

Appendix A

Policies in the North West Regional Strategy

This Appendix sets out the text of the policies that make up the Regional Strategy for the North West. It comprises policies contained in the North West of England Plan published in September 2008.

The North West of England Plan

POLICY DP1: Spatial Principles

The following principles underpin RSS (incorporating RTS)

Other regional, sub-regional and local plans and strategies and all individual proposals, schemes and investment decisions should adhere to these principles. All may be applicable to development management in particular circumstances:

- promote sustainable communities;
- promote sustainable economic development;
- make the best use of existing resources and infrastructure;
- manage travel demand, reduce the need to travel, and increase accessibility;
- marry opportunity and need;
- promote environmental quality;
- mainstreaming rural issues;
- reduce emissions and adapt to climate change.

The 8 Policies DP 2 -9 amplify these principles and should be taken together as the spatial principles underlying the Strategy. They are not in order of priority.

The whole of the RSS should be read together and these principles should be applied alongside the other policies which follow.

POLICY DP2: Promote Sustainable Communities

Building sustainable communities – places where people want to live and work - is a regional priority in both urban and rural areas. Sustainable Communities should meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, promote community cohesion and equality and diversity, be sensitive to the environment, and contribute to a high quality of life, particularly by:

- fostering sustainable relationships between homes, workplaces and other concentrations of regularly used services and facilities;
- taking into account the economic, environmental, social and cultural implications of development and spatial investment decisions on communities;
- improving the built and natural environment, and conserving the region's heritage;
- improving the health and educational attainment of the region's population, reducing present inequalities;
- promoting community safety and security, including flood risk (see map 2.11¹);
- encouraging leadership, joint working practices, community consultation and engagement;
- reviving local economies, especially in the Housing Market Renewal Areas and other areas in need of regeneration and housing restructuring such as Blackpool, Fleetwood and Morecambe;
- integrating and phasing the provision public services (including lifelong learning) and facilities to meet the current and future needs of the whole community, ensuring that those services are conveniently located, close to the people they serve, and genuinely accessible by public transport;
- promoting physical exercise through opportunities for sport and formal / informal recreation, walking and cycling.

The guiding principles of the UK Sustainable Development Strategy 2005 or its successors and the basic elements of sustainable communities as set out in 'Sustainable Communities: People, Places and Prosperity (A Five Year Plan)' should be followed.

POLICY DP3: Promote Sustainable Economic Development

It is a fundamental principle of this Strategy to seek to improve productivity, and to close the gap in economic performance between the North West and other parts of the UK. Sustainable economic growth should be supported and promoted, and so should reductions of economic, environmental, education, health and other social inequalities between different parts of the North West, within the sub-regions, and at local level.

POLICY DP4: Make the Best Use of Existing Resources and Infrastructure

Priority should be given to developments in locations consistent with the regional and

¹ Page 13 of the North West of England Plan

sub-regional spatial frameworks as set out in Chapter 5 (notably policy RDF1) and sub regional policies in Chapters 10-13 which:

- build upon existing concentrations of activities and existing infrastructure;
- do not require major investment in new infrastructure, including transport, water supply and sewerage. Where this is unavoidable development should be appropriately phased to coincide with new infrastructure provision.

Development should accord with the following sequential approach:

- first, using existing buildings (including conversion) within settlements, and previously developed land within settlements;
- second, using other suitable infill opportunities within settlements, where compatible with other RSS policies;
- third, the development of other land where this is well-located in relation to housing, jobs, other services and infrastructure and which complies with the other principles in DP1-9.

Natural and man-made resources should be managed prudently and efficiently. Sustainable construction and efficiency in resource use (including reuse and recycling of materials) should be promoted.

POLICY DP5: Manage Travel Demand; Reduce the Need to Travel, and Increase Accessibility

Development should be located so as to reduce the need to travel, especially by car, and to enable people as far as possible to meet their needs locally. A shift to more sustainable modes of transport for both people and freight should be secured, an integrated approach to managing travel demand should be encouraged, and road safety improved.

Safe and sustainable access for all, particularly by public transport, between homes and employment and a range of services and facilities (such as retail, health, education, and leisure) should be promoted, and should influence locational choices and investment decisions.

Major growth should, as far as possible, be located in urban areas where strategic networks connect and public transport is well provided.

All new development should be genuinely accessible by public transport, walking and cycling, and priority will be given to locations where such access is already available.

In rural areas accessibility by public transport should also be a key consideration in providing services and locating new development, emphasising the role of Key Service Centres (Policy RDF2).

POLICY DP6: Marry opportunity and need

Priority should be given, in locational choices and investment decisions, to linking areas of economic opportunity with areas in greatest need of economic, social and physical restructuring and regeneration. Proximity to, and access via public transport from, such areas will be important considerations in the choice of employment locations and sites.

POLICY DP7: Promote Environmental Quality

Environmental quality (including air, coastal and inland waters), should be protected and enhanced, especially by:

- understanding and respecting the character and distinctiveness of places and landscapes;
- the protection and enhancement of the historic environment;
- promoting good quality design in new development and ensuring that development respects its setting taking into account relevant design requirements, the NW Design Guide and other best practice;
- reclaiming derelict land and remediating contaminated land for end-uses to improve the image of the region and use land resources efficiently;
- maximising opportunities for the regeneration of derelict or dilapidated areas;
- assessing the potential impacts of managing traffic growth and mitigating the impacts of road traffic on air quality, noise and health;
- promoting policies relating to green infrastructure and the greening of towns and cities;
- maintaining and enhancing the tranquillity of open countryside and rural areas;
- maintaining and enhancing the quantity and quality of biodiversity and habitat;
- ensuring that plans, strategies and proposals which alone or in combination could have a significant effect on the integrity and conservation objectives of sites of international importance for nature conservation are subject to assessment, this includes assessment and amelioration of the potential impacts of development (and associated traffic) on air quality, water quality and water levels.

POLICY DP8: Mainstreaming Rural Issues

The rural areas of the North West should be considered in a way which is integrated with other decision making, and not seen as a separate topic.

The problems of rural communities (such as housing affordability, economic diversification, and access to jobs and services), especially in Cumbria, have particular causes and require particular solutions – different in sparsely populated areas from those closer to large settlements. Plans and strategies should acknowledge this and respond to spatial variations in rural need and opportunities. The positive interaction between rural and urban areas should be promoted when appropriate.

POLICY DP9: Reduce Emissions and Adapt to Climate Change

As an urgent regional priority, plans, strategies, proposals, schemes and investment decisions should:

- contribute to reductions in the Region's carbon dioxide emissions from all sources, including energy generation and supply, buildings and transport in line with national targets to reduce emissions to 60% below 1990 levels by 2050; in particular, for residential and commercial development, by developing trajectories or other yardsticks for identifying trends in carbon performance;
- take into account future changes to national targets for carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions;
- identify, assess and apply measures to ensure effective adaptation to likely environmental, social and economic impacts of climate change.

Measures to reduce emissions might include as examples:

- increasing urban density;
- encouraging better built homes and energy efficiency, eco-friendly and adaptable buildings, with good thermal insulation, green roofs and microgeneration;
- reducing traffic growth, promoting walking, cycling and public transport;
- facilitating effective waste management;
- increasing renewable energy capacity;
- focusing substantial new development on locations where energy can be gained from decentralised supply systems;
- the improved management and rewetting of the regions blanket and raised bog resource.

Adaptation measures might include, for example:

- minimising threats from, and the impact of, increased coastal erosion, increased storminess and flood risk, habitat disturbance, fragmentation and increased pressure on water supply and drainage systems;
- protection of the most versatile agricultural land;
- Sustainable Urban Drainage.

Policy makers should use the North West Integrated Appraisal Toolkit as a basis to assess and strengthen the climate change mitigation and adaptation elements of their plans and strategies. Exceptionally, other comparable and robust methodologies might be used.

Applicants and local planning authorities should ensure that all developments meet at least the minimum standards set out in the North West Sustainability Checklist for Developments, and should apply 'good' or 'best practice' standards wherever practicable.

POLICY RDF1: Spatial Priorities

In making provision for development, plans and strategies should accord with the following priorities, taking into account specific considerations set out in Sub Regional Chapters 10-13:

- the first priority for growth and development should be the regional centres of Manchester and Liverpool;
- the second priority should be the inner areas surrounding these regional centres. Emphasis should be placed on areas in need of regeneration and Housing Market Renewal Areas in particular;
- the third priority should be the towns / cities in the 3 city regions: Altrincham, Ashton-under-Lyne, Blackburn, Blackpool, Bolton, Burnley, Bury, Chester, Crewe, Ellesmere Port, Macclesfield, Northwich, Oldham, Preston, Rochdale, Runcorn, St Helens, Skelmersdale, Southport, Stockport, Warrington, Widnes, Wigan. Development in larger suburban centres within the city regions would be compatible with this policy provided the development is of an appropriate scale and at points where transport networks connect and where public transport accessibility is good;
- the fourth priority should be the towns and cities outside the City Regions of Carlisle and Lancaster, with investment encouraged in Barrow-in-Furness and Workington and Whitehaven to address regeneration and worklessness in Furness Peninsula and West Cumbria.

In the third and fourth priorities development should be focused in and around the centres of the towns and cities. Development elsewhere may be acceptable if it satisfies other policies, notably DP1 to 9. Emphasis should be placed on addressing regeneration and housing market renewal and restructuring.

POLICY RDF2: Rural Areas

Plans and strategies for the Region's rural areas should support the priorities of the Regional Rural Delivery Framework and:

- maximise the economic potential of the Region's rural areas;
- support sustainable farming and food;
- improve access to affordable rural housing;
- ensure fair access to services for rural communities;
- empower rural communities and address rural social exclusion;
- enhance the value of our rural environmental inheritance.

Key Service Centres

Plans and Strategies should identify a subset of towns and villages as Key Service Centres which:

- act as service centres for surrounding areas, providing a range of services including retail, leisure, community, civic, health and education facilities and financial and professional services; and
- have good public transport links to surrounding towns and villages, or the potential for their development and enhancement.

Development in rural areas should be concentrated in these Key Service Centres and should be of a scale and nature appropriate to fulfil the needs of local communities for housing, employment and services, and to enhance the quality of rural life.

Local Service Centres

Small scale development to help sustain local services, meet local needs, or support local businesses will be permitted in towns and villages defined as Local Service Centres in Local Development Documents which already provide a more limited range of services to the local community.

Outside Key and Local Service Centres

In remoter rural areas particularly the 'sparse' rural areas of the region, more innovative and flexible solutions to meet their particular development needs should be implemented and targeted towards achieving:

- more equitable access to housing, services, education, healthcare and employment; and

- a more diverse economic base, whilst maintaining support for agriculture and tourism.

Exceptionally, new development will be permitted in the open countryside where it:

- has an essential requirement for a rural location, which cannot be accommodated elsewhere (such as mineral extraction);
- is needed to sustain existing businesses;
- provides for exceptional needs for affordable housing;
- is an extension of an existing building; or
- involves the appropriate change of use of an existing building.

LDDs should set out criteria for permitting the re use of buildings in the countryside in line with PPS7.

POLICY RDF3: The Coast

Plans and strategies should:

- enhance the economic importance of the coast and the regeneration of coastal communities in ways that safeguard, restore or enhance and make sustainable use of the natural, built and cultural heritage assets of the North West Coast and address issues of environmental decline and socio-economic decline, through support for:
 - the protection, development and diversification of the North West's maritime economy;
 - regeneration based around opportunities for sustainable growth in coastal tourism and recreation;
 - regeneration opportunities associated with reuse of developed or under-used developed coast, former docks and other adjacent industrial areas;
 - improving the image of coastal resorts to attract inward investment and tourism;
 - the diversification of economic activity in coastal communities and rural coastal areas;
- define the undeveloped, developed (including despoiled), and remote coast at a strategic and local level using the criteria set out in paragraph 5.22²;
- direct development requiring a coastal location, in all but exceptional circumstances, to the developed coast and safeguard the undeveloped and remote coast;

² Page 38 of the North West of England Plan

- protect the functional integrity of bays, estuaries and the inter-tidal areas immediately offshore;
- promote the conservation and enhancement of cultural, historical and natural environmental assets, including land and seascapes;
- promote the integrated planning and management of the coast (and adjacent sea areas and neighbouring coastal regions) and marine spatial planning of the Irish Sea;
- facilitate co-ordination and harmonisation between Local Development Frameworks and the wide range of plans, strategies and schemes which apply to the coastal zone.

POLICY RDF4: Green Belts

Overall the general extent of the Region's Green Belt will be maintained.

There is no need for any exceptional substantial strategic change to Green Belt and its boundaries in the North West within the timescales set out below:

- within Cheshire, Greater Manchester, Lancashire or Merseyside before 2011; and
- within Warrington before 2021.

After 2011 the presumption will be against exceptional substantial strategic change to the Green Belt in Cheshire, Greater Manchester, Lancashire or Merseyside. Strategic studies, undertaken by The Regional Planning Body, together with relevant stakeholders should investigate both the need for change and options for implementation. The findings will inform future reviews of RSS and subsequent reviews of plans and strategies.

Local Development Frameworks may provide for detailed changes in Green Belt boundaries to accommodate the expansion of Manchester Airport and Liverpool John Lennon Airport; and to provide for an inter-modal freight terminal at Newton-Le-Willows. Subject to the agreement of The Regional Planning Body, any other local detailed boundary changes should be examined through the LDF process.

POLICY W1: Strengthening the Regional Economy

Plans and strategies should promote opportunities for economic development (including the provision of appropriate sites and premises, infrastructure, and clustering where appropriate) which will strengthen the economy of the North West by:

- building on the region's strengths, particularly the three City Regions of Manchester, Liverpool and Central Lancashire. This should reflect the following growth opportunities:
 - Manchester City Region – advanced manufacturing and engineering (includes chemicals, aerospace, automotive and flexible materials), financial and professional services, media, creative and cultural industries, biomedical (biotechnology, pharmaceuticals and medical devices), ICT / digital, and communications;
 - Liverpool City Region – advanced manufacturing and engineering, financial and professional services, media, creative and cultural industries, biomedical, high value added knowledge based industries, ICT / digital, tourism, maritime and communications;
 - Central Lancashire City Region – advanced manufacturing and engineering, environmental technologies and biomedical, tourism and conferencing;
- realising the opportunities for sustainable development to increase the prosperity of Carlisle and Lancaster, and to regenerate the economies of the Furness Peninsula in Barrow, and in West Cumbria in Workington and Whitehaven;
- giving positive support to the sustainable diversification and development of the rural economy through the growth of existing businesses and the creation of new enterprise, particularly within Cumbria where there is a need to both develop high value business activities and sustain traditional economic activities. Prospects for growth in tourism, food and energy sectors should be developed, including promoting links between regional agriculture and production and retail facilities to reduce food miles and support local businesses;
- ensuring the safe, reliable and effective operation of the region's transport networks and infrastructure in accordance with the regional transport policies and priorities as set out in Chapter 8;
- supporting growth in service sectors, which will continue to act as significant employers within the region, and in which the greatest improvements in productivity can be made;
- improving the skills base of the region, including tackling skills deficiencies and concentrations of unemployment;
- providing sufficient and appropriate housing to support economic growth (Policies L2 - L5);
- linking areas of opportunity and need.

POLICY W2: Locations for Regionally Significant Economic Development

Regionally significant economic development will be located close to sustainable transport nodes within the urban areas of Manchester, Liverpool and Central Lancashire City Regions and Lancaster, Carlisle, Barrow-in-Furness and Workington and Whitehaven.

Sites will be identified in Local Development Documents, having regard to the priorities in RDF1; spatial principles in Policies DP 1- 9 and relevant sub regional policies in Chapters 10-13. They should be:

- capable of development within the plan period, having regard to the condition and availability of the land, infrastructure capacity, market considerations and environmental capacity;
- highly accessible, especially by adequate public transport services, walking and cycling;
- well-related to areas with high levels of worklessness and/or areas in need of regeneration;
- well related to neighbouring uses, particularly in terms of access, traffic generation, noise and pollution.

They should not be used for development that could equally well be accommodated elsewhere and should not be developed in a piecemeal manner.

Sites for regionally significant office development should be located in accordance with the sequential approach in PPS6, focusing on the regional centres and the town/cities listed in RDF1.

Sites for regionally significant knowledge-based services may also be clustered close to universities, major hospitals or other research establishments. Sites for regionally significant knowledge-based manufacturing should be well connected to these facilities by transport and ICT links.

Sites for regionally significant logistics and high-volume manufacturing should be well connected to the primary freight transport networks.

POLICY W3: Supply of Employment Land

Provision should be made for a supply of employment land as outlined in Table 6.1. Local planning authorities should undertake a comprehensive review of commitments, to secure a portfolio of sites that complies with the spatial development principles outlined in Policies DP1 – 9, and RDF1 and sub regional policies (Chapters 10-13), and to ensure:

- the most appropriate range of sites, in terms of market attractiveness and social, environmental and economic sustainability, are safeguarded for employment use;
- these sites can meet the full range of needs and are actively marketed;
- at least 30% of sites are available at any one time so that all new and existing businesses have the ability to grow successfully;

- the amount of brownfield land used for employment purposes is maximised, reflecting the likely increases in the amount available as a result of economic restructuring;
- full consideration is given to the scope for mixed-use development particularly within centres, and on larger sites;
- appropriate provision is made in Key Service Centres and full consideration given to the innovative re-use of agricultural buildings to facilitate the growth and diversification of the rural economy;
- the implications of home working on the scale and location of future employment land requirements are considered.

Office development should, as far as possible, be focused in the regional centres, in or adjacent to town / city centres listed in RDF1 and in Key Service Centres, consistent with RDF2 and the sequential approach in PPS6.

The portfolio must be kept under regular review to ensure that the region does not over- or under- allocate land in relation to the actual scale of economic growth. Local Authorities should review their employment land portfolio every three years.

Table 6.1 Provision of Employment Land 2005-2021 (hectares)

	Greater Manchester	Merseyside and Halton	Lancashire	Cumbria	Cheshire and Warrington	North West
2005 Supply	1368	1234	1069	633	1171	5475
Current take up per annum	112	76	68	16	41	313
Projected inc in take up	6%	18.5%	4.25%	17.5%	6.00%	9.22%
Projected take up per annum	119	90	71	19	43	342
Need 2005 – 21	1904	1440	1136	304	688	5472

Extra allocation required	536	206	67	-329	-483	-3
Flexibility factor	20%	20%	20%	33%	27%	-
Need 2005-21 (incorporating flexibility factor)	2285	1728	1363	404	874	6654
Extra allocation required (incorporating flexibility factor)	917	494	294	-229	-297	1179

POLICY W4: Release of Allocated Employment Land

Where sites are to be de-allocated in plans and strategies (following a comprehensive review of commitments outlined in Policy W3) consideration should be given to a range of alternative uses and determined as appropriate to the location and nature of each site. Alternative uses considered should include housing, and soft end uses, particularly where this will contribute to the delivery of Green Infrastructure networks (Policy EM3). Appropriate remediation may also be required to address issues of land contamination before sites can be effectively re-used (Policy EM2). In de-allocating sites Local Authorities should be mindful of the need to create and sustain mixed-used communities where there is access to a wide range of services and facilities.

Outside of a comprehensive review of commitments (Policy W3) when preparing plans and strategies and considering proposals and schemes there should be a presumption against the release of allocated employment sites for other uses. Sites should not be released where they provide, or have the potential to provide, an important contribution to the economy of the local area. If Local Authorities are minded to release sites they should be satisfied, before so doing, that:

- an appropriate supply of sites is available for employment uses. The de-allocation or re-allocation of a site should not result in a deficient supply of employment land, in either quantitative or qualitative terms, matched against the demand and supply requirements of the local economy;
- if required, there are replacement sites available, of equal or better quality, or that alternative means of incorporating employment land needs have been identified. This might mean considering mixed-use developments, greater intensity of land use or the availability of sites in adjacent authorities.

In both cases consideration should be given to the implications of releasing / retaining employment land in relation to the spatial principles in DP1-9, in particular

the promotion of social and economic inclusion, sustainable travel choices and access to services, particularly within Housing Market Renewal Areas and rural areas.

POLICY W5: Retail Development

Plans and strategies should promote retail investment where it assists in the regeneration and economic growth of the North West's town and city centres. In considering proposals and schemes any investment made should be consistent with the scale and function of the centre, should not undermine the vitality and viability of any other centre or result in the creation of unsustainable shopping patterns.

Manchester/Salford and Liverpool City Centres will continue to function as the North West's primary retail centres.

Comparison retailing facilities should be enhanced and encouraged in the following centres to ensure a sustainable distribution of high quality retail facilities.

Altrincham	Ashton-under-Lyne	Barrow-in-Furness
Birkenhead	Blackburn	Blackpool
Bolton	Burnley	Bury
Carlisle	Chester	Crewe
Kendal	Lancaster	Macclesfield
Northwich	Oldham	Preston
Rochdale	Southport	St Helens
Stockport	Warrington	Wigan
Workington / Whitehaven		

Investment, of an appropriate scale, in centres not identified above will be encouraged in order to maintain and enhance their vitality and viability, including investment to underpin wider regeneration initiatives, to ensure that centres meet the needs of the local community, as identified by Local Authorities.

Retail development that supports entrepreneurship, particularly increasing the number of independent retailers, should be supported.

There will be a presumption against new out-of-centre regional or sub-regional comparison retailing facilities requiring Local Authorities to be pro-active in identifying and creating opportunities for development within town centres. There should also be a presumption against large-scale extensions to such facilities unless they are fully justified in line with the sequential approach established in PPS6. There is no justification for such facilities to be designated as town centres within plans and strategies.

POLICY W6: Tourism and the Visitor Economy

Plans, strategies, proposals and schemes should seek to deliver improved economic growth and quality of life, through sustainable tourism activity in the North West. This should be in line with the principles outlined in Policy W7 and focused on:

- the regeneration of Blackpool as an International Tourism Destination, and the North West's other coastal resorts as priority locations for major footloose tourism development, where tourism is a critical component of the economy;
- the regional centres of Manchester, Liverpool (European Capital of Culture 2008), and Preston, where tourism is a contributory component of the economy;
- Chester as a heritage city of international renown where tourism is a significant component of the economy;
- Carlisle, Bolton, Birkenhead, Lancaster and Kendal as destinations with emerging potential for heritage related tourism development, where tourism supports and compliments their status as historic towns and cities;
- promoting business tourism through the development of high quality conference and exhibition facilities, particularly of European significance in Manchester and national significance in Liverpool and Blackpool;
- opportunities for diversifying the rural economy and regenerating rural areas should align with Policy RDF2. Development should be of an appropriate scale and be located where the environment and infrastructure can accommodate the visitor impact. Coastal sites of international importance for nature conservation, The Lake District National Park and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty are important tourist attractors in their own right. Sustainable tourism activity which will strengthen and diversify the economic base within these areas will be supported but the statutory purposes of these designations must not be adversely affected. Wherever possible, tourism development opportunities should be sought which take place in locations adjacent to the National Park and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, thus spreading the economic benefit of tourism;
- opportunities related to Regional Parks, Hadrian's Wall and Liverpool World Heritage Sites. Tourism activity in these locations should be promoted within the context of the relevant Strategic Frameworks and Management Plans.

POLICY W7: Principles for Tourism Development

Plans and strategies should ensure (particularly to implement Policy W6) high quality, environmentally sensitive, well-designed tourist attractions, infrastructure and hospitality services, which:

- improve the region's overall tourism offer, increasing the market share of attractions;
- meet the needs of a diverse range of people and are easily accessible by sustainable means;
- support the provision of distinct tourism resources that harness the potential of sites and their natural attributes, including built heritage and cultural facilities;
- encourage and facilitate regeneration;
- promote facilities which will extend the existing visitor season;
- harness the potential of sport and recreation, particularly the role of major sporting events;
- improve the public realm;
- are viable in market and financial terms;
- help to relieve pressure on locations vulnerable to the impacts of climate change;
- respect the environmental sensitivity of the coast, particularly the undeveloped coast along with other sensitive areas, and ensure that the integrity of sites of international importance for nature conservation are maintained through assessment of proposals and through careful visitor management and restrictions on visitor access where necessary;
- promote eco-tourism in areas of high natural value in a way that minimises any adverse effect on the natural assets that visitors seek to experience.

The maintenance and enhancement of existing tourism development will be supported, providing that improvement, intensification and expansion proposals meet environmental and other development control criteria.

POLICY L1: Health, Sport, Recreation, Cultural and Education Services Provision

Plans, strategies, proposals and schemes (including those of education, training and health service providers) should ensure that there is provision for all members of the community (including older people, disabled people and the black & minority ethnic population) for:

- the full spectrum of education, training and skills provision, ranging from childcare and pre-school facilities, through schools, to further and higher education and to continuing education facilities and work-related training;
- health facilities ranging from hospitals down to locally based community health facilities; and

- sport, recreation and cultural facilities.

In doing so they must take account of the views of the local community (including service users) and carry out an assessment of demographic, sporting, recreational, cultural, educational, skills & training and health needs in local communities. Furthermore, they should ensure that accessibility by public transport, walking and cycling is a central consideration.

Particular attention should be given to improving access to and addressing spatial disparities in service and facilities provision, in areas which have the greatest needs (in terms of poverty, deprivation, health and education inequalities, rural service provision), or where communities or the local economy are poorly served.

Proposals and schemes, for all major developments and regeneration schemes, and especially for housing, employment or mixed uses, should ensure appropriate health, cultural, recreational, sport, education and training provision from the outset including for example Children's Centres and SureStart Initiatives.

POLICY L2: Understanding Housing Markets

Local Authorities should develop an understanding of local and sub-regional housing markets by undertaking Strategic Housing Market Assessments, in order to adopt a concerted and comprehensive approach to:

- influence housing supply across all types, sizes, tenures and values to achieve a better match between supply and need;
- improve the quality of the Region's housing stock;
- support housing market restructuring and renewal;
- overcome increasing issues of affordability; and
- ensure the needs of the wider population are met, including disabled people, students, older people, black & minority ethnic communities and families with children, including single headed households.

POLICY L3: Existing Housing Stock and Housing Renewal

Plans and strategies, across the North West, but particularly in:

a. Housing Market Renewal Initiative Pathfinder Areas:

- New Heartlands (- Liverpool, Sefton and Wirral);
- Manchester and Salford;
- Oldham and Rochdale;
- Elevate (- Blackburn with Darwen, Burnley, Hyndburn, Pendle and Rossendale);

- b. West Cumbria and Furness Housing Market Renewal Areas;
- c. Lancashire Coastal Towns of Blackpool / Fleetwood and Morecambe;
- d. Other urban areas in the Manchester & Liverpool City Regions in need of housing regeneration \ market restructuring;

should:

- respond to any need to substantially restructure local housing markets;
- take account of and understand housing markets;
- manage the delivery of new build and its impacts on the existing housing stock;
- reduce vacancy rates to 3% in the existing dwelling stock, through the increased re-use of suitable vacant housing; and
- where appropriate make the best use of the existing stock.

Plans and strategies should designate areas, where necessary, for comprehensive regeneration as part of a broader course of action to regenerate local communities, reduce health inequalities, improve the sustainability and resource efficiency of the housing stock and its local environmental quality and increase numbers of and access to local jobs and services. The approach to be adopted, whether clearance, or renewal and refurbishment, or a mix of these, will depend on local circumstances. Plans and strategies for comprehensive regeneration should:

- involve and engage the local community in determining the future of its area;
- include a prior evaluation of the environmental, economic, social and cultural impacts of the way any proposed clearance and after-uses will affect the surrounding area and the local community; and
- incorporate a clear and comprehensive action plan for implementing proposals, linked to the availability of resources.

POLICY L4: Regional Housing Provision

Local Authorities should monitor and manage the availability of land identified in plans and strategies and through development control decisions on proposals and schemes, to achieve the housing provision (net of clearance replacement) set out in Table 7.1³.

In doing so they should:

- work in partnership with developers and other housing providers to address the housing requirements (including local needs and affordable housing needs) of different groups, (for example disabled people, students, older people, black &

³ Pages 66-67 of the North West of England Plan

minority ethnic communities and families with children including single headed households) to ensure the construction of a mix of appropriate house types, sizes, tenures and prices, in line with policies L2, L3 and L5;

- use the results of up-to-date Strategic Housing Market Assessments and Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments to inform the allocation of and development control decisions upon specific sites;
- encourage new homes to be built to Code for Sustainable Homes ⁽⁶⁹⁾ standards and promote the use of the Lifetime Homes standard;
- ensure that new housing development does not have an adverse cumulative impact on the existing housing stock and market;
- ensure that new dwellings will be served by adequate water supply and sewage management facilities;
- allow for clearance replacement to reflect local circumstances, as a mechanism for the recreation of viable and sustainable neighbourhoods;
- introduce phasing policies which secure the orderly and managed release of housing land over the period of the plan in line with the sequential approach set out in Policy DP4, taking into account the need for co-ordinated provision of necessary infrastructure and the overall availability of land for housing;
- ensure that the transport networks (including public transport, pedestrian and cycle) can accommodate additional demand generated by new housing; and
- maximise the re-use of vacant and under-used brownfield land and buildings in line with Policy DP4 and indicative targets set out in Table 7.1⁴.

For the purpose of producing Local Development Frameworks, local planning authorities should assume that the average annual requirement set out in Table 7.1 will continue for a limited period beyond 2021.

POLICY L5: Affordable Housing

Plans and strategies should set out requirements for affordable housing, and the location, size and types of development to which these requirements apply. Evidence, including from Strategic Housing Market Assessments, should be used to support the setting of quotas and thresholds for affordable housing provision along with an indication of the type, size and tenure of affordable housing required.

It is anticipated that the greatest need will be in areas of high demand where affordability issues are unbalancing local communities, due to high prices and low wages and/or the adverse effects of second homes, although affordability is an increasing concern in many parts of the region.

⁴ Pages 66-67 of the North West of England Plan

Plans and strategies should set out a range of delivery mechanisms to secure the provision of affordable housing. Local authorities should consider all or some of the following where appropriate:

- seeking a proportion of affordable housing on all development sites which are above the relevant thresholds;
- allocating the development of sites solely (or primarily) for affordable housing use (i.e. up to 100% affordable in rural areas), where necessary;
- using local occupancy criteria to support provision for local housing need so long as this need can be clearly demonstrated, to be implemented through the use of planning conditions and obligations;
- actively promoting the rural exception site policy;
- for all sites containing housing in rural settlements with populations of under 3,000 promote onsite affordable housing provision and where on site affordable housing provision is not possible, seeking developer contributions towards affordable housing;
- making the most of publicly owned land;
- making the most of existing housing stock;
- in line with Policy W4, permitting the conversion of buildings in sustainable locations to residential use (including as part of mixed use schemes), particularly where commercial premises which are vacant or under-used and offer no long term potential or viable contribution to the local economy;
- encouraging employers to provide housing for their key workers;
- ensuring that wherever possible (and subject to continuing evidence), that property remains affordable and available in perpetuity.

POLICY RT1: Integrated Transport Networks

Transport problems and issues in the region should be examined on a multi-modal basis to develop sustainable, integrated and accessible solutions for all users. The management of routes in the Regional Highway Network should be closely co-ordinated with relevant Route Utilisation Strategies on the rail network where available.

Plans and strategies should seek to make best use of existing infrastructure and to capitalise on developments in intelligent transport systems and information and communications technology. They should focus on improving journey time reliability in the transport corridors shown on the Key Diagram and in Appendix RT(a) and enhancing the accessibility of the region's gateways and interchanges, particularly the international ones, as listed in Appendix RT(b).

POLICY RT2: Managing Travel Demand

The Regional Planning Body, local authorities, and other highway and transport authorities should develop a coordinated approach to managing travel demand. Early consultation with the Highways Agency will be required for any proposal that may affect the trunk road network. In particular, efforts should be aimed at reducing the proportion of car-borne commuting and education trips made during peak periods and tackling the most congested parts of the motorway network including M6, M56, M60 and M62. In rural areas, the focus should be on major tourist areas where visitor pressure is threatening the local environment and quality of life. Measures to discourage car use should consider improvements to and promotion of public transport, walking and cycling.

Plans and strategies will need to be specific to the nature and scale of the problems identified, set clear objectives and specify what is being proposed, why it is necessary and what the impacts will be. They should:

- ensure that major new developments are located where there is good access to public transport, backed by effective provision for pedestrians and cyclists to minimise the need to travel by private car;
- seek to reduce private car use through the introduction of 'smarter choices' (see examples in paragraph 8.6⁵) and other incentives to change travel behaviour which should be developed alongside public transport, cycling and pedestrian network and service improvements;
- consider the effective reallocation of road space in favour of public transport, pedestrians and cyclists alongside parking charges, enforcement and provision and other fiscal measures, including road user charging;
- make greater use of on-street parking controls and enforcement;
- incorporate maximum parking standards that are in line with, or more restrictive than, Table 8.1⁶, and define standards for additional land use categories and areas where more restrictive standards should be applied. Parking for disabled people and for cycles and two-wheel motorised vehicles are the only situations where minimum standards will be applicable.

POLICY RT3: Public Transport Framework

The Public Transport Framework set out in Appendix RT (a) defines the North West's main public transport corridors. These are also shown in Diagram 2 of Appendix RT. Appendix RT(b) defines a hierarchy of gateways and interchanges in the North West. Similar frameworks should be developed by local authorities for sub-regional and local networks and set out in Local Transport Plans.

⁵ Page 73 of the North West of England Plan

⁶ Page 73 of the North West of England Plan

Plans and strategies should seek to reduce existing or forecast overcrowding along the main public transport corridors by improvements to transport infrastructure in partnership with operators and delivery partners including Network Rail where appropriate. Local authorities and station operators should consider making additional provision for car parking at railway stations, so as to promote maximum use of the rail network.

Local authorities should introduce measures to enhance the accessibility by public transport, cycling and walking of the regional centres and towns / cities identified in RDF1. In rural areas, priority should be given to providing access from rural hinterlands to key service centres.

Local authorities should work in partnership with public transport providers to improve the quality and provision of public transport services. Proposals and schemes to enhance services in the corridors identified in Appendix RT(a) should include priority measures to improve journey time reliability. Interchange and service improvements should be supported by better information provision, marketing and integrated ticketing.

Local authorities should identify in Local Transport Plans where existing public transport provision is insufficient and where public, community and demand responsive transport networks should be developed which link employment, education and training opportunities with areas of need.

Regional public transport priorities for investment and management are included in policy RT10.

POLICY RT4: Management of the Highway Network

The region's road network is vital to the economy of the North West, providing the means to transport goods and people within and outside the region. However, existing and forecast traffic congestion is a constraint on economic growth and needs to be addressed if the North West is to reduce the productivity gap.

The Functional Road Hierarchy set out in Appendix RT(c) and shown on Diagram 3 of Appendix RT identifies those routes which comprise the Regional Highway Network. Local authorities should extend the concept of functional hierarchies to sub-regional and local highway networks.

The Highways Agency and Local Highway authorities should prepare Route Management Plans in accordance with Regional Planning Body guidance for all routes in the Regional Highway Network. Plans should make best use of existing infrastructure and proposals for major highway improvements should only be

included following an examination of all practical alternative solutions to a particular problem.

Plans and strategies for managing traffic should focus on improving road safety, reducing traffic growth and maintaining a high quality environment through mitigating the impacts of road traffic on air quality, noise and health, with traffic encouraged to use the most appropriate routes wherever possible. In rural areas, particular emphasis should be given to maintaining the tranquillity of the countryside. Where safety is not compromised, highway engineering measures should reflect local character, including landscape and conservation.

Where a route is the responsibility of more than one highway authority, the relevant authorities should adopt a consistent approach to maintenance and management, including the adoption of appropriate speed limits by reference to the road's function, standard and environmental context. The harmonisation of speed limits across highway authority boundaries should be considered to achieve consistency on routes of similar function and standard. Maximum use should be made of secondary and recycled aggregates in road construction and maintenance schemes in line with policies EM9 and DP4.

Local authorities should work with freight, coach and parking operators to develop plans and strategies to identify sites for the provision of driver rest and parking facilities.

POLICY RT5: Airports

Plans and strategies should support the economic activity generated and sustained by the Region's airports, in particular, the importance of Manchester Airport as a key economic driver for the North of England and Liverpool John Lennon Airport for the Liverpool City Region. Airport operators, in partnership with stakeholders, should implement surface transport initiatives which ensure that access by public transport, walking and cycling for both passengers and employees across the site is continually enhanced to reduce car dependency and ensure that all local environmental standards are met.

For Manchester, Liverpool John Lennon and Blackpool Airports, the future operational and infrastructure requirements, surface access demands and environmental impacts for each airport should be identified and measures to address and monitor them included in Airport Master Plans and other relevant plans and strategies, based on the strategic framework for the development of airport capacity set out in the White Paper 'Future of Air Transport'. For Carlisle Airport, proposals for development should be considered through the local planning process. If proposals exceed 20,000 air transport movements annually by 2030 the airport should consider developing an Airport Masterplan.

Airport boundaries, as existing or as proposed, should be shown in Local Development Documents. Development that would impede the operational requirements of an airport should not be permitted within this boundary.

In determining requirements for the expansion of an airport beyond its existing boundary, plans and strategies should take account of:

- the scope for intensification and rationalisation of activities and facilities within the existing boundary;
- the scope for relocating existing activities or facilities off-site;
- the scope for developing proposed activities or facilities off-site.

Plans and strategies for airports and adjacent areas should include measures to regulate the availability of car parking space for passengers and employees across the site.

In considering applications for development at airports, account will be taken of:

- the extent to which surface access and car parking arrangements encourage the use of public transport, walking and cycling;
- the effect of the proposed development on noise and atmospheric pollution, and the extent to which this can be mitigated;
- the effect of the proposed development on the health and wellbeing of local communities; and
- the adverse effects on sites of national and international nature conservation importance to ensure that these effects are avoided, mitigated or compensated as appropriate.

In formulating plans and strategies, account should be taken of the contribution general aviation makes to the regional and local economies, and the role smaller airfields have in providing for both business and leisure.

POLICY RT6: Ports and Waterways

The region will optimise the use of its ports and waterways assets, for trade and leisure, whilst at the same time protecting the environment and the integrity of their biodiversity. Plans and strategies should support the economic activity generated and sustained by the Region's major ports and waterways, in particular, the Port of Liverpool, as the North West's key international sea port, and the Manchester Ship Canal. Port operators in partnership with stakeholders should develop land-side surface access plans to accommodate existing and projected freight and passenger traffic. There should be a presumption in favour of making best use of existing infrastructure where possible, and opportunities to secure the transfer of port-related freight from road to rail or water should be explored.

It is recommended that for the Port of Liverpool, the Manchester Ship Canal, Port of Heysham and Fleetwood, the future operational and infrastructure requirements, surface access demands and environmental impacts for each port should be identified and measures to address and monitor them included in Port Masterplans and relevant plans and strategies. For navigations and waterways, Local Authorities and operators should work in partnership with appropriate navigation authorities to investigate and identify bottlenecks and develop solutions.

Port boundaries, as existing or as proposed, should be shown in Local Development Documents. Development that would impede the operational requirements of a port should not be permitted within this boundary. There should be a strong presumption in favour of safeguarding land close to ports for logistics, transport and port-related development where there is at least a reasonable likelihood of restitution to significant operational use within fifteen years and where the alternative use in contemplation is one, such as residential development, which will be difficult to reverse. Land with wharfside frontages should also be protected for future uses that require a water connection where there is a likelihood of such re-use in the short term.

In determining requirements for the expansion of a port beyond its existing boundary, plans and strategies should take account of:

- the scope for intensification and rationalisation of activities and facilities within the existing boundary;
- the scope for relocating existing activities or facilities off-site;
- the scope for developing proposed activities or facilities off-site.

Plans and strategies for ports and adjacent areas should include measures to regulate the availability of car parking spaces to accommodate existing and projected passengers and employees across the site.

In considering applications for development at ports, account will be taken of:

- the extent to which land-side surface access can assist the transfer of port traffic from road to rail and/or water;
- the extent to which it reduces unsustainable use of ports in other UK regions;
- the effect of the proposed development on the health and wellbeing of local communities; and
- the adverse effects on sites of national and international nature conservation importance to ensure that these effects are avoided, mitigated or compensated as appropriate.

POLICY RT7: Freight Transport

Plans and strategies should take account of the aims and objectives of the Regional Freight Strategy. Local authorities should develop sub-regional freight strategies, including the establishment of Freight Quality Partnerships to promote constructive solutions to local distribution problems and issues.

The Regional Highway Network, as detailed in Appendix RT(c), forms the North West's strategic network for the movement of freight by road, supplemented by sub-regional highway networks defined in Local Transport Plans. Heavy Goods Vehicles should not be restricted from any routes in these networks.

Local authorities should work with distribution companies and their customers to develop a consistent approach to lorry management, including access restrictions and curfews. Signing strategies should be developed and introduced for key freight routes and local destinations.

Local authorities should work with rail, port and inland waterway operators, Network Rail, the freight transport industry and business to capitalise on the opportunities available in the North West for increasing the proportion of freight moved by short-sea, coastal shipping and inland waterways. This will encourage a shift from road based transport.

Local authorities should work with airport operators to facilitate the development of air freight at the region's airports, in line with the White Paper 'The Future of Air Transport', having particular regard to the need to minimise and mitigate environmental impacts (including night noise).

POLICY RT8: Inter-Modal Freight Terminals

Plans and strategies should facilitate the transfer of freight from road to rail and/or water by the identification of sites for inter-modal freight terminals, and by encouraging greater use of existing terminals and private sidings. Consideration should be given to the allocation of land for inter-modal freight terminals in the following broad locations:

- South West Greater Manchester (with access to rail and the Manchester Ship Canal);
- Widnes (with access to the West Coast Main Line (Liverpool Branch));
- Newton-le-Willows (with access to the West Coast Main Line and Chat Moss rail route);
- Birkenhead Waterfront and Eastham Docks (Wirral Waterfront SIA).

Proposals for inter-modal freight terminals should satisfy the following criteria:

- be accessible from the Regional Highway Network and Regional Rail Network as listed in Appendix RT(c) and consistent with its operation and management;
- conform with rail industry strategies for freight and network and capacity utilisation and the Regional Planning Assessment;
- be compatible with the local environment and adjacent land uses;
- be capable of accommodating, as required,
 - an appropriate road and / or rail layout;
 - facilities for water-borne freight;
 - provision for the development of activities that add value; and
 - scope for further growth;
- develop a site Travel Plan prior to approval that sets out measures for providing genuine access to the site for potential employees other than by private car;
- address potential community, health, and quality of life impacts, including air and light pollution, visual intrusion and noise.
- the effect of the proposed development on the health and wellbeing of local communities; and
- the adverse effects on sites of national and international nature conservation importance to ensure that these effects are avoided, mitigated or compensated as appropriate.

Local authorities should satisfy themselves that the prime purpose is to facilitate the movement of freight by rail and/or water and that rail access and associated facilities are available before the site is occupied.

A review of the Green Belt boundary in the local development framework would be justified in order to accommodate an inter-modal freight terminal in accordance with this policy. If land is removed from the Green Belt in accordance with this policy, the relevant development plan document should include a presumption against its development for purposes other than an inter-modal freight terminal.

POLICY RT9: Walking and Cycling

Local Authorities should work with partners to develop integrated networks of continuous, attractive and safe routes for walking and cycling to widen accessibility and capitalise on their potential environmental, social and health benefits. A high priority should be given to routes linking residential areas with employment areas, transport interchanges, schools, hospitals and other community services.

Local authorities should ensure that proposals and schemes for new developments incorporate high quality pedestrian and cycle facilities, including secure cycle parking. Routes should connect with those in nearby developments, and provision of all facilities should take into consideration integration with likely future development.

When considering improvements to the region's transport networks, scheme promoters should take the opportunity to enhance walking and cycling provision, including crossings, signage, lane markings, allocation or re-allocation of road space, and off-road routes wherever possible.

POLICY RT10: Priorities for Transport Management and Investment

The general priorities for transport investment and management will be determined in accordance with the Regional Economic Strategy, RSS transport objectives, spatial principles (DP 1 – 9) and the regional and sub-regional spatial frameworks in RDF1 and sub regional policies (chapters 10-13). The region's principles for investment are set out in the Implementation Plan. The Plan includes schemes for which funding has been provisionally allocated, subject to Department for Transport approval, and those under development.

POLICY EM1: Integrated Enhancement and Protection of the Region's Environmental Assets

The Region's environmental assets should be identified, protected, enhanced and managed.

Plans, strategies, proposals and schemes should deliver an integrated approach to conserving and enhancing the landscape, natural environment, historic environment and woodlands of the region.

Plans and strategies should define spatial objectives and priorities for conservation, restoration and enhancement as appropriate, and provide area-based guidelines to direct decisions and target resources. These will be founded on a sound understanding of the diversity, distinctiveness, significance and sensitivity of the region's environmental assets, and informed by sub-regional environmental frameworks. Special consideration will be given to the impacts of climate change and adaptation measures.

Priority should be given to conserving and enhancing areas, sites, features and species of international, national, regional and local landscape, natural environment and historic environment importance.

Where proposals and schemes affect the region's landscape, natural or historic environment or woodland assets, prospective developers and/or local authorities should first avoid loss of or damage to the assets, then mitigate any unavoidable damage and compensate for loss or damage through offsetting actions with a foundation of no net loss in resources as a minimum requirement.

With regard to specific elements of this integrated approach, the following should be taken into account:

Policy EM1 (A): Landscape

Plans, strategies, proposals and schemes should identify, protect, maintain and enhance natural, historic and other distinctive features that contribute to the character of landscapes and places within the North West.

They should be informed by and recognise the importance of:

- detailed landscape character assessments and strategies, which local authorities should produce, set in the context of the North West Joint Character Area Map. These will be used to identify priority areas for the maintenance, enhancement and/or restoration of that character and will under-pin and act as key components of criteria-based policies in LDFs;
- the special qualities of the environment associated with the nationally designated areas of the Lake District National Park, the Yorkshire Dales National Park, the Peak District National Park, the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), the Arnside and Silverdale AONB, the North Pennines AONB and Solway Coast AONB and their settings;
- the characteristics and setting of World Heritage Sites.

Policy EM1 (B): Natural Environment

Plans, strategies, proposals and schemes should secure a 'step-change' increase in the region's biodiversity resources by contributing to the delivery of national, regional and local biodiversity objectives and targets for maintaining extent, achieving condition, restoring and expanding habitats and species populations. This should be done through protecting, enhancing, expanding and linking areas for wildlife within and between the locations of highest biodiversity resources, including statutory and local wildlife sites, and encouraging the conservation and expansion of the ecological fabric elsewhere.

Broad locations where there are greatest opportunities for delivering the biodiversity targets are shown on the Indicative Biodiversity Resource and Opportunity Diagram (see Diagram 9.1⁷). More specific locations will be informed by sub-regional biodiversity maps and frameworks of statutory and local wildlife sites.

Local authorities should:

- develop a more detailed representation of this spatial information for use in their Local Development Frameworks; and

⁷ Page 90 of the North West of England Plan

- develop functional ecological frameworks that will address habitat fragmentation and species isolation, identifying and targeting opportunities for habitat expansion and re-connection. Active arrangements will be needed to address ecological cross-boundary issues within areas such as the Pennines, Solway Firth, the Mersey Estuary, the Lune Estuary, the River Dee Estuary and the Cheshire Meres and Mosses, as well as including biodiversity policies in any developing Marine Spatial Planning System in the Irish Sea.

Plans, strategies, proposals and schemes should protect and enhance the region's geological and geomorphological resources including statutory and local sites by contributing to the delivery of national, regional and local geodiversity objectives and targets.

Policy EM1 (C): Historic Environment

Plans, strategies, proposals and schemes should protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment supporting conservation-led regeneration in areas rich in historic interest, and in particular exploiting the regeneration potential of:

- the maritime heritage of the North West coast including docks and waterspaces, and coastal resorts and piers;
- the Pennine textile mill-town heritage that exists in East Lancashire and Greater Manchester; and the textile mill-town heritage of East Cheshire;
- Victorian and Edwardian commercial developments in Liverpool and Manchester city centres;
- the traditional architecture of rural villages and market towns of Cumbria, Cheshire and Lancashire;
- the historic Cities of Carlisle, Chester and Lancaster; and
- the Lake District Cultural Landscape.

Policy EM1 (D): Trees, Woodlands and Forests

Plans, strategies, proposals and schemes should:

- support the aims and priorities of the North West Regional Forestry Framework and sub-regional forestry strategies;
- encourage a steady targeted expansion of tree and woodland cover and promote sustainable management of existing woodland resources to enable the delivery of multiple benefits to society;
- support the continued role of community forestry;
- identify and protect ancient semi-natural woodland and veteran trees.

POLICY EM2: Remediating Contaminated Land

Plans, strategies, proposals and schemes should encourage the adoption of sustainable remediation technologies. Where soft end uses (including green infrastructure, natural habitat or landscape creation) are to be provided on previously developed sites, appropriate remediation technologies should be considered which reduce or render harmless any contamination that may be present.

POLICY EM3: Green Infrastructure

Plans, strategies, proposals and schemes should aim to deliver wider spatial outcomes that incorporate environmental and socio-economic benefits by:

- conserving and managing existing green infrastructure;
- creating new green infrastructure;
- enhancing its functionality, quality, connectivity and accessibility.

Local authorities should work with partners to:

- identify partnerships at an appropriate scale to take forward green infrastructure planning, in the context of relevant environmental and socio-economic objectives. Green infrastructure should include the identification, development and management of new areas of open space. This should be complemented by the retention, enhancement and adaptation of existing sites;
- ensure that a key aim of green infrastructure is the maintenance and improvement of biodiversity;
- protect the integrity of sites of national and international importance including the historic environment;
- use existing strategies and frameworks to develop consensus on green infrastructure priorities and associated data needs;
- promote physical and mental health benefits through access to and usage of open spaces by disadvantaged groups and communities;
- set out the significant green infrastructure needs across the spectrum of economic, environmental and social objectives;
- identify and secure opportunities for delivery and put in place implementation plans;
- integrate proposals to improve green infrastructure in the delivery of new developments, particularly through area based regeneration initiatives and major proposals and schemes;
- maximize the role of green infrastructure in mitigating and adapting to climate change;
- provide new areas of appropriate greenspace where development would otherwise cause unacceptable recreational pressure on sites of international

ecological importance, for example where new housing is proposed close to such sites.

Local Delivery of Green Infrastructure Plans should seek first to make use of existing delivery mechanisms supplemented by bespoke delivery mechanisms where necessary.

A Green Infrastructure Guide for the North West has been produced which provides more detailed guidance and will assist the way this policy is put into practice.

POLICY EM4: Regional Parks

Three Areas of Search for Regional Parks have been identified as shown on Diagram 9.2⁸ and within Table 9.1⁹.

- the North West Coast;
- the Mersey Basin; and
- east Lancashire.

The Regional Planning Body will work with partners to prepare a Strategic Framework for each area of search. The Strategic Framework will provide the context for the delivery of regional parks in the area of search by setting out:

- an assessment of assets, opportunities, functions and potential to meet overall objectives of regional parks set out in Figure 9.1, including target populations;
- a broad vision and objectives; and
- guiding principles for projects being promoted within its area of search.

The protection of European sites and the enhancement of biodiversity should form guiding principles for the Strategic Frameworks. In particular, Strategic Frameworks should include an assessment of potential impacts on sites of international nature conservation importance.

Plans and strategies should have regard to the Strategic Frameworks and for each specific regional park should:

- identify the locations and boundaries;
- secure successful delivery and management arrangements;

⁸ Page 98 of North West of England Plan

⁹ Page 97 of North West of England Plan

- ensure that access provision is only delivered where access for recreation will not result in adverse impact on the integrity of any site of international nature conservation importance. Where this cannot be ensured, access restrictions must be put in place to prevent the occurrence of any adverse effect;
- as part of this process, systems should be in place to ensure effective monitoring of and appropriate response to any impact of recreational pressure on sites of international nature conservation importance that lie within or close to Regional Parks;
- access to the Regional Parks by walking, cycling and public transport should be promoted, and car transport to the Regional Parks should be managed in order to ensure that air pollution at sensitive European sites is not affected by the development of Regional Parks.

POLICY EM5: Integrated Water Management

In achieving integrated water management and delivery of the EU Water Framework Directive, plans and strategies should have regard to River Basin Management Plans, Water Company Asset Management Plans, Catchment Flood Management Plans, and the Regional Flood Risk Appraisal. Local planning authorities and developers should protect the quantity and quality of surface, ground and coastal waters, and manage flood risk, by:

- working with the Water Companies and the Environment Agency when planning the location and phasing of development. Development should be located where there is spare capacity in the existing water supply and waste water treatment, sewer and strategic surface water mains capacity, insofar as this would be consistent with other planning objectives. Where this is not possible development must be phased so that new infrastructure capacity can be provided without environmental harm;
- producing sub-regional or district level strategic flood risk assessments, guided by the Regional Flood Risk Appraisal. Allocations of land for development should comply with the sequential test in PPS25. Departures from this should only be proposed in exceptional cases where suitable land at lower risk of flooding is not available and the benefits of development outweigh the risks from flooding;
- designing appropriate mitigation measures into the scheme, for any development which, exceptionally, must take place in current or future flood risk areas, to ensure it is protected to appropriate standards, provides suitable emergency access under flood conditions, and does not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere;
- requiring new development, including residential, commercial and transport development, to incorporate sustainable drainage systems and water conservation and efficiency measures to the highest contemporary standard;
- encouraging retrofitting of sustainable drainage systems and water efficiency within existing developments;

- raising people's awareness of flood risks (particularly for vulnerable groups) and the impacts of their behaviours and lifestyles on water consumption.

POLICY EM6: Managing the North West's Coastline

Plans, strategies, proposals and schemes (including Shoreline Management Plans) should take a strategic and integrated approach to the long term management of flood and coastal erosion risk by:

- taking account of natural coastal change and the likely impacts of climate change, to ensure that development is sited or re-sited carefully to avoid:
 - the risk of future loss from coastal erosion, land instability and flooding;
 - unsustainable coastal defence costs;
 - damaging existing defences and the capacity of the coast to form natural defences or to adjust to future changes without endangering life or property;
- making provision for mitigation of and adaptation to natural coastal change and the predicted effects of climate change over the medium to long-term (100 years) and supporting a 'whole shoreline approach' being taken to coastal risk management;
- minimizing the loss of coastal habitats and avoiding damage to coastal processes; and avoiding adverse impacts now and in the future on coastal sites of international nature conservation importance;
- promoting managed realignment as a tool for managing flood and coastal erosion risk and delivering biodiversity targets and compensatory habitat requirements under the Habitats Directive

POLICY EM7: Minerals Extraction

Plans and strategies should make provision for a steady and adequate supply of a range of minerals to meet the region's apportionments of land-won aggregates and requirements of national planning guidance. This will take into account:

- the national significance of the Region's reserves of salt, silica sand, gypsum, peat and clay (including fireclay);
- the need to maintain land banks of permitted reserves of certain minerals as identified in relevant government guidance including silica sand and materials for the cement industry;
- the contribution that substitute, secondary or recycled sources, or imports from outside the Region, should make;
- the potential supply of marine dredged aggregate in contributing towards overall regional aggregate needs, applying the principles of sustainable development alluded to in relevant government guidance ⁽¹⁰²⁾ and reflect any future Marine Spatial Planning arrangements.

Minerals extraction forms an exception to the sequential approach set out in the Core Development Principles.

Plans and strategies should:

- include criteria-based policies to indicate the circumstances under which extraction might or might not be permitted;
- include opportunities for the transportation of minerals by pipeline, rail or water, including the maintenance of existing wharves and railhead facilities, the provision of new ones, and of facilities for on-shore processing and distribution of hydrocarbons;
- safeguard mineral resources from other forms of development and, where appropriate, reserve highest quality minerals for applications that require such grades;
- identify and protect sources of building stone for use in repairing and maintaining historic buildings and public realm improvements; and
- ensure sensitive environmental restoration and aftercare of sites including improved public access where they are of amenity value.

POLICY EM8: Land-won Aggregates

Mineral planning authorities should continue to work together to make provision for the agreed regional apportionment of land-won aggregate requirements to 2016 on the basis of the revision to Minerals Planning Guidance Note 6 (MPG6), and the sub-regional apportionment set out in Table 9.2¹⁰.

POLICY EM9: Secondary and Recycled Aggregates

The Regional Planning Body will work with the Regional Aggregates Working Party, mineral and waste planning authorities, and others to maximise the role played by secondary and recycled sources of aggregates in meeting the Region's requirements by:

- working with the construction industry to achieve a target of 20% of construction aggregates to be from secondary or recycled sources by 2010 and 25% by 2021;
- encouraging local authorities and developers to incorporate temporary materials-recycling facilities on the sites of major demolition or construction projects; and
- plans and strategies identifying, sites or criteria for the provision of permanent recycling plants for construction and demolition waste in appropriate locations.

¹⁰ Page 102 of North West of England Plan

POLICY EM10: A Regional Approach to Waste Management

Plans, strategies, proposals and schemes should promote and require the provision of sustainable new waste management infrastructure, facilities and systems that contribute to the development of the North West by reducing harm to the environment (including reducing impacts on climate change), improving the efficiency of resources, stimulating investment and maximising economic opportunities.

Plans and strategies should reflect the principles set out in the Waste Strategy for England 2007 and PPS10. They should seek to achieve the following regional waste targets, and to exceed them where practicable:

- growth in municipal waste to be reduced to zero by 2014;
- 40% of household waste to be reused, recycled or composted by 2010; 45% by 2015; and 55% by 2020;
- value to be recovered from 53% of municipal solid waste by 2010 (including recycling/composting); and 67% by 2015 and 75% by 2020;
- zero future growth in commercial and industrial wastes;
- recycle 35% of all commercial and industrial wastes by 2020;
- value to be recovered from at least 70% of commercial and industrial wastes by 2020 (including recycling/composting).

POLICY EM11: Waste Management Principles

Every effort should be made to minimise waste, maximise re-use, and maximise opportunities for the use of recycled material. Such residual waste as does arise should be managed at the highest practicable level in the Government's waste hierarchy. The following sequence of initiatives should be followed, and appropriate facilities provided:

- first, waste minimisation; then
- maximise the re-use of waste for the same or a different purpose; then
- composting or recycling (for instance through streamed "kerbside" collections, "bring" banks, civic amenity sites, and centralised recycling facilities); then
- intermediate treatment of wastes that cannot readily be composted or recycled (through anaerobic digestion or mechanical biological treatment (MBT)); or
- treatment to deal with hazardous materials; then
- production of refuse derived fuels from waste; then
- recovery of energy from residual waste and refuse derived fuels (by a range of thermal treatments); and finally

- disposal of residual wastes by land-filling (or land-raising), including the recovery of energy from landfill gas where practicable.

POLICY EM12: Locational Principles

Waste planning and disposal authorities should provide for communities to take more responsibility for their own waste. The final residue, following treatment, of municipal, commercial and industrial waste should be disposed of in one of the nearest appropriate installations. Local authorities should ensure that waste management facilities are sited in such a way as to avoid the unnecessary carriage of waste over long distances. In considering the location of new waste management facilities, they should take account of the availability of transport infrastructure that will support the sustainable movement of waste, seeking when practicable to use rail or water transport. They should also take account of the environmental impact of the proposed development.

POLICY EM13: Provision of Nationally, Regionally and Sub-Regionally Significant Waste Management Facilities

Plans, strategies, proposals and schemes should provide for an appropriate type, size and mix of development opportunities to support, bring forward and safeguard sites for waste management facilities that will deliver the capacity to deal with the indicative volumes of non-hazardous commercial and industrial waste, hazardous waste and municipal waste in each sub-region, as set out in Tables 9.3, 9.4 and 9.5 respectively¹¹.

Plans and Strategies should identify locations for waste management facilities and allocate suitable sites for the provision of facilities up to 2020. When identifying these sites, account should be taken of the scope for co-location of complementary activities, such as resource recovery parks, to support the provision of adequate reprocessing and re-manufacturing capacity.

In considering proposals for waste management facilities (including additional landfill capacity) the ability of existing established sites to meet the needs of the region / sub region should be fully explored. Wherever possible, such sites should be used in preference to other sites where waste management activities have not previously been located, provided proposals for the development of waste management facilities satisfy general planning and licensing conditions, including the likely cumulative impact on the environment, landscape, cultural heritage, groundwater,

¹¹ Pages 109-111 of North West of England Plan

the amenity and health of the neighbourhood and residents, the traffic impact; available transport links; the prevention and control of pollution and any specific technical issues.

For both the municipal, and the commercial and industrial waste streams, primary reception, treatment and transfer facilities should be located near to the sources of arisings. Secondary treatment and disposal facilities may be located on a sub-regional strategic basis, to serve a wider catchment area. Regionally significant facilities may be needed to serve the Mersey Belt, which includes the Manchester and Liverpool conurbations. The provision of nationally significant waste management facilities may be appropriate where the region offers a particular waste management advantage on a national scale.

Where it is appropriate at the sub-regional level, waste planning, disposal and collection authorities should work together to produce joint waste management strategies in partnership with the Environment Agency, the waste management industry, Regional Planning Body and other stakeholders.

POLICY EM14: Radioactive Waste

Plans and strategies should continue to support the North West as a centre of national and international expertise in the fields of nuclear fuel fabrication, reprocessing, radioactive waste management and decommissioning.

National and regional partners should work together to promote an agreed solution to the safe long-term management of radioactive waste, based on consultation with all relevant interests. This should incorporate a long-term commitment to the reduction of radioactive discharges and to radioactive waste minimisation, management and safe storage techniques.

POLICY EM15: A Framework For Sustainable Energy In The North West

Plans and strategies should promote sustainable energy production and consumption in accordance with the principles of the Energy Hierarchy set out in Figure 9.2¹² and within the Sustainable Energy Strategy. In line with the North West Sustainable Energy Strategy the North West aims to double its installed Combined Heat and Power (CHP) capacity by 2010 from 866 MWe to 1.5 GW, if economic conditions are feasible.

¹² Pages 113 of North West of England Plan

All public authorities should in their own proposals and schemes (including refurbishment) lead by example to emphasise their commitment to reducing the annual consumption of energy and the potential for sustainable energy generation, and facilitate the adoption of good practice by the widest range of local stakeholders.

POLICY EM16: Energy Conservation & Efficiency

Local authorities, energy suppliers, construction companies, developers, transport providers and other organisations should ensure that their approach to energy is based on minimising consumption and demand, promoting maximum efficiency and minimum waste in all aspects of local planning, development and energy consumption. To support this, Distribution Network Operators and local planning authorities should make effective provision for required energy network upgrades in terms of distribution connections and substations.

Plans and strategies should actively facilitate reductions in energy requirements and improvements in energy efficiency by incorporating robust policies which support the delivery of the national timetable for reducing emissions from domestic and non-domestic buildings.

POLICY EM17: Renewable Energy

In line with the North West Sustainable Energy Strategy, by 2010 at least 10% (rising to at least 15% by 2015 and at least 20% by 2020) of the electricity which is supplied within the Region should be provided from renewable energy sources. To achieve this new renewable energy capacity should be developed which will contribute towards the delivery of the indicative capacity targets set out in Tables 9.6 and 9.7a-c¹³. In accordance with PPS22, meeting these targets is not a reason to refuse otherwise acceptable development proposals.

Local authorities should work with stakeholders in the preparation of sub regional studies of renewable energy resources so as to gain a thorough understanding of the supplies available and network improvements, and how they can best be used to meet national, regional and local targets. These studies should form the basis for:

- informing a future review of RSS to identify broad locations where development of particular types of renewable energy may be considered appropriate; and

¹³ Pages 119-122 of the North West of England Plan

- establishing local strategies for dealing with renewable resources, setting targets for their use which can replace existing sub regional targets for the relevant authorities.

Plans and strategies should seek to promote and encourage, rather than restrict, the use of renewable energy resources. Local planning authorities should give significant weight to the wider environmental, community and economic benefits of proposals for renewable energy schemes to:

- contribute towards the capacities set out in tables 9.6 and 9.7 a-c¹⁴; and
- mitigate the causes of climate change and minimise the need to consume finite natural resources.

Opportunities should be sought to identify proposals and schemes for renewable energy. The following criteria should be taken into account but should not be used to rule out or place constraints on the development of all, or specific types of, renewable energy technologies:

- anticipated effects on local amenity resulting from development, construction and operation of schemes (e.g. air quality, atmospheric emissions, noise, odour, water pollution and disposal of waste). Measures to mitigate these impacts should be employed where possible and necessary to make them acceptable;
- acceptability of the location/scale of the proposal and its visual impact in relation to the character and sensitivity of the surrounding landscape, including cumulative impact. Stringent requirements for minimising impact on landscape and townscape would not be appropriate if these effectively preclude the supply of certain types of renewable energy, other than in the most exceptional circumstances such as within nationally recognised designations as set out in PPS22 paragraph 11;
- effect on the region's World Heritage Sites and other national and internationally designated sites or areas, and their settings but avoiding the creation of buffer zones and noting that small scale developments may be permitted in such areas provided there is no significant environmental detriment;
- effect of development on nature conservation features, biodiversity and geodiversity, including sites, habitats and species, and which avoid significant adverse effects on sites of international nature conservation importance by assessment under the Habitats Regulations;
- maintenance of the openness of the Region's Green Belt;
- potential benefits of development to the local economy and the local community;
- accessibility (where necessary) by the local transport network;
- effect on agriculture and other land based industries;

¹⁴ Pages 119-122 of the North West of England Plan

- ability to make connections to the electricity distribution network which takes account of visual impact (as qualified above);
- integration of the proposal with existing or new development where appropriate;
- proximity to the renewable fuel source where relevant – e.g. wood-fuel biomass processing plants within or in close proximity to the region's major woodlands and forests;
- encourage the integration of combined heat and power (CHP), including micro CHP into development.

Developers must engage with local communities at an early stage of the development process prior to submission of any proposals and schemes for approval under the appropriate legislation.

POLICY EM18: Decentralised Energy Supply

Plans and strategies should encourage the use of decentralised and renewable or low-carbon energy in new development in order to contribute to the achievement of the targets set out in Table 9.6 and 9.7a-c¹⁵. In particular, local authorities should, in their Development Plan Documents, set out:

- targets for the energy to be used in new development to come from decentralised and renewable or low-carbon energy sources, based on appropriate evidence and viability assessments; and
- the type and size of development to which the target will be applied.

In advance of local targets being set, new non residential developments above a threshold of 1,000m² and all residential developments comprising 10 or more units should secure at least 10% of their predicted energy requirements from decentralised and renewable or low-carbon sources, unless it can be demonstrated by the applicant, having regard to the type of development involved and its design, that this is not feasible or viable.

POLICY MCR1: Manchester City Region Priorities

Plans and strategies in the Manchester City Region should:

- support interventions necessary to achieve a significant improvement in the sub-region's economic performance by encouraging investment and sustainable development in the Regional Centre, surrounding inner areas, the towns/cities and accessible suburban centres as set out in RDF1 and other key locations

¹⁵ Pages 119-122 of the North West of England Plan

which accord with the spatial principles policies (DP1-9) and the criteria in policies W2 and W3 in order to contribute to the growth opportunities identified in policy W1;

- secure improvements, including the enhancement of public transport links, which will enable the inner areas and the northern part of the City Region to capture growing levels of investment and reduce sub-regional disparities. Particular attention should be given to assisting with programmes to address worklessness;
- accommodate housing development in locations that are accessible by public transport to areas of economic growth. A high level of residential development will be encouraged in the inner areas to secure a significant increase in the population of these areas;
- provide high quality housing to replace obsolete stock and where appropriate refurbish existing properties, to meet the needs of existing residents, and attract and retain new population in order to support economic growth;
- improve the City Region's internal and external transport links in line with the priorities for transport investment and management set out in Policy RT10;
- maintain the role of Manchester Airport as the North of England's key international gateway in line with Policy RT5;
- develop the role of Manchester as a national public transport gateway to the region in line with policy RT3 and enhance the accessibility of the Regional Centre by public transport to support economic growth and enable the benefits of its wide range of economic, cultural and other opportunities to be shared. Investment should support policies MCR2 and MCR4 in particular;
- develop the roles of Wigan, Warrington and Crewe as regional public transport gateways in line with policy RT3;
- focus environmental improvements where they are most needed and will have the greatest benefit to facilitate the sustainable development of the Regional Centre and Inner Areas. This includes integrated flood management works, the remediation of contaminated land, and provision of high quality green infrastructure as part of comprehensive regeneration schemes;
- proposals and schemes will be directed primarily towards locations where they can contribute to these priorities.

POLICY MCR2: Regional Centre and Inner Areas of Manchester City Region

Plans and strategies should ensure that the Regional Centre of the Manchester City Region continues to develop as the primary economic driver, providing the main focus for business retail, leisure, cultural and tourism development in the City Region. The expansion of the knowledge economy throughout the Regional Centre, and particularly related to the Universities and Central Manchester hospitals, will be a particular priority;

- proposals and schemes for residential development in the Regional Centre will be acceptable where they are part of mixed use employment schemes that

comprise a good range of housing sizes, types, tenures and affordability and where they contribute to the vitality and viability of the Regional Centre;

In the inner areas:

- residential development should be focused in the inner areas adjacent to the Regional Centre in order to secure a significant increase in their population, to support major regeneration activity including the Manchester-Salford Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder, and to secure the improvement of community facilities and the creation of sustainable communities. The emphasis will be on providing a good range of quality housing, in terms of size, type, tenure and affordability, with a high quality environment and accessible local facilities and employment opportunities;
- plans and strategies should provide for employment within the Inner Areas in accordance with policies W2 and W3 and MCR1.

POLICY MCR3: Southern Part of the Manchester City Region

Plans and strategies in the southern part of the City Region should sustain and promote economic prosperity consistent with the environmental character of the area and the creation of attractive and sustainable communities by:

- focusing employment development in the towns as set out in RDF 1 and on brownfield sites which accord with the spatial principles (policies DP1-9) in Policies W2 and W3 and MCR1, in order to support the overall economic growth of the City Region, to meet local needs and regeneration requirements and to address worklessness. Sites should be of an appropriate scale, and accessible by public transport, walking and cycling;
- allowing residential development to support local regeneration strategies and to meet identified local needs (particularly for affordable housing), in sustainable locations which are well served by public transport;
- support and diversify the rural economy and improve access to services in the rural areas focusing development in locations which accord with RDF2.

POLICY MCR4: South Cheshire

Plans and strategies should:

- support sustainable economic growth in Crewe and focus development on sites which accord with RDF1, the Spatial Principles (policies DP1-9), the criteria in W2 and W3 and MCR1;
- promote the role of Crewe as a regional public transport gateway/interchange to the region;

- provide for regeneration to improve the environment, economy and image of Crewe;
- continue the protection and enhancement of the historic environment of Nantwich and its contribution to the sub-region's economy, tourism, quality of life and regeneration;
- support and diversify the rural economy and improve access to services in the rural areas focusing development in locations which accord with RDF2.

POLICY MCR5: Northern Part of the Manchester City Region

Plans and strategies for the northern part of the City Region should support the transformation of the local economy, regenerate communities, and enhance the environment. They should:

- secure improvements which enable the area to compete more effectively for economic investment now and in the future, helping to achieve significant improvements in productivity and creating the conditions for sustainable growth. This will require significant interventions to improve skill levels within the labour market, to deliver appropriate development sites, and to secure necessary infrastructure improvements;
- focus employment development in the town/cities as set out in RDF1 and at other locations which accord with the spatial principles (policies DP1-9), policies W2 and W3 and MCR1, to support the overall economic growth of the sub region, to encourage the 'spin-off' of functions linked to the Regional Centre and to address worklessness;
- expand the quality and choice of housing (in terms of size, type, tenure and affordability) in line with the approach set out in Policy L4;
- use the HMR Pathfinder in Oldham and Rochdale as an opportunity for wide ranging change in the economic and housing role of these areas, the renewal of communities and investment in new infrastructure;
- support and diversify the rural economy and improve access to services in the rural areas focusing development in locations which accord with RDF2.

POLICY MCR6: Strategic Framework for Warrington

In Warrington plans and strategies should:

- support sustainable economic growth in Warrington and its role as a source of employment for an area including Warrington, Knowsley, Halton, St Helens and Wigan;

- focus development on sites which are accessible by public transport, walking and cycling and accord with policy RDF1, the spatial principles (policies DP1-9), policies W2 and W3 and MCR1, focusing particularly on brownfield sites to ensure no further significant expansion onto open land;
- support regeneration and restructuring of the older urban areas;
- support Warrington's role as a regional transport gateway/interchange;
- support and diversify the rural economy and improve access to services in the rural areas focusing development in locations which accord with RDF2.

POLICY LCR1: Liverpool City Region Priorities

Plans and strategies in the Liverpool City Region should:

- support interventions necessary to achieve a significant improvement in the sub-region's economic performance by encouraging investment and sustainable development in the Regional Centre, surrounding inner areas, the towns/cities as set out in RDF1 and other key locations, including accessible suburban centres which accord with the spatial principles policies (DP1-9) and the criteria in policies W2 and W3 in order to contribute to the growth opportunities identified in policy W1;
- focus sustained and co-ordinated programmes to maximise economic potential and promote urban renaissance and social inclusion within the Regional Centre and its surrounding Inner Area (the New Heartlands Housing Market Renewal Area);
- focus a sufficient proportion of new housing development and renewal (and related social and environmental infrastructure) within the inner areas to meet the objectives of the Housing Market Renewal Initiative and, consistent with this, make provision for an increase in the supply of affordable and market housing required to address demographic needs and to support economic growth and regeneration;
- enhance the accessibility by public transport of the New Heartlands Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder Area and improve transport links between this (and other disadvantaged areas) and key employment, education and healthcare locations. Particular attention should be given to assisting with programmes to address worklessness;
- in the outer part in the Liverpool City Region, promote economic development, address worklessness, urban renaissance and social inclusion, complementary to the programmes within the Liverpool Regional Centre and the Inner Areas;
- maximise the employment potential of the Strategic Investment Areas (SIAs) and Economic Development Zones (EDZs). Detailed boundary definitions will be set out in Local Development Frameworks;
- promote the sustainable growth, local regeneration initiatives and development opportunities in West Cheshire/North East Wales sub-region and in Vale Royal. Maintain the role of the sub area and Chester in particular as an important

- component of the Liverpool City Region economy and promote joint working between Authorities and Agencies for its strategic planning and management;
- improve the City Region's internal and external transport links in line with the priorities for transport investment and management set out in Policy RT10;
 - support and develop the roles of Liverpool John Lennon Airport and the Merseyside Ports, in line with Policies RT5 and RT6, especially the Port of Liverpool as the only Port of national significance for deep-sea trade in the North of England;
 - develop the role of Liverpool as a national and regional public transport gateway and interchange to the Region in line with policy RT3 and enhance the accessibility of the Regional Centre, particularly by public transport walking and cycling to support its role as the main economic focus for the City Region;
 - focus environmental improvements where they are most needed and will have the greatest benefit to facilitate the sustainable development of the Regional Centre and Inner Areas. This includes the remediation of contaminated land and provision of high quality green infrastructure as part of comprehensive regeneration schemes. Protect existing environmental assets in line with DP7 and EM1, in particular sites of international importance for nature conservation such as the Mersey Estuary.

Proposals and schemes should be directed primarily towards locations where they can contribute to these priorities.

POLICY LCR2: The Regional Centre and Inner Areas of Liverpool City Region

The Regional Centre is the primary economic driver of the Liverpool City Region and plans and strategies should support and enhance this role by:

- focusing appropriate commercial, retail, leisure, cultural and tourism development within the Regional Centre developing its role as the primary retail centre, main employment location and primary economic driver of the City Region;
- outside areas of housing market renewal, providing for proposals and schemes for residential development in the Regional Centre where they are part of mixed use employment schemes that comprise a good range of housing sizes, types tenures and affordability and where they contribute to the vitality and viability of the Regional Centre;
- expanding the knowledge economy within the regional centre particularly by maximising the research and development roles of the Universities and delivering knowledge nuclei sites and the expansion of professional services.

They should focus residential development in the Inner Areas adjacent to the Regional Centre in order to secure a significant increase in population and to support major regeneration activity. This will entail:

- maintaining and enhancing the roles of Birkenhead and Bootle to provide community facilities, services and employment;
- the development of the New Heartlands Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder to revitalise housing in Liverpool, Sefton, and Wirral through comprehensive area based regeneration schemes;
- supporting the development of the Mersey Ports and the maritime economy;
- sustaining investment in the Mersey Waterfront Regional Park; and
- providing for employment within the inner areas in accordance with W2 and W3 and LCR1.

The emphasis will be on providing a good range of quality housing in the inner areas in terms of size, type, tenure and affordability with a high quality environment and accessible local facilities and employment opportunities.

POLICY LCR3: Outer part of the Liverpool City Region

In the outer part of the City Region Plans and strategies should:

- focus economic development in the town/cities as set out in RDF1 and at other locations which accord with the spatial principles (policies DP1-9), Policies W2 and W3 and LCR1. Particular attention should be given to addressing worklessness;
- support significant intervention in areas where housing market restructuring is required in line with the approach set out in Policies L3 and L4;
- expand the quality and choice of housing in line with the approach set out in Policy L4;
- maintain and enhance the roles of the regional towns, key service centres and local centres in accordance with Policy RDF2;
- identify, define and maintain the role of suburban centres in accordance with RDF1 and spatial principles DP1-9.

POLICY LCR4: The remaining rural parts of Liverpool City Region

In the remaining rural parts of the Liverpool City Region plans and strategies should:

- support and diversify the rural economy and improve access to services in the rural areas focusing development in locations which accord with RDF2;
- be consistent with other regeneration programmes and policies;
- ensure the provision of housing to address barriers to affordability and to meet identified local needs.

POLICY LCR5: West Cheshire – North East Wales

Plans and strategies within West Cheshire – North East Wales sub-region covered by RSS for the NW of England should:

- focus development in the town/cities as set out in RDF1 and at other locations which accord with LCR1, the spatial principles (policies DP1-9), policies W2 and W3;
- harness the potential of Chester for sustainable growth, and as a key sub-regional centre for employment, shopping, leisure, culture and tourism, ensure development is compatible with the conservation and enhancement of the historic City and its setting and the need to improve quality of life and promote regeneration in West Chester;
- support the sustainable economic growth and regeneration opportunities of Ellesmere Port through sustained and co-ordinated programmes for development and investment, with emphasis on developing Ellesmere Ports reputation for ‘high tech’ manufacturing, through the diversification of the economy and the improvement of the image, quality of life and perception of Ellesmere Port;
- support sustainable economic growth, investment and regeneration opportunities in Northwich and focus on meeting local needs;
- improve the internal and external transport links, in particular with North East Wales, in line with the priorities for transport investment set out in Policy RT10;
- develop the role of Chester as a regional public transport gateway in line with Policy RT3;
- enhance links between areas of opportunity and areas of need, including those regeneration areas served by the following transport corridors:
 - Wrexham - Bidston - Liverpool rail corridor;
 - Wrexham - Chester;
 - Route leading to the Flintshire Coastal Corridor; and
 - Other corridors radiating out from Chester, in particular links to Ellesmere Port and Broughton. The enhancement of road links does not imply the provision of additional capacity;
- ensure the strategic planning and management of the sub-region’s economy, housing market, transport network and environmental and cultural assets through joint working with Authorities and Agencies across the sub-region;
- ensure the provision of housing to meet local needs and address barriers to affordability;
- further develop the skills base of the labour force and promote access to employment; and
- support and diversify the rural economy in line with policy RDF2 and improve access to services in the rural areas.

POLICY CLCR1: Central Lancashire City Region Priorities

Plans and strategies for the Central Lancashire City Region should:

- focus investment and sustainable development in the City of Preston and 3 towns of Blackburn, Burnley and Blackpool, raising economic performance, particularly through:
 - tourism and housing-led regeneration in Blackpool;
 - knowledge-based development (including advanced manufacturing and aerospace) in Preston and Blackburn;
 - regeneration and restructuring of the East Lancashire economy (including actions taken under the Elevate Transformational Agenda);
 - enhanced educational opportunities which will improve the skill-base of the resident population;
 - developing new employment opportunities in accordance with policies W1 to W3 and addressing localised problems of worklessness;
- provide for a range of good quality housing, accessible to local facilities;
- improve the City Region's internal and external transport links, in line with the transport investment and management priorities set out in policy RT10;
- develop the role of Blackpool Airport, in line with policy RT5;
- develop the role of Preston as a regional transport gateway in line with policy RT3;
- improve the accessibility of employment locations by sustainable transport modes, with priority given to the Elevate Housing Renewal Pathfinder area;
- support and diversify the rural economy and improve access to services in the rural areas focusing development in locations which accord with RDF2.

Proposals and schemes will be directed primarily towards locations where they can contribute to these priorities.

POLICY CLCR2: Focus for Development and Investment in Central Lancashire City Region

Development in the Central Lancashire City Region will be located primarily in the city of Preston and the three towns of Blackburn, Blackpool and Burnley, giving priority to sites in and around their centres and at other locations which accord with RDF1, DP1-9 and policies W2 and W3. Development should be pursued in a manner that addresses worklessness, enhances urban quality, and contributes to the enhancement of the natural setting of the city/towns. Outside the City and towns identified above, development in the Central Lancashire City Region will be largely confined to Key Service Centres and Local Service Centres, in line with Policy RDF2.

POLICY CLCR3: Green City

The unique 'green' character of the Central Lancashire City Region, and the advantages it offers for recreation and for attracting people and investment, will be protected and further enhanced by:

- a. maintaining the general extent of the Green Belt in accordance with Policy RDF4;
- b. protecting the Forest of Bowland AONB, in accordance with Policy EM1;
- c. the further development of the City Region's three Regional Parks (East Lancashire, Ribble Estuary and Morecambe Bay) in accordance with Policy EM4, through:
 - improving access to open space networks, enhancing the urban fringe, reclaiming derelict land, enhancing recreational and educational facilities, and providing public art;
 - promoting the conservation, protection and enhancement of the physical and natural environment, and supporting biodiversity; and
 - the inclusion of appropriate policies and projects, and the delineation of Regional Park boundaries in Local Development Frameworks in line with strategic frameworks as set out in EM4;
- d. the greening of urban areas, through measures including the renovation of existing parks; the reclamation of derelict land for 'soft' end uses; the utilisation of open space adjacent to waterways, such as the Leeds-Liverpool Canal; and the creation of green wedges extending into the countryside.

POLICY CNL1: Overall Spatial Policy for Cumbria

Plans and strategies in Cumbria should:

- focus major developments within Barrow in Furness and Whitehaven, and Workington, and in the City of Carlisle in line with policy RDF1 and spatial principles DP1-9;
- provide for development in the key service centres and local service centres in line with RDF2;
- provide a portfolio of employment sites in accordance with RDF1 and the criteria in policies W2 and W3;
- support the restructuring of housing markets in West Cumbria and Furness;
- improve Cumbria's internal and external transport links in line with the priorities for transport investment and management set out in policy RT10;
- develop the role of Carlisle as a regional public transport gateway to the region in line with policy RT1 and harness its potential for economic growth in sustainable ways;
- ensure that network management measures are utilised to make best and most appropriate use of available highway infrastructure and to improve road safety

and journey time reliability, with priority given to improving the operation of routes linking Furness and West Cumbria to the M6;

- give priority to improving access to employment, services and education/training facilities on foot and by cycle, and by public transport, in Carlisle, Workington/Whitehaven and Barrow-in-Furness, and in Key Service Centres, especially Kendal;
- support the development of sustainable tourism in Cumbria; and
- support the development of higher value knowledge based and specialist industry based employment opportunities.

Proposals and schemes will be directed primarily towards locations where they can contribute to these priorities.

POLICY CNL2: Sub-area Development Priorities for Cumbria

Within the sub-areas of Cumbria, plans and strategies should accord with CNL1 and focus on:

- supporting sustainable growth in Carlisle. Building on Carlisle city's significant potential to attract sustainable development into Cumbria. The city will enhance its role as the sub-regional centre for business, shopping, leisure, culture and tourism, serving Cumbria and the adjoining parts of Scotland and North East England. It will also develop its higher education function through the establishment of the new University of Cumbria, which should help attract investment in the knowledge – based economy. Ensure development is compatible with the conservation and enhancement of the historic city centre;
- enhancing the Regeneration Priority Area of West Cumbria, particularly through developing the roles of the existing centres of Whitehaven, Workington, and also in Cleator Moor and Maryport in a complementary manner. Efforts should be made to exploit the potential offered by a local workforce with expertise in the field of nuclear research, development and decommissioning; and the presence of the National Nuclear Laboratory. The location of part of the University of Cumbria in this area could increase its potential for the development of a knowledge-based economy. The potential of the area for tourism-based development should also be explored;
- concentrating development within the Furness Regeneration Priority Area in Barrow in Furness, to facilitate diversification of the local economy, and enable opportunities for development and regeneration to be brought forward in the wider Furness Peninsula. Efforts should be made to exploit specialist marine engineering skills and opportunities, and to develop the area's potential for tourism;
- ensuring that the needs of local people in South & East Cumbria are met with a focus on securing inward investment and improving service provision within

Kendal and Penrith. High priority should be placed on the further provision of affordable housing within the sub-area.

POLICY CNL3: Spatial Policy for the Lake District

Plans and strategies should give priority to the protection of the landscape and cultural heritage of the Lake District National Park.

In addition they should:

- promote further diversification and development of its economic base;
- redress housing imbalances through the provision of affordable and local needs housing in accordance with Policies L4 and L5;
- develop programmes for improvements to the public realm and effective traffic management in Windermere, Ambleside and Keswick, to enhance the urban fabric and support their recreational and tourism roles;
- manage recreational and sustainable tourist activities, in suitable locations;
- ensure that public transport services are improved and better integrated, and that the proportion of travel to and within the National Park by sustainable modes is increased; and
- address the relationship of the National Park with its wider area, and develop a suitable framework for meeting locally generated needs.

POLICY CNL4: Spatial Policy for North Lancashire

Plans and strategies will:

- secure the regeneration of Morecambe through the development of tourism and the restructuring of the housing market;
- support sustainable growth in Lancaster in line with RDF1, the spatial principles DP1-9, W2 and W3 and CNL1, ensuring development is compatible with the conservation of the historic city;
- build on the strengths and opportunities offered by Lancaster University and the University of Cumbria;
- ensure an increase in the supply of affordable housing;
- support the role of the Port of Heysham in line with Policy RT6; and
- develop proposals for the safe and effective management of traffic in Lancaster and Morecambe to enhance the public realm and support their leisure and tourism roles.

POLICY IM1: Implementation

In addition to the statutory requirement for Environmental Impact Analysis, economic, health, transport and other impact assessments should be carried out in appropriate cases.

The Regional Planning Body along with other partners will ensure the RSS Implementation Framework is reviewed and developed.

Plan-Monitor-Manage

Plans and policies should be sufficiently flexible to respond to robust monitoring information which will reveal whether :

- they are having the desired impact/outcome;
- they are being implemented as intended;
- circumstances have changed and there should be appropriate mechanisms to trigger a review of policy, if necessary.

The Regional Planning Body will work with local authorities and other partners to secure, as far as possible, a common evidence base, targets and indicators, avoid duplication and improve the efficiency of monitoring activity.

They will keep the RSS monitoring framework under constant review and annually prepare a Monitoring Manual and Monitoring report.