 (plus climate impacts?)</p>	<p>These policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.</p> <p>Minerals planning authorities will continue to be responsible for mineral development frameworks, including policies on opencast coal, having regard to national policy.</p>

	or can provide local or community benefits which clearly outweigh the likely impacts.		
<b>Policy 45: Sustainable waste management</b>	<p>Strategies, plans, programmes and planning proposals should give priority to initiatives which encourage behavioural change through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• waste minimisation schemes</li> <li>• waste awareness and education campaigns</li> <li>• developing reuse schemes; and</li> <li>• minimising the use of primary construction materials and the production of waste</li> </ul>	<p>Use of resources; soil quality; water quality; public health.</p> <p>Municipal waste quantities are increasing with landfill remaining the main route for waste disposal (74%) (2005 sustainability appraisal).</p>	<p>These policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.</p> <p>This area is driven by European legislation, the national waste strategy and policy, and rising financial costs (landfill). It is expected that local planning and waste planning authorities, as appropriate, will continue to pursue broadly similar policies for sustainable waste management.</p>
<b>Policy 46: Waste management provision.</b>	<p>Strategies, plans/programmes should provide the management capacity for the annual tonnage of waste arisings set out. The type and number of facilities should reflect local circumstances within the Plan strategic framework.</p>	As for policy 45	<p>These policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.</p> <p>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 information prepared by partners, including other waste planning authorities and the Environment</p>

			Agency, will continue to assist in this process. Waste Planning Authorities may work together to produce joint waste plans.
<b>Policy 47: Hazardous waste</b>	Waste development frameworks and local development frameworks should provide for a range of new facilities for the treatment and management of hazardous waste, as set out in the policy.	As for policy 45.	These policy objectives could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.  This is an area driven by legislation. See also comments for Policy 46.
<b>Theme 3D: Improving connectivity and accessibility within and beyond the region</b>			These policy objectives and Policies 48 – 57 could be delivered by other means than through a regional strategy.
	The primary driver of the region’s transport strategy is the need to deliver the region’s wider spatial strategy and the regional economic strategy. The key objectives for the transport strategy component of the Plan are to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• improve access to markets and contribute to the competitiveness of North East businesses</li> <li>• improve sustainable access to the North East for inbound tourism</li> <li>• improve access to employment, learning, health</li> </ul>	Broad range of sustainability issues.	The Plan notes that co-operation between local transport authorities is essential in achieving the ‘seamless journey’ concept and, therefore, cross-boundary planning between authorities will be required. The revocation of the Plan will not prevent this, or wider cooperation for example with the Highways Agency and Network Rail.  The proposed duty to cooperate will assist co-ordinated effort and cross boundary working needed to better align the growth and transport

	<p>facilities and services for all</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• support the development of a dynamic labour market for North East businesses</li> <li>• minimise the impact of the movement of people and goods on the environment and climate change</li> <li>• reduce the need to travel, particularly by private modes of transport</li> <li>• promote and increase the proportion of journeys made by public transport, cycling and walking</li> <li>• improve connectivity and accessibility between the Tyne and Wear and Tees Valley City-Regions; and to the North East's international gateways</li> <li>• make best use of resources and existing infrastructure; and</li> <li>• ensure safe transport networks and infrastructure</li> </ul>		<p>development priorities of neighbouring areas, including, where relevant, Scotland.</p>
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<b>Policy 48: International gateways</b>	Sets out the regional surface access improvements required – by all modes, particularly by public transport – to support the growth of the region’s airports and ports.	Economic development; employment;  Accessibility; sustainable transport; climate change impacts.	
<b>Policy 49: Regional transport corridors</b>	Local transport plans and other strategies, plans and programmes should focus on improving sustainable accessibility and the efficiency of movement along the strategic transport networks [road and rail].	As for policy 48.	
<b>Policy 50: Regional public transport provision</b>	Strategies, plans and programmes should develop public transport provision that encourages a rebalancing of the transport system in favour of more sustainable modes.	As for policy 48  Final sustainability appraisal notes: “The policy supports the spatial strategy by including a long term focus for public transport ... This will be on strategic public transport projects which support development in and connectivity of the city regions.”	
<b>Policy 51: Strategic public transport hubs</b>	To develop public transport between the conurbations of the city-regions to provide an attractive alternative to the car to encourage modal shift; to	As for policy 48 - plus social inequalities; human health.	

	improve public transport from the other Regeneration Areas to the conurbations to provide social inclusion opportunities.		
<b>Policy 52: Strategic framework for demand management</b>	The regional planning body in conjunction with other authorities and the Highways Agency shall develop a strategic framework for demand management.	As for policy 51 Final sustainability appraisal notes: "The policy will help to support the efforts that the Plan is making to encourage public transport use and to provide a sustainable transport system to support the spatial strategy."	
<b>Policy 53: Demand management measures</b>	Local transport plans, other strategies, plans and programmes should develop integrated demand management measures to address congestion, environmental and safety issues.	As for policy 51	
<b>Policy 54: Parking and travel plans</b>	The promotion of travel plans and the provision and pricing of parking, to complement pricing measures as an emerging demand management tool in the North East and to support the delivery of improved public transport throughout the region.	As for policy 51	
<b>Policy 55: Accessibility within and between the city-regions</b>	Local transport plans, other strategies, plans/programmes should seek to improve access, particularly by public transport,	As for policy 51.	

	within/between the Tyne and Wear and Tees Valley City-Regions; and between the conurbations and Regeneration Towns and rural service centres within the city-regions.		
<b>Policy 56: Accessibility in rural areas</b>	The development of innovative integrated rural public transport to ensure access to services, healthcare and employment for rural residents and to support the sustainable development of the region's tourism industry.	As for policy 51.	
<b>Policy 57: Sustainable freight distribution</b>	Local transport plans, other strategies, plans/programmes to support/promote/safeguard a number of measures in support of sustainable freight distribution.	As for policy 48	

## 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 only saved structure plan policy in the North East which remains relevant and considers the environmental implications of its revocation.

Policy	Policy has been implemented or expired	Generic policy	Superseded by national policy	Superseded by local plan policy	Still relevant –environmental implications of revocation
Northumberland County and National Park Joint Structure Plan First Alteration (2005)  <b>Policy S5: Extension to the Green Belt</b> (see below)					The policy requires local development frameworks to expand the Green Belt in the Morpeth area, as did the North East Plan. With revocation it would be for the Northumberland Local Development Framework to consider this matter, having regard to national Green Belt policy.

### **Northumberland County and National Park Joint Structure Plan**

The North East of England Plan has replaced all former saved structure plan policies within the region with the exception of one policy in the Northumberland and National Park Joint Structure Plan First Alteration (February 2005), as follows:

#### Policy S5 – Extension to the Green Belt

An extension to the Green Belt will extend from the existing boundary northwards to lie:

- to the west of Netherwitton, Hartburn and Belsay
- north of Longhorsley and west of Widdrington Station, excluding the Stobswood Opencast site
- east of Pegswood
- west of Ashington, Guide Post, Bedlington and the A1068; and
- east of Bothal, Hepscott, Nedderton and Hartford Bridge

Precise boundaries, including those around settlements, should be defined in Local Plans having particular regard to the maintenance of the role of Morpeth as defined in Policy S7 and to the sequential approach in Policy S11.

## Annex C

### North East of England: Local plans (as at August 2011)

The following lists the development plan documents (including mineral and waste development plan documents) and saved local plan policies, which would form the relevant development plan for the areas in question in the North East, if the regional strategy and saved structure plan policies were revoked.

<b>Planning Authority</b>	<b>Current status and composition of the local development plan (local development framework)</b> (including where saved policies from earlier local plans remain in place pending the core strategy)	<b>Other relevant (saved) policies and other near complete local development plan documents</b>
Darlington	Core Strategy	Local plan saved policies
Durham County Council (Unitary authority)	(Local plan saved policies - of the seven former district councils in County Durham and the Minerals and Waste Local Plans)	
Gateshead	(Local plan [unitary development plan] saved policies)	
Middlesbrough	Core Strategy and Regeneration Development Plan Document	Local plan saved policies
Newcastle upon Tyne	Walker Riverside Area Action Plan; Benwell/Scotswood Area Action Plan; (Local plan [unitary development plan] saved policies)	
North Tyneside	(Unitary development plan saved policies)	

Northumberland County Council (Unitary authority)	Northumberland Consolidated Planning Policy Framework comprising: Alnwick Core Strategy; Blyth Valley Core Strategy and Blyth Valley Development Control Policies Development Plan Document; Tynedale Core Strategy. (Local plan saved policies for Berwick upon Tweed; Castle Morpeth; Wansbeck; Northumberland Minerals Local Plan, Northumberland Waste Local Plan).	[Also:] Local plan saved policies (Alnwick, Blyth Valley, Tynedale)
Northumberland National Park Authority	Core Strategy and Development Policies Document	
Redcar & Cleveland	Core Strategy and Development Policies Development Plan Document	Local plan saved policies
South Tyneside	Core Strategy; South Shields Town Centre and Waterfront Area Action Plan; Hebburn Town Centre Area Action Plan; Central Jarrow Area Action Plan.	Unitary development plan saved policies
Stockton-on-Tees	Core Strategy	Local plan saved policies
Sunderland	(Unitary development plan saved policies)	
Tees Valley		<i>(Joint Tees Valley Minerals &amp; Waste Core Strategy and Policies and Sites Development Plan Document - Examination in Public)</i>