

# Tees Valley Structure Plan



Adopted February 2004

## Foreword

Development is necessary and change is inevitable. The Tees Valley Structure Plan provides a framework to guide future development and ensure that the change is for the better.

Much has been written about sustainable development and there are many definitions, but the essential elements are that development should satisfy economic, environmental and social needs without compromising the ability of future generations to satisfy their needs.

The Tees Valley Structure Plan has been commended by the Joint Strategy Committee and adopted by the five unitary authorities of Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland, and Stockton-on-Tees. The adoption of the Tees Valley Structure Plan marks the end of a lengthy, but worthwhile process. We have now reached a stage of having a document that contains a robust set of strategic policies that will guide future development across the Tees Valley.

The process has been an excellent demonstration of the five unitary authorities working together for mutual benefit, and at a time when the government has embarked on a complete revision of the planning system, it is important that this joint work continues. Looking to the future, the Structure Plan will form a basis on which to inform the debate surrounding the production of the Regional Spatial Strategy for the North East, and furthermore will help in the development of core policies for new style Local Development Frameworks.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has contributed to the production of the Structure Plan through its various stages. Ensuring that future development is sustainable requires co-operation, partnership and ownership, and without the contribution of the many organisations and members of the public who have been involved in the consultation process, the Structure Plan could not have been completed to this high standard.

**David Lyonette**

Chair

Tees Valley Joint Strategy Committee

## Preface

### The Preparation Process

The Tees Valley Structure Plan has been prepared by the Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit on behalf of the Borough Councils of Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland, and Stockton-on-Tees. It provides strategic planning guidance for development in the Tees Valley until 2016.

The Structure Plan preparation process commenced in April 1996 with an Issues Paper being published for consultation. Following the Issues Paper, a consultation draft Structure Plan was published in 1999. As a result of this, the Deposit Draft Structure Plan was published during February/March 2000. The Examination In Public (EIP) into the Deposit Draft Tees Valley Structure Plan took place in March/April 2001 and the independent Panel published their report on the proceedings with their recommendations in June 2001.

In November 2001 Proposed Modifications were issued for consultation, principally to reflect changes recommended by the EIP Panel. At this stage, a number of objections were made by the Government Office for the North East on behalf of the Secretary of State, on the grounds that the Structure Plan did not conform to draft Regional Planning Guidance for the North East (RPG1).

Following the publication of the final version of RPG1 in November 2002, Further Proposed Modifications to the Tees Valley Structure Plan were prepared, and issued for consultation in August 2003. As a result of this consultation, it was deemed that only a small number of minor amendments, which will not materially affect the content of the Plan's proposals, would be required. On 25 November 2003, the Tees Valley Joint Strategy Committee resolved that the Tees Valley Structure Plan incorporating Further Proposed Modifications and the aforementioned minor amendments, be commended for adoption by the five Tees Valley Boroughs. As a result of this decision, The Cleveland Structure Plan (including Alteration Numbers) November 1995 and the Darlington Structure Plan December 2000, have now been superseded.

### The Next Steps

The planning system and planning practice in England and Wales are currently undergoing their most fundamental reforms for over a decade. The Planning and Compensation Bill sets out the

government's intention to revise the current planning process by abolishing Structure Plans and introducing Local Development Frameworks and statutory Regional Spatial Strategy. If the Bill is enacted in its present form, statutory Regional Spatial Strategy will eventually supersede Structure Plans, with the Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit performing an advisory role on behalf of the five Tees Valley unitary authorities in the preparation of this document.

Under the proposed new arrangement, the Tees Valley Structure Plan will be saved for a period of three years, unless statutory Regional Spatial Strategy for the North East Region is adopted within this period, in which case it will be superseded.

Despite these changes, the work that has gone into the Structure Plan has not been in vain, as it will guide Planning Authorities in the preparation of their Local Development Documents and includes strategic policies, which, with slight amendment, can be used to form Local Development Framework core policies.

Copies of the following Tees Valley Structure Plan documents are available to download, free of charge, from the Joint Strategy Unit's Website:

- Deposit Draft Tees Valley Structure Plan – February 2000
- Examination in Public Panel Report – June 2001
- Deposit Draft Tees Valley Structure Plan as amended by Proposed Modifications – November 2001
- Deposit Draft Tees Valley Structure Plan as amended by Further Proposed Modifications – July 2003
- The Adopted Tees Valley Structure Plan – February 2004

([www.teesvalley-jsu.gov.uk/tvsp\\_documents.htm](http://www.teesvalley-jsu.gov.uk/tvsp_documents.htm))

Printed versions of the Structure Plan documents can also be obtained, subject to availability and a fee, by contacting the Strategic Planning Team at the Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit:

**Strategic Planning Team**  
**Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit**  
 PO Box 199, Melrose House  
 Melrose Street, Middlesbrough, TS1 2XF  
 Tel: +44 (0) 1642 264834  
 E-mail: [strategic.planning@teesvalley-jsu.gov.uk](mailto:strategic.planning@teesvalley-jsu.gov.uk)

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## chapter one

## Background

## Introduction

**1.1** The Tees Valley Structure Plan sets out the strategic planning policies that will guide the future development and use of land within the Tees Valley up to the year 2016. It provides the strategic policy framework for planning and development control locally. It includes policies to conserve the natural beauty and amenity of the area, improve the physical environment, manage the growth in traffic, and guide housing and industrial development to the most appropriate areas.

**1.2** The Plan is not a 'blueprint' but rather should be considered as a set of guidelines to help decision makers. It identifies the scale and general location of development and areas which need to be improved or protected. It comprises policies and a key diagram. The detailed and more local matters, including precise site boundaries and development control policies are set out in Local Plans, which are prepared by the Borough Councils. Structure and Local Plans together are referred to as the Development Plan.

## The Tees Valley Area

**1.3** The Tees Valley Structure Plan covers the districts of Hartlepool, Darlington, Middlesbrough, Stockton, and Redcar and Cleveland, but excludes the North York Moors National Park

**1.4** Within the Tees Valley, there are strategic planning issues which merit consideration on the basis of an area which is much wider than any district. Therefore, the five local authorities have delegated, to the Joint Strategy Committee, responsibility for preparing and publishing a joint structure plan.

## Joint Strategy Committee:

- Produces a strategic development framework of planning, transportation, economic development and tourism for the Tees Valley
- Delivers strategic intelligence support services through the Joint Strategy Unit to the Tees Valley Development Company and the five Boroughs

- Liaises with regional, national and international bodies on strategic Tees Valley matters
- Comprises 25 members, 5 councillors from each of the 5 Unitary Authorities

## The Structure Plan Process

**1.5** To set the scene for the Tees Valley Structure Plan and to provide debate on the key issues in the area, an Issues Report was published in November 1996. Following this, a draft plan and key diagram were published in February 1999 for consultation purposes. Comments were invited from all those with an interest in the future of the Tees Valley area. This included the general public, local authorities, government departments, and a wide range of groups and organisations representing differing commercial, business, amenity or environmental interests. This consultation included seminars, public exhibitions and Borough Council meetings.

**1.6** Over 650 copies of the draft plan were sent out to interested parties. This resulted in approximately 850 separate comments on the contents of the draft. Following these comments, the Deposit Draft Structure Plan was published for consultation during March and April 2000.

**1.7** Approximately 1,500 groups, organisations and individuals responded to the deposit draft Plan, submitting a total of 4,000 comments. The Examination In Public into the Deposit Draft Plan took place between 27th March and 5th April 2001. Invited participants discussed selected issues in front of an independent Panel. The Panel produced their report and recommendations in June 2001.

**1.8** On 5th November 2001, the Proposed Modifications to the Deposit Structure Plan were published for a six-week consultation period ending on 17th December 2001. The modifications incorporated the Pre-EIP changes, changes to reflect government advice issued since the Deposit Plan and those recommendations made by the EIP Panel which were accepted. A set of Further Proposed Modifications were issued for consultation between 18th August and 29th September 2003, principally to reflect the publication of the final version of Regional Planning Guidance for the North East in November 2002.

### Purpose of the Plan

**1.9** The Tees Valley Structure Plan sets out the area's overall land use strategy indicating how the balance will be struck between development, conservation and regeneration, and the relationship with transport and other infrastructure. As the Plan is a strategic document, the policies are confined to matters of strategic area-wide importance. More detailed policies are set out in the Districts' local plans which will be reviewed to conform with the policies in the Structure Plan.

**1.10** The purpose of the Plan is to:

- i) provide the strategic policy framework for the preparation of local plans and for development control within the Tees Valley area;
- ii) ensure that the provision for development within the area is realistic and consistent with national and regional policy; and
- iii) secure consistency between the local plans of the five Boroughs in the Tees Valley area.

**1.11** The strategic policies established by the Tees Valley Structure Plan must be interpreted in detail at the local level through the policies and proposals of district-wide local plans. Together these plans will form the statutory development plan for the Tees Valley area.

### Statutory Requirement for a Structure Plan

**1.12** The Tees Valley Structure Plan has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by the Planning and Compensation Act 1991. The Plan's form and content and the procedures followed in its preparation comply with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Development Plan) Regulations 1991. These introduced a significantly different planning regime, with emphasis on a development plan led system. The Acts in effect introduced a presumption in favour of development proposals which are in accordance with the development plan.

**1.13** The 1991 Act also introduced new arrangements for development plan preparation. Structure Plans are now prepared and adopted without referring them to the Secretary of State for approval. There will, however, be powers for the Secretary of State to intervene where necessary,

particularly to ensure that plans are consistent with national and regional guidance.

### European Union Influence

**1.14** The European Union has already had a major influence on land use planning in the Tees Valley, for example through the Common Agricultural Policy and Environmental Impact Assessment Directives. But possibly of greater importance is the common framework for European land use planning through the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP), which was adopted by European Spatial Planning ministers at Potsdam in May 1999. The ESDP, as a legally non-binding document, is a policy framework for better co-ordination between Community sectoral policies with significant spatial impacts and between Member States, their regions and cities.

**1.15** The ESDP is based on the European Union aim of achieving a balanced and sustainable development of the territory of the European Union. There are three policy guidelines which were agreed by EU ministers for the Union's spatial development. These are:

- The development of a balanced and polycentric system and a new urban-rural relationship;
- Securing parity of access to infrastructure and knowledge; and
- Sustainable development, prudent management and protection of nature and cultural heritage.

### National and Regional Guidance

#### National Guidance

**1.16** The Government prepares national guidance on planning issues to be taken into account in preparing development plans. The Tees Valley Structure Plan needs to be consistent with this guidance which is issued in the form of Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs), Minerals Planning Guidance Notes (MPGs), Government Circulars, Statutory Instruments and White Papers. PPGs and MPGs provide the principal sources of guidance on a variety of topics. Particular reference to PPGs, MPGs and other advice is made, as appropriate within the individual Structure Plan chapters.

**1.17** Planning Policy Guidance Note 12: Development Plans was revised in 1999 and the new guidance published in December 1999. The guidance provides overall direction on the preparation and content of structure plans. It sets out the range of key strategic topics which the Structure Plan should address, provides advice on the level of detail that the Plan should contain and requires that regard should be given to economic, social and environmental considerations. It also advises that development plans in particular can contribute to the objectives of ensuring that development and growth are sustainable.

#### Regional Guidance

**1.18** The Secretary of State issued Regional Planning Guidance for the North East Region (RPGI) in November 2002. The primary aim of the guidance is to provide a framework for updating structure plans. Any reviews or alterations to structure plans must have regard to the guidance. The main theme of the guidance is that structure plans should continue to concentrate on the regeneration of the Region's existing urban areas, and attract employment to the area to improve its economic base. At the same time they should continue to pursue policies designed to safeguard the countryside, forests and coastline.

**1.19** Revised guidance for the North East is currently being prepared, in the form of a statutory Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). A draft RSS, is expected to be published for consultation in 2004.

## chapter two

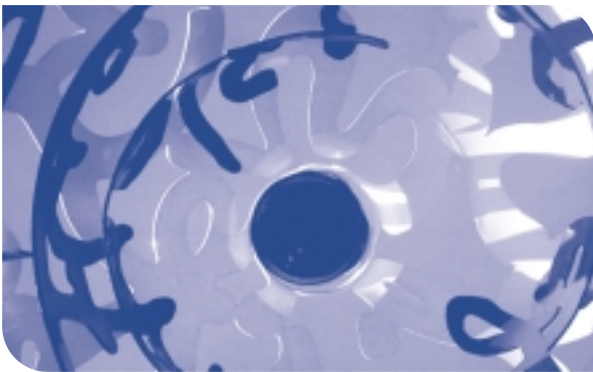
### People – twenty years of change

#### Total Population

2.1 The number of people in the Tees Valley is slowly decreasing. The population is projected to decline by 11,000 from 649,700 in 2002 to 638,300 in 2016. However, this relative stability masks some substantial changes in various age groups, a significant rise in the demand for housing and continuing developments in the workforce.

2.2 The assumptions behind the projections are based on information about present trends affecting the make up of the population. Where appropriate, they take account of the official national assumptions of future changes in the country's population. Thus, typically, national trend assumptions have been applied to the local Tees Valley and Borough circumstances.

2.3 The projections indicate the likely changes in the population structure over the twenty-year period of the structure plan. They do not attempt to indicate the short-term fluctuations that will almost certainly occur, especially for migration, which is subject to national and international influences.



Photograph 2.1: Bottle of Notes

#### Births, Deaths and Migration

2.4 The number of **births** is partly dependent on the fertility rate – equivalent to the number of children in the typical family. This has scarcely altered for many years after having fallen dramatically in the 1960s and 1970s. It is assumed that this will rise by a few percent over the next few years and then keep constant. The Tees Valley fertility rate is 3% above the national figure. It is assumed that this will remain constant. The other

factor is the number of young couples, which has been declining in recent years, a consequence of the 1960s/1970s fall in the birth rate. This is projected to fall further.

2.5 The result is that the number of births, which was largely constant at about 9,500 per annum in the 1980s, has fallen to 7,500 in 1999-2000. Births are projected to remain close to this level throughout the remainder of the period to 2016. The future birth rate is relatively difficult to project and there is uncertainty on these figures.

2.6 The number of **deaths** is relatively stable. Death rates in the Tees Valley are generally 11% above the national average and it is assumed that this differential will remain. The population is ageing and this effect on its own would increase deaths. However, the death rates for individual age groups have been falling and it is assumed that this will continue, following nationally projected trends. The result is that there is projected to be a small decline in deaths from 7,000 to 6,900 per annum by 2016.

2.7 The level of net **migration** for the Tees Valley has been the most volatile element in the past (5,000 net loss in some years). Since 1991, migration losses have been rather lower – a little over 2,000 per annum – closer to the levels of the 1970s and before. It is assumed that the large structural changes in the employment market, which seriously affected the Tees Valley in the 1980s, will not recur and that the recent lower migration losses will continue. A small decrease in migration losses from around 1,900 per annum in the first few years of the plan period to 1,500 later is projected.

2.8 These figures represent the general level anticipated throughout the plan period and represent a relatively optimistic view of migration, given the experience of the last two decades. Of course, the effects of economic cycles are liable to create substantial short-term variations from the projected migration figures. Longer-term changes in the national and international economies could affect the levels of migration, causing consequent changes to the demand for housing and the need for jobs. Moreover, the availability of jobs in the Tees Valley could also seriously affect future levels of migration.

## Age Group Projections

**2.9** The effects of the above assumptions are reflected in the changes they produce in the three main age groups in the population, namely children, adults of working age and older people.

**2.10** The number of children (0 – 16) is projected to fall from 146,000 in 2002 to around 127,000 in 2016. Of course, there is some uncertainty about the exact size of these numbers. However, it is clear that family size is continuing to fall, fewer couples are having families and those that have families are having them later. This decline in numbers is likely to affect couples' perceptions of their needs for housing. Clearly, it contributes to a fall in average household size. It is worth noting that the drop in the number of children, 19,000, more than accounts for the projected 11,400 decrease in the total population. Thus the number of adults is projected to increase.

**2.11** The working age population (17 – retirement age) is projected to change little in size throughout much of the plan period, remaining close to the 2002 level of 386,000 until 2006. A decline to 373,000 is projected by 2016.

**2.12** These figures conceal substantial changes regarding younger and older members of the group. The younger 17-44 section is projected to decline from 247,000 in 2002 to 223,000 in 2016 – a trend that lies behind the projected decrease in children. In contrast, the older 45-retirement age element is projected to rise from its 2002 level of 139,000 to 149,000 in 2016, having peaked at 150,000 in 2011. (This is significant because, as noted later, an increasing proportion of this group has retired from the workforce).

**2.13** The number of older people (retirement age and over) overall is projected to rise slowly at first – from 118,000 in 2002 to 120,000 in 2006 – and then much more quickly to 138,000 in 2016. The under 75s are projected to remain stable at around 73,000 from 2002 until 2006 before rising to 85,000 in 2016. Especially significant is the large rise in the over 75s from 42,000 in 1996 to 53,000 in 2016.

## Households

**2.14** The number of households is projected to increase by 8% from 277,400 in 2002 to 297,200 in 2016. This rise in households, complemented by a fall in population, is reflected in the figures on

household size where the average is projected to decline from 2.3 in 2002 to 2.11 in 2016.

**2.15** This decline in average household size results from:

- fewer children and smaller families
- more separation and divorce leading to more but smaller households
- more older people in the population
- more people living alone

**2.16** It can be seen from these changes – which are continuations of past trends – that the nature of households is altering with fewer, smaller families, more people living alone and more older people with their own housing needs.

## Workforce

**2.17** The size of the resident workforce is projected to undergo a small increase from 294,000 in 2002 to 296,000 in 2006 before declining to 284,000 by 2016. The number of women in the workforce is projected to increase from 125,000 in 1998 to 129,000 in 2006 before falling to 122,000 in 2016, while the number of men in the workforce falls steadily from 169,000 in 2002 to 163,000 in 2016.



Photograph 2.2: Darlington Town Centre

**2.18** The proportion of over 45s in the work force is projected to increase steadily from 33% in 2002 to 37% in 2016, with a corresponding decrease in the under 45 age groups. The proportion of women in the workforce is projected to rise.

**2.19** The size of the workforce is, to some extent, fluid. Clearly, it is very much dependent on the number of people of working age, their age distribution, educational opportunities and the availability – or necessity – for early retirement. It is also dependent on the number of jobs available in the area. The number of jobs influences levels of inward or outward migration and commuting, it also influences people to enter and leave the workforce depending on their perceptions of the ease of acquiring a job.

chapter three

**A vision and strategy for sustainable development**

**Introduction**

3.1 The Tees Valley has experienced considerable economic, physical and social change over the last 20 years. Many of the traditional industries on which the local economy has depended – steel, shipbuilding, chemicals and railways – have declined in importance or disappeared altogether, leaving high unemployment rates and large areas of derelict and vacant land in the urban areas and along the banks of the River Tees. More positively, the area has seen much new growth, through the development of industrial estates and housing areas, investment in town centres and the expansion of the major road network. The River Tees is a unifying feature of the Tees Valley and has ecological significance both locally and internationally. Areas of high quality landscape have been protected and there has been a significant reduction in overall levels of air and water pollution.

3.2 The Tees Valley is a sub region of contrasts. It has some of the best and worst environments. It has nearly 1,000 hectares of derelict land and in contrast has thousands of hectares of high landscape value land and is on the fringes of the North York Moors National Park. The unemployment rate has been halved over 8 years but the rate remains more than the national average. Tees Valley has 95% of under 5 year olds in education compared with the national average of 64% but it remains one of the poorest performing sub- regions for GCSE results.



Photograph 3.1: Guisborough Priory

3.3 The next 20 years will also bring major changes to the built and natural environment of the Tees Valley, coupled with significant changes to the way in which people live, work and travel. The preparation of the Structure Plan presents a prime opportunity to develop a sustainable land-use framework which caters for these potential changes, while guiding new development to those areas which minimise the impact on the environment and afford opportunities for all to improve their quality of life.

**The Long Term Vision**

3.4 A clear, long term vision for the Tees Valley is of fundamental importance. Without a vision for the future, there is a danger of merely planning for short term trends. The vision is the driving force for the Plan, providing the values to be followed in the policies and giving direction in tackling the issues and trends that confront the Tees Valley.

3.5 New issues are now emerging and there are many challenges facing the Tees Valley as we move into the 21st century. It is timely therefore, given the recent review of local government in the area, to review the current strategic planning policies set out in the Cleveland and the Durham County Structure Plans. The new Tees Valley Structure Plan will set the direction for change over the next 15-20 years and beyond.

3.6 During formative consultations with interested parties it was widely accepted that ‘Sustainable Development’ should be the underlying theme of the Structure Plan. Therefore, the agreed vision for the Tees Valley has incorporated the concept of Sustainable Development as far as practicable. The overall vision for the Tees Valley Structure Plan is:

*“To meet the economic and social needs of the present generation, in a quality environment, without denying future generations at least the same opportunity”.*

The people of the Tees Valley area should have the best opportunities for work, housing, shopping and leisure. There should also be facilities for those with particular disadvantages to improve their quality of life. By 2016 the Structure Plan will have contributed to increasing the number of jobs available, speeding up the take up of employment land, bringing in new investment, reducing out migration, increasing social cohesion, improving the environment and transport choice and regenerating urban and rural areas in a sustainable way.

**3.7** The Tees Valley needs a future with an ecologically sound, aesthetically pleasing and pollution free environment, where development does not compromise the natural strengths and resources of the area. A good quality environment is essential and a healthy economy provides the best prospect for creating and maintaining an attractive environment. A high quality environment is more likely to stimulate further investment and encourage new employers to locate in the area.

**3.8** Improving the quality of life of people in the Tees Valley by creating a better physical environment, enhanced work opportunities and improved social and leisure facilities should encourage people in the younger age groups to remain in the area. We should seek to establish a living countryside with thriving rural communities and high quality services. We should also look towards a future where access is provided by an effective, environmentally friendly transport system and where there is efficient use of all resources. Particular consideration has been given in this Structure Plan to the effects of the policies on those people who are most disadvantaged when it comes to access to employment opportunities and quality of life. Where possible the policies have been prepared to include the socially excluded. This vision is summarised diagrammatically in Figure 3.1.

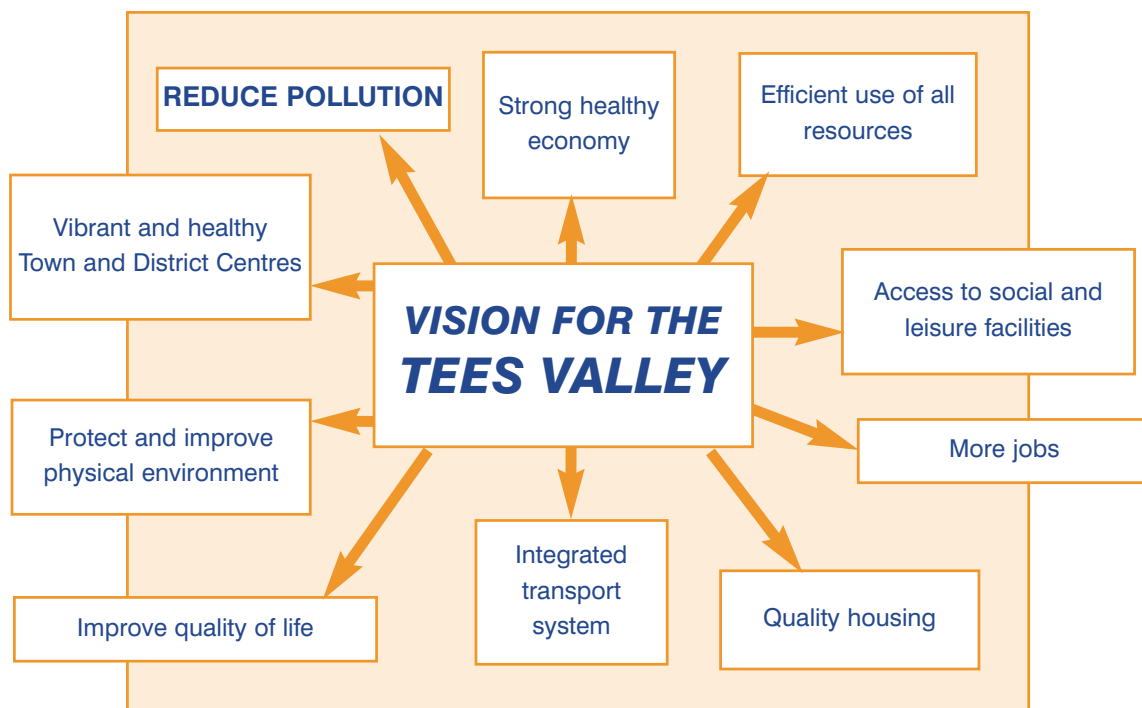
### Aims for the Tees Valley

**3.9** Strategic aims have been developed in response to the vision. They convey in more detail, what the Structure Plan is trying to achieve. Each aim should not be considered in isolation, as the attainment of any one, may impinge upon the achievement of another. From each aim stems a series of objectives which are highlighted further within the chapters.

#### Regeneration

**3.10** A key aim of the Plan is to improve quality in the Tees Valley; quality of housing, environment and of life. The Plan's policies for regeneration and sustainable development set the overarching framework for the rest of the Plan. The aim for regeneration is to improve those areas where the social and physical fabric is deteriorating. The plan encourages maximising the reuse of previously developed land, the renovation and refurbishment of existing buildings and the reclamation and reuse of derelict land. This means identifying the worst physical and social aspects of the environment and setting priorities for their improvement and enhancement. This will involve for instance, enhancing the employment prospects of the unemployed, encouraging the renovation and reuse

Figure 3.1:  
A Vision for the Tees Valley



of land and building stock, and steering investment and resources to areas of greatest need, reducing social and economic disparity. Land use policy is insufficient alone to tackle regeneration. However many agencies have formed, or are forming local partnerships to tackle a wide range of issues within deprived areas of the Tees Valley. In rural areas there are additional problems of declining services, poor public transport and weak local economies. The Plan encourages local employment opportunities through farm diversification, maintenance of existing bus routes, maintenance and re-instatement of services and the development of long-term initiatives such as Nunthorpe to Skelton railway extension.



Photograph 3.2: Stockton Town Hall

### The Economy

**3.11** The Structure Plan provides the strategic land use framework to guide development, including that which is needed to ensure a healthy economy for the Tees Valley. To contribute to this, the Plan will provide a range of land for industry and commerce, encourage the creation of employment opportunities within existing urban areas, support the present industrial base, and provide land for prestige employment development to encourage high tech and knowledge based businesses. The aim of the Plan is also to encourage the diversification of the rural economy and economic regeneration in rural areas. The aim is to facilitate economic activity while minimising the effect on environmental quality and social well

being. This means providing an appropriate range of sites for industry and commerce, encouraging initiatives which utilise existing infrastructure, and promoting the creation of employment opportunities within the existing urban area. Development that contributes towards a knowledge based economy is particularly encouraged.

**3.12** The Tees Valley Partnership is preparing an economic strategy for the next 20 to 25 years, which will accelerate the economic development of the Tees Valley. The Partnership (comprising the local authorities, the Learning and Skills Council, Business Link, Chamber of Commerce, Tees Valley Tomorrow, The Tees Forest Partnership, the universities and further education colleges, voluntary sector, trades unions and the health sector, One North East and Government Office for the North East) has the responsibility for developing the vision. The Tees Valley needs to create 26,000 new jobs, 8,000 new businesses, reduce the number of households receiving State Benefits by 23,000 and ensure 600 more pupils a year obtain 5 or more GCSEs at grades A to C.

**3.13** The Partnership's Vision is to build a confident and vibrant society, a competitive and stable economy and a liveable and inspiring environment. The Tees Valley Action Plan has been developed with the remit of helping to achieve the 6 key objectives of One North East's regional economic strategy, meeting the needs and aspirations of local stakeholders, and helping to ensure that the right climate and portfolio of strategic sites is in place for achieving an urban and rural renaissance in the Tees Valley. The Tees Valley Structure Plan has a vital role to play in helping to shape the physical enhancement of the environment, and its policy integration with other key strategies. The Tees Valley Vision represents a long term aspiration which will be achieved through the immediate action of all partners working together to ensure the renaissance of the Tees Valley.

### Environment

**3.14** The quality of the Tees Valley environment affects people who live and work in the area and can deter or attract potential visitors and investors. Environmental considerations are therefore fundamental to all policy areas addressed in the Plan. The Structure Plan will protect the best environmental features and areas from inappropriate development and where development



is appropriate, the Plan will ensure high standards of design and quality. Development should look good, be well designed, use quality materials and enhance its surroundings. It is important that new development makes an important contribution to the environment, as a good quality environment is more likely to stimulate further investment and encourage new employers to locate in the area. A good quality environment will also promote sustainability, biodiversity and an improved quality of life for local residents. The Plan will encourage maximising the reuse of previously developed land and buildings. The Plan aims to protect, sustain and enhance the countryside, coastline and urban environment while ensuring new development improves environmental quality. This covers areas such as reducing pressure on non-renewable resources, minimising air, water and land pollution, conserving and enhancing areas, buildings and sites given special protection, and maintaining and improving biodiversity by protecting and enhancing habitats.

#### Housing

**3.15** The Structure Plan needs to consider the amount of new housing required over the plan period, and give guidance on where it should be located. The Plan will ensure there is a range of good quality, well-designed housing available to meet the needs of small households, low income groups and the executive market. Full and effective use will be made of suitable land within existing urban areas to reduce the need to build on greenfield land with emphasis on the reuse of previously developed land. The Plan ensures that a range of housing land is available to meet changing requirements and that full and effective use of suitable land is made within the existing urban area. New housing sites must relate well to existing settlement patterns, be capable of being served by good public transport networks and not place excessive demands on service infrastructure. Efforts must be made to ensure that both existing and new communities in the Tees Valley have a good quality of life. This means providing an excellent standard of facilities and amenities such as open space, good public transport, shopping and community services.

#### Transport

**3.16** Transport policy is a key element in the overall development strategy. Good transport links and accessibility are essential to assist economic regeneration. They will influence the success of

other policy areas such as housing, town centres and shopping, economy, and so on. The aim therefore is to develop a safe, sustainable, environmentally friendly and efficient transport system which serves the needs of local residents, industry and commerce. The long term focus is to improve the rail network to provide a network of high quality, fast public transport links across the Tees Valley. This may involve a light rapid transport system, integrated with heavy rail infrastructure, the opening of new passenger stations, improvements to other sustainable transport modes and the construction of a new multi-modal crossing of the River Tees between South Bank and Port Clarence. The crossing will provide a direct link between both sides of the river and open up opportunities for developing on previously developed land. It could be a springboard for new development and regeneration opportunities, in particular in terms of future job creation. The Plan will encourage the use of more sustainable modes of transport, such as walking, cycling and public transport. It will encourage the transfer of freight from roads to more sustainable modes. It will guide development to areas which are presently served by public transport or can be served by public transport in the future and ensure that the transport system is accessible to all. The Plan will also aim to improve rural transport.

#### Town Centres and Shopping

**3.17** Town and district centres have a mix of land uses, are accessible by a variety of modes of transport and are important employment centres; however they are underpinned by their retail function. The town and district centres in the Tees Valley serve an important social and economic function. Town and district centres provide jobs in shops, offices and other services as well as being a focus for shopping, social, leisure and cultural facilities. Vibrant and healthy town and district centres are important to the quality of life in the area. The aim is to maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of the town and district centres, strengthening the role of the main settlements as the principal shopping and service centres. The Plan encourages major retail, leisure and office developments to locate in town centres. This means ensuring that everyone has convenient access to a wide choice of shopping, leisure and other facilities. The Plan also encourages the retention of rural shops and services. By providing a wide range of readily accessible facilities, town

and district centres encourage the use of public transport, reducing emissions of carbon dioxide and other pollutants. Encouraging the location of new development where a choice of transport mode is available, makes sure that town and district centres are accessible by all forms of transport.

#### Leisure, Recreation and Tourism

**3.18** Recent years have seen a big increase in the demand for leisure facilities and this is expected to continue in the future. Tourism is an activity which the local authorities in the area are keen to promote and a number of new attractions have been provided recently. The aim for leisure, recreation and tourism is therefore to encourage opportunities for leisure and the development of tourism facilities which are easily accessible to all. From this aim, sport, entertainment and cultural development will be encouraged in the town centres where appropriate, or elsewhere in the built up area. Also, catering for recreation in the countryside without damaging the environment, developing the potential of the River Tees and coast and developing a tourist industry which benefits the local economy, and maintains and enhances the environment are also of paramount importance.

#### Energy

**3.19** Energy has become an increasingly important issue. The Tees Valley Structure Plan is concerned with the location and effects of energy generating plant, and with methods to reduce the use of and conserve energy. The aim for energy in the Tees Valley is therefore to contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gases and to develop more energy efficient patterns of land use and development. This aim promotes minimising the demand for energy arising from new development, making provision for strategic energy development in appropriate locations and supporting opportunities for the use of renewable energy sources such as wind power.

#### Waste

**3.20** The Tees Valley Structure Plan has an important role to play in ensuring proper management of the waste arising in the Tees Valley. The aim is to minimise the environmental impact of waste. This means reducing the amount of waste produced, encouraging the reuse and recycling of waste, and ensuring the appropriate restoration and after-use of land used for waste treatment or disposal.

#### Minerals

**3.21** The Plan recognises the economic importance of mineral extraction but seeks both to protect the environment of the Tees Valley and meet national, regional or local needs for minerals. For minerals, the aim of the Structure Plan is to reduce the demand for primary minerals and encourage the use of secondary and recycled materials. From this aim a number of principles emerge, including enabling the provision of a suitable contribution to the Regional mineral need that accords with National and Regional Guidance, ensuring that land taken for minerals operations is reclaimed at the earliest opportunity and is capable of an acceptable, beneficial after-use and preventing the unnecessary sterilisation of mineral resources. The greater the recycling and use of secondary aggregates, then the smaller the demand for primary aggregates. As the aim states, we wish to maximise the former and minimise the latter.

#### Resources and Infrastructure

**3.22** Finally, although there is not an actual chapter on resources and infrastructure, the Structure Plan has an aim relating to this that applies to all areas of the Plan. The aim is to make the most effective use of existing resources and infrastructure. This will include the reuse of previously developed land and buildings. This means maximising the use of existing facilities in order to reduce the demand for new facilities and to ensure that new developments are planned around existing facilities and infrastructure in the most cost-effective and environmentally friendly manner.



Photograph 3.3:  
Hartlepool Art Gallery

#### Sustainable Development and the Tees Valley

**3.23** The term “Sustainable Development” emerged during the 1980’s as part of the response to major concerns over population growth, resource depletion and global environmental issues. In 1987, the World Commission on Environment and Development put forward a definition of

sustainable development which has since become the bench-mark by which all new contributions to the understanding of sustainable development have been judged;

*“Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”.*

**3.24** In the years that have followed the penning of this definition, a succession of Government papers and guidance have helped develop the UK’s approach to delivering sustainable development. In September 1990, the Government published a comprehensive strategy for the environment in the White Paper, “This Common Inheritance”. This included many specific targets and objectives for policies in different areas, and progress on these, has been reported annually. In 1994 the Government published “Sustainable Development – The UK Strategy”. This document was structured differently from its predecessors, to emphasise the key elements of sustainable development and to explain the new processes and implementation arrangements. The UK Strategy explained that sustainable development aims to reconcile two objectives;

- achieving economic development to secure higher standards of living, now and for future generations.
- protecting and enhancing the environment, now and for our children.

**3.25** Further analysis of these objectives shows that there are three main elements to sustainable development: economic growth, environmental protection and social development. The analogy of a “three-legged stool” is often used, for without the presence of all three elements, sustainable development can never be achieved.

**3.26** The new administration has reiterated this commitment to sustainable development and there has been a renewed impetus to raise awareness and move the UK towards more sustainable forms of development. In May 1999 the Government published a revised UK Strategy for Sustainable Development, ‘A Better Quality of Life’. This strategy recognises that economic growth must contribute to our quality of life, rather than degrading it, and ensure that we can all share in the benefits. The four broad aims upon which the strategy is based are:

- Social progress which recognises the needs of everyone
- Effective protection of the environment
- Prudent use of natural resources
- Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment

**3.27** The Tees Valley Structure Plan will embrace these broad objectives and develop policies which accord with the philosophy of sustainable development. Within the limits of strategic land-use planning, this Plan will provide a framework for the future, which is not only in the best interest of the Tees Valley, but also contributes to addressing global concerns about the environment and resource depletion.

**3.28** The main emphasis of the Structure Plan, concerning sustainable development principles, is regeneration, and maximising the reuse of previously developed land. However some greenfield development will be required. Where greenfield development is required, development will be encouraged on sites on the edge of urban areas and along public transport corridors which is consistent with the sequential approach advocated in national planning guidance.

**3.29** The concept of sustainable development provides the all important link between the Structure Plan’s Vision, Aims and Objectives and the Strategy (see figure 3.2). The vision symbolises the society which could evolve as a result of following sustainable development principles. The aims, which stem from the vision, set out in more detail the main issues which must be addressed in order to achieve sustainable development in the Tees Valley. In practice it will mean creating jobs on previously used or derelict land, providing houses in locations which give good access to a range of facilities, services and job opportunities and protecting the countryside from inappropriate development. It is the aspiration of the Structure Plan to seek simultaneous achievement of economic, social and environmental objectives. However the Plan recognises that in practice decisions about where development is located may involve seeking an appropriate balance between the three objectives. It will also mean making difficult decisions and providing guidance on the appropriate balance between the requirement for new jobs, the importance of protecting the environment and ensuring social equity.

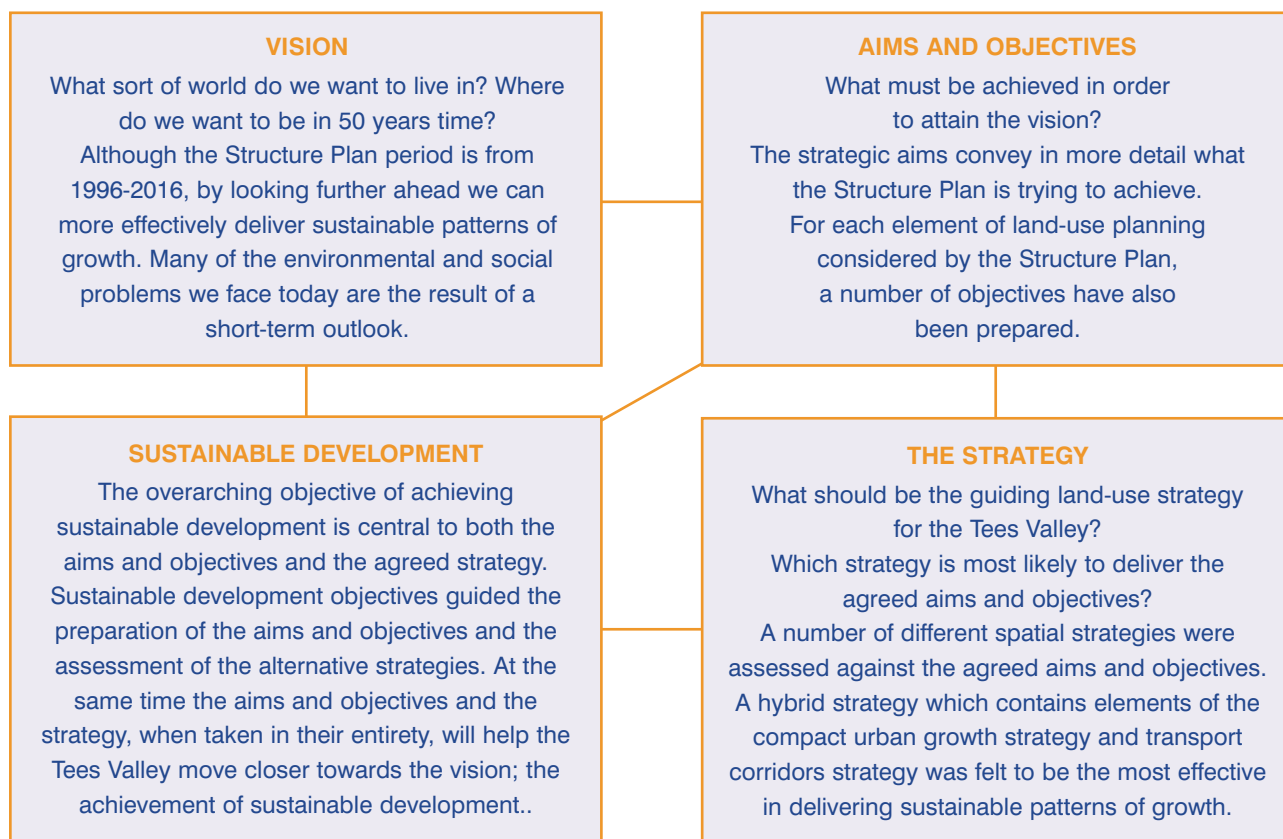


Figure 3.2:  
Sustainable Development and the Conceptual Relationship Between the Vision, Aims and Objectives and Strategy

### Sustainable Development Policy

**3.30** In addition to the subject specific policies in Chapters 4 – 12, it is appropriate to provide sustainable development policies that apply to all forms of development. These provide a framework for the development of other policies and show the commitment of the five Borough Councils of the Tees Valley to achieving sustainable development.

#### SUS1

New development proposals in the Tees Valley must make a positive contribution to all three strands of sustainable development, namely enhancing environmental quality, social well-being and economic prosperity.

**3.31** New developments can make a positive contribution towards achieving sustainable development. This may be through good access to public transport, building design which reduces energy consumption or locational decisions which enable people to live and work in close proximity. Policy SUS1 aims to ensure that new development moves towards, rather than away from, sustainable development by considering proposals against the three legs of sustainable development i.e. environmental, economic and social. When proposals produce overall benefits under all three headings then that development will be sustainable. Where not all of the objectives can be met, unavoidable adverse impacts should be mitigated or compensated.

**3.32** The policy above outlines the over-arching Structure Plan approach that will help to move towards more sustainable patterns of development in the Tees Valley. Further criteria may emerge over the plan period in addition to those listed in the policy. The policy will inform the difficult planning decisions that need to be made, within a framework that considers the wider picture. It will also enable the achievement of all the Plan's key aims and objectives. Sustainable development and

regeneration are the guiding principles behind the Structure Plan, and these principles have been fully integrated across all the topics covered in the Plan.

## SUS2

The Tees Valley authorities, through their local plans, development control decisions and partnership activities, will

- i) encourage physical and social regeneration in urban and rural areas;
- ii) give preference to the development of brownfield sites, and prevent the unnecessary use of greenfield sites;
- iii) promote the re-use of vacant land and buildings;
- iv) make best use of existing infrastructure, services and amenities;
- v) encourage development in locations which minimise the need for travel and can be well served by public transport;
- vi) encourage the creation of new employment opportunities close to areas of high unemployment;
- vii) provide accessible opportunities for recreation, education, employment and public services;
- viii) maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of town and district centres;
- ix) protect and enhance the quality and character of the built and natural environment;
- x) conserve the use of natural resources and encourage the generation of power from renewable energy sources;
- xi) minimise pollution to land, air and water; and
- xii) reduce the amount of waste produced and encourage reuse and recycling.

**3.33** The policy needs to be viewed against a number of assumptions which set the context in which it will operate. These assumptions are explained more fully in later sections of the Plan, but are briefly summarised below:

- i) decline of 3% in total population from 657,000 in 1996 to 638,000 in 2016;

- ii) continued reduction in the rate of net outward migration loss;
- iii) changing age structure of the population with more elderly people and fewer children;
- iv) increase in the overall number of households by some 20% requiring an extra 33,500 new houses (including replacements for demolitions);
- v) land already identified for about 18,000 new houses;
- vi) an increase in jobs, with a smaller workforce and lower unemployment;
- vii) household car ownership will continue to increase;
- viii) a modest increase in traffic volume is anticipated leading to more congestion on the roads, particularly at peak periods and in certain locations; and
- ix) a need to address climate change through the reduction in greenhouse gases.

**3.34** Although the Structure Plan is able to give strategic guidance on the general location and mix of development it is for the local plans to provide the detailed policies for individual sites. It is possible to consider sustainability issues at the strategic and local level, with the Structure Plan being able to ensure that large scale new developments make best use of existing infrastructure and minimise environmental degradation through locating in less sensitive areas. Local plans are able to promote the most efficient use of individual sites, ensuring close interaction between different land uses and maximising the potential for sustainable living. In keeping with this distinction, policy SUS2 provides sustainable development guidance to the Tees Valley authorities in preparing their local plans and making development control decisions. It aims to encourage a more sustainable approach towards the way in which we live, work and travel.

### Urban and Rural Regeneration

**3.35** The regeneration of both urban and rural areas and the need to create an inclusive society underpins the sustainable approach of the Plan. Many policies contribute to this objective but the need to break into the cycle of urban deprivation requires a concerted effort from local authorities, local residents and other organisations working in partnership.

**3.36** The re-use of derelict land and maximising the re-use of previously developed land and buildings is a priority. This applies to uses such as employment and leisure as well as housing development. It is estimated that there should be scope for about 7,000 additional houses to be built within the urban areas.

**3.37** Priority is to be given to identifying and removing development constraints in existing industrial areas, and improving the environment in the more run down industrial and commercial estates. Detailed studies will be needed to help realise the opportunities that undoubtedly exist, including for example the Middlesbrough/Stockton axis, derelict land along the River Tees and regeneration in Hartlepool. Regeneration areas have been identified in the following general locations: East Cleveland, Darlington, Hartlepool and the built up area of Teesside. A number of initiatives are already underway in the Tees Valley, for example the redevelopment of the area surrounding Middlesbrough Docks at Middlehaven, an emerging initiative for leisure and recreation upstream of the Tees Barrage, the development of a new business park at Queen's Meadow, Hartlepool and the Darlington Gateway (comprehensive enhancement and improvements of key sites along the entrances to Darlington).

**3.38** Established town and district centres provide a focus for shopping, business and leisure activities and they are easily accessible by public transport. Their vitality and viability must therefore be maintained and strengthened with greater priority being given to developments within town and district centres rather than other locations.

**3.39** The regeneration of urban areas will help to ensure that housing and industry remain in close proximity and provide the opportunity for shorter journeys to work. Public transport, and facilities for cycling and walking, will be improved. Priority will be given to buses along certain routes and there are opportunities to improve the rail network.

**3.40** Traffic management and traffic calming schemes will help to encourage alternative forms of transport and will contribute towards managing the demand for car use by restricting road capacity.

**3.41** In the more remote rural areas there are additional problems of declining services, poor public transport, farm mergers, and a weak local economy. The Structure Plan should help to

provide local employment opportunities, assist agricultural diversification and bring new life and activity to rural communities without harming the countryside and natural environment.

#### **REG1**

**Local authorities and other stakeholders should work together to tackle the problems of urban decay through a co-ordinated programme, including proposals to redevelop and regenerate the rundown areas and to improve the environment.**

**3.42** One of the key objectives of the regional economic strategy is to accelerate the renaissance of the North East. It states that "the region's renaissance will be based on integrated physical and social investment within a clear long term framework, led by the local authorities. It must draw on the resources of all sectors: public, private business and voluntary. The renaissance will be achieved by:

- establishing local regeneration frameworks;
- improving communities;
- investing in sustainable neighbourhoods;
- seeking a rural renaissance; and
- investing in flagship projects"  
*(Pg.72 of the Regional Economic Strategy).*

**3.43** The five Tees Valley local authorities, One NorthEast and English Partnerships recognise that there is an urgent need to speed up the regeneration of the Tees Valley so that towards the end of the plan period the Tees Valley sub-region no longer has the high levels of deprivation, unemployment and social problems which have characterised parts of the area over the last 25 years.

**3.44** It is vital that the Tees Valley has co-ordinated local regeneration frameworks at the sub-regional and local level. At the sub-regional level, the key agencies have worked together to set up the Tees Valley Partnership comprising the five local authorities, the private sector, the voluntary sector, the health service, trade unions, the universities, the colleges of further education, the Learning and Skills Council, the Small Business Service, Government Office-North East, One NorthEast, the Countryside Agency, the Forestry Commission and the Tees Forest Partnership to provide a more

effective strategic approach to encourage the economic development and regeneration of the Tees Valley.

**3.45** The Tees Valley Partnership is developing a Vision for the Tees Valley which all the partners can support. One NorthEast, English Partnerships and the five Tees Valley authorities are currently contributing £750,000 towards the preparation of the Vision which when completed in 2002 will become the economic development and regeneration strategy for the Tees Valley. The proposed Tees Valley Regeneration Company will be responsible for the implementation of the property development and economic regeneration elements of the Vision with the Tees Valley Partnership dealing with the social elements of the Vision appropriate to the sub-regional level.

**3.46** At the local authority level, regeneration programmes are co-ordinated by the local strategic partnership (LSPs) in each borough. These LSPs will bring together, at a local level, the different parts of the public sector as well as the private, business, community and voluntary sectors so that different initiatives, programmes and services support each other and work together. These partnerships operate at a Borough-wide level which enables strategic decisions to be taken and are close enough to individual neighbourhoods to allow actions to be determined at the community level.

**3.47** The Tees Valley Structure Plan is a key part of the regeneration framework in that it translates the regeneration strategies of the various agencies and partnerships in the Tees Valley into a strategic land use and transportation framework. Concerted effort from many agencies, forming local partnerships, are tackling a whole range of issues within the most deprived areas of Tees Valley. The five local authorities are actively involved in initiatives such as SRB, Health Action Zones, Education Action Zones, Neighbourhood Renewal Areas, New Deal for Communities and Rural Development Areas.

#### **REG2**

Proposals for new development, redevelopment, diversification and enterprise which tackle the combined social, physical and economic problems of the rural areas will be encouraged.

**3.48** In the rural areas, the main issues include access to employment opportunities, affordable housing, access to community facilities, and maintaining the viability of the agricultural industry. A prosperous rural economy is of fundamental importance. Without an adequate employment base it becomes difficult to sustain the social fabric of rural communities. Indigenous and locally developed industry and business often provide the majority of employment opportunities, but there may also be scope for the development of enterprises which utilise new technology. With regard to the underlying problem of accessibility, the local authorities will need to ensure the provision of an efficient network of public transport. The maintenance of existing bus routes, the re-opening of former services and the development of long-term initiatives such as the Guisborough to Skelton railway extension will all help enable residents in rural communities to access opportunities in nearby villages and towns. This, combined with policies and programmes to ensure the provision of a range of housing types, will address the problems of a disadvantaged rural population. The Rural Development Area (RDA) designation in East Cleveland is playing a major part in the regeneration of this area.

**3.49** Agriculture remains the principal element in the rural economy. The character of the countryside is largely dependent on the nature of farming activity. Structural changes in farming in recent years however, now make it difficult to earn a satisfactory income solely from agriculture. Many farms are only marginally viable. Ultimately this could have serious implications for the character and appearance of the countryside.

#### **Spatial Strategy**

**3.50** As described earlier in this chapter (Para. 3.35) the regeneration of both urban and rural areas and the creation of an inclusive society underpins the sustainable approach to the Plan. In land use terms, this involves the reuse of previously developed land, especially land which is derelict or under used. In spatial terms, this type of land is concentrated within existing urban areas. The spatial strategy, therefore, attempts to guide the majority of future development to within existing urban areas. However, it is not practical, nor desirable, to develop exclusively within the urban area and so a number of options were evaluated to accommodate the new development which will be located beyond the existing urban area. All

alternatives took as their starting point that the majority of future development would be within existing urban areas and the options relate to the locations of the remainder of development.

**3.51** Six alternative spatial strategies were considered for future new development which may be required outside the existing urban areas:

- **Compact Urban Growth:** concentrate development on the edge of existing urban areas
- **Selected Settlements:** development on the edge of certain larger settlements
- **Transport Corridors:** development along major public transport corridors
- **New Settlement:** development of a major new settlement in the countryside beyond existing urban areas
- **Conurbation Growth:** concentrate development on extending the Teesside conurbation, principally in two directions – towards Darlington and towards Hartlepool
- **Market Led:** developers preferences – likely to lead to dispersed development throughout the rural areas and villages

**3.52** The above strategies were tested against the Structure Plan's aims and objectives, existing policies for the protection of environmental quality and the major physical constraints in the Tees Valley. The first three spatial strategies performed well against the Plan's aims and objectives, which incorporate the principles of sustainable development. It was also found that a new settlement could be sustainable once it attained a certain size and mix of uses, but was not considered to be an appropriate solution for the Tees Valley. A new settlement would be relatively close to the existing conurbation and main built-up areas and would inevitably perform a commuter/dormitory town function. The conurbation growth and market led strategies were not considered to be consistent with the principles of sustainable development and were rejected. The selected settlement strategy performed well in areas such as East Cleveland, where there is a relatively even spread of settlements and associated facilities. However, as there is little need for major development in the rural areas of the Tees Valley this strategy was ultimately rejected. The compact urban growth strategy has the potential to be close to the existing infrastructure, services and amenities and could

encourage the creation of new employment opportunities close to areas of high unemployment. It could also reduce the length of journeys compared to the other strategies. The transport corridors strategy would enable, and support, the use of public transport and, if combined with the compact urban growth strategy, it would help refine that strategy and make it even more sustainable.

**3.53** The preferred strategy combines development on the edge of the existing urban areas of Darlington, Hartlepool and Teesside, with locations along major public transport corridors. The new strategy is to be named Sustainable Urban Growth. Further locational details for major new development are as follows.

#### **STRAT1**

The majority of future development will be located in urban areas with preference given to:

- i) previously developed sites within urban areas, particularly along the Tees Corridor between the A66 crossing in Stockton-on-Tees and the Tees Barrage and between Teesport and the Tees Barrage; and
- ii) in the town and district centres listed in policy TC3.

In the event that such areas yield insufficient capacity then development will be located along public transport corridors on the edge of the Teesside conurbation, Darlington or Hartlepool.

Proposals must satisfy the sustainability criteria set out in policy SUS2.

**3.54** The target for the proportion of housing development to be provided on previously developed land and through the conversion of existing buildings is 60% over the period 1998-2016. New strategic housing allocations will be needed in Stockton-on-Tees and Middlesbrough. In Darlington, Hartlepool and Redcar and Cleveland, non-strategic housing sites may be identified in local plans on the edge of the towns with good public transport to the town centres. In Middlesbrough, to maintain green wedges the only direction for new development adjacent the town is to the south. In Stockton the main location should be to the west of the town.



**3.55** A large area to the south west of Stockton will be identified as suitable for one or two major investment industrial projects. Priority will be given to the development of existing previously developed sites which are capable of being served by public transport.

**3.56** To maintain the nature conservation and scenic value of the Tees Valley, policies are included in the Plan to safeguard designated Special Protection Areas (SPAs), RAMSAR Sites, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Heritage Coast and Special Landscape Areas. The Plan's conservation policies for these areas will minimise the potential adverse impact of new development and help to retain the overall attractiveness of the Tees Valley area. The Plan also identifies green wedges between individual areas to maintain local identity and provide opportunities for recreation. These areas will contribute to the creation of the Tees Forest, which provides for countryside management on the urban fringe in association with additional tree planting.

**3.57** As traffic levels increase the Tees crossings will become more congested. A corridor will be reserved for another Tees crossing in the Port Clarence/South Bank areas to link the existing Middlesbrough/Redcar rail line with an existing/potential link through Seal Sands and on to Hartlepool. The possibility of this additional crossing incorporating a road needs further investigation. Other potential rail links which should be safeguarded include the route to Guisborough and then on to Saltburn via Skelton.

**3.58** For businesses to prosper, efficient movement of freight by road, rail, sea and air is essential. The use of rail and short sea shipping will be encouraged to reduce the environmental impact of heavy goods vehicles, and new developments will be encouraged to connect into the rail network where appropriate. Further development at Teesside Airport for freight and passengers will be encouraged, and there is further potential for port-related development along the Tees and in Hartlepool.

**3.59** An essential part of the Plan's regeneration theme is to improve the vitality and viability of established town centres. Therefore, new office, retail, leisure, entertainment and cultural facilities will be directed to the area's main centres. A hierarchy of centres is identified, with Middlesbrough and Darlington being sub regional

centres, and Stockton, Hartlepool and Redcar being major town centres. The sub regional centres identified in this Plan are expected to accommodate the largest scale of development.

**3.60** The need to conserve energy and resources is a central theme of sustainable development. Therefore, the Plan directs new energy generating development to the most appropriate locations and gives positive guidance on such renewable energy schemes as wind farms. Gaining further value from waste is also a key element of sustainability, hence, policies are included in the Plan to encourage reduced levels of waste production, recycling and energy recovery.

#### Strategy for Rural Areas

##### **STRAT2**

**The nature and scale of development in rural areas should sustain balanced rural communities. Development should be within the rural service centres which should be defined in local plans, or additionally where business development associated with farm diversification is involved, within an established complex of rural buildings. In all cases, development must be appropriate to the scale and character of the service centre of the particular location.**

**3.61** In rural areas, many people are forced to travel to the main urban areas for employment, recreation, shopping and other services. Limited public transport provision encourages the use of the private car, increasing congestion on rural roads and further threatening the viability of public transport. Those without a car experience poor access to many everyday facilities and employment opportunities.

**3.62** In recognition of these difficulties, this policy encourages the development of balanced rural communities, where the employment opportunities, level of local service provision and range of housing enable people to live and work in rural areas, without the need for excessive travel. However, the scale of future development should not diminish the inherent character of rural areas.

## chapter four

### Economy

#### Introduction

**4.1** The concept of sustainable development requires that economic development is integrated with environmental and social benefit. This means that the creation of new employment opportunities should be undertaken within a framework that aims to foster a high quality living and working environment.

**4.2** Although the Structure Plan cannot on its own achieve the desired levels of economic activity, it has an important role to play in identifying appropriate locations for future development. The Regional Economic Strategy for the North East 'Unlocking Our Potential' sets a context for the Tees Valley Economic Strategy, which share the same key aims. The policies contained in the Structure Plan should be seen as complementing these strategies by allowing for sustainable economic development in the Tees Valley. The fundamental aim of the Tees Valley Economic Strategy is to enhance competitiveness by:

- i) Building the knowledge based economy;
- ii) Raising education and skill levels;
- iii) Realising opportunities in the sub-regional economy;
- iv) Combating social exclusion; and
- v) Regenerating the urban fabric;

#### Strategic Aim and Objectives

**4.3** The overall development strategy in the Tees Valley Structure Plan aims to build on the successful elements of the Cleveland and Durham Structure Plans. Concentrating development around and within the urban areas of the Tees Valley will remain a central theme. The development of brownfield land will be encouraged wherever it is appropriate and practical but not to such an extent that it causes town cramming. Employment development outside of the main urban areas will be concentrated along existing "Transport Corridors".

**4.4** The development strategy outlined above should encourage greater accessibility and a reduced need to travel by the private car. Some types of development will still need to be separated from other land uses (for example, potentially polluting and hazardous industries) but they should remain well related to the overall pattern of development. There will also be some forms of development that can only be located in certain areas, these include port related industries and those that require direct access to the River Tees.

**4.5** Although the development strategy is able to positively influence the general location, scale and type of new development that occurs over the next 20 years, it cannot immediately alter existing patterns of development or current allocations. As already indicated, virtually all the employment land that this plan makes provision for is already allocated in the five local plans that cover the Tees Valley. This reduces the need and scope to identify new areas of employment land that accord with the principles of sustainable development.

**4.6** More positively, many of the areas currently identified for employment purposes are in locations which are well related to the working population and that are well served, or have the potential to be well served, by public transport. Furthermore, many of the areas identified for employment use are brownfield sites and therefore the reclamation and development of these areas will help the Tees Valley achieve the targets which aim to reduce the percentage of greenfield site development. It is no coincidence that the areas allocated for employment use accord with the principles of sustainable development. The Compact Urban Growth strategy advocated by the Cleveland Structure Plan and Tees Plan before that, have ensured that employment land allocations are in locations which relate well to the existing urban fabric. Indeed, the central aims of the Compact Urban Growth strategy mirror in many respects those of sustainable development.

**4.7** It is in line with this commitment to create a more sustainable living and working environment that the Structure Plan will aim to:

*"Facilitate economic activity while minimising the effect on environmental quality and social well being".*

**4.8** In addition, and following on from this broad aim, the economic objectives of this Plan are to:

#### Urban Economy

- i) Provide an appropriate range of land for industry and commerce.
- ii) Encourage the creation of employment opportunities within existing urban areas.
- iii) Encourage initiatives which expand and utilise the present industrial base (including port, rail and airport-related activities) and diversify it.
- iv) Stimulate the knowledge based economy and improve links between local business and research institutions, by providing land for prestige employment development.

#### Rural Economy

- i) Diversify employment opportunities and protect, and where appropriate enhance, existing village facilities.
- ii) Protect the best and most versatile agricultural land from inappropriate development.

**4.9** The policies in this chapter address the aims and objectives identified above and provide a framework for the district planning authorities to prepare their local plan policies.

## Context

### National Guidance

**4.10** The national context to this chapter is provided by a series of Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs). Of particular relevance are PPG 4, Industrial and Commercial Development and Small Firms, and PPG 7, The Countryside- Environmental Quality and Economic and Social Development.

**4.11** PPG 4 defines sustainable development as catering for the nation's needs for commercial and industrial development, while respecting environmental objectives. In more recent policy statements from central Government (PPG 1 Revised, February 1997), the reclamation and reuse of brownfield land has emerged as an important supporting objective. The main role of the Structure Plan in achieving sustainable economic development is to ensure that sufficient land is

available in locations which are both attractive to business and accord with the philosophy of sustainable development.

**4.12** In relation to the rural environment (PPG 7), the Government's policies are based on ensuring both rural prosperity and the protection and enhancement of the character of the countryside. This will require a continuation of existing policies to protect the countryside for its own sake, but also new efforts to diversify the rural economy and encourage business activities which are not currently common place in the rural environment.

**4.13** The Government's White Paper 'Our Competitive Future' (DTI, 1998) sets out the role it and business need to play in improving the UK's competitiveness. The aim is to provide the right economic environment for business success, ensuring that policies and programmes are in place to help innovation and enable companies to meet the challenge of the knowledge driven economy. The Paper identifies a need for growth in small and medium sized enterprises and suggests the planning system should help to promote the needs of employment clusters.

**4.14** In November 2000, the Government published two White Papers relating to urban and rural areas. The Urban White Paper, "Our Towns & Cities: The Future" (DETR, 2000) sets out a new vision for urban living, which offers a high quality of life and opportunity for all. This means promoting an urban renaissance and, in terms of economic development, enabling all towns and cities to create and share prosperity by promoting an innovation and enterprise culture and encouraging private investment. It also aims to ensure that everyone has access to training and jobs as well as providing an efficient transport network.

**4.15** The Rural White Paper, "Our Countryside: The Future. A Fair Deal for Rural England" (DETR, 2000) sets out the Government's vision for the future of England's countryside. In terms of economic development it supports the role of market towns as key to rural economies and as appropriate locations for future growth. It aims to help farming and related industries become more competitive, diverse, modern and sustainable.

**4.16** In February 2001, the Government launched a new White Paper on enterprise, skills and innovation, "Opportunity for All in a World of Change" (DTI/DfEE, 2001). It sets out how

Government can help businesses and individuals anticipate and respond to change: working to equip individuals with the skills, abilities and know-how they need; building capacity in all communities and regions to grasp the opportunities; ensuring that investment occurs in the modern infrastructure needed to allow businesses and individuals to innovate and compete; increasing the possibilities for people to transform their ideas into successful businesses and ensuring markets operate effectively and fairly in the best interests of consumers; strengthening the European and global frameworks to maximise opportunity and wealth creation.

#### Regional Guidance

**4.17** Current Regional Planning Guidance for the Northern Region was first published in September 1993. It suggests that structure plans should continue to concentrate on the regeneration of existing urban areas, attracting employment opportunities to strengthen the economic base. In addition, it is important to achieve an increase in the range and quality of jobs available, to reduce unemployment and help create a self sustaining economy.

**4.18** Revised Draft Regional Planning Guidance for the North East was published in December 1999. It provides greater detail on the way in which land-use planning can achieve the dual objectives of strengthening the economy and protecting the environment. The guidance outlines the main element of the Regional Economic Strategy, which is to strengthen the competitive position of the North East. The Regional Economic Strategy, published in Autumn 1999, sets out six main priorities for the North East:

- i) creating wealth by building a diversified knowledge driven economy;
- ii) establish a new entrepreneurial culture;
- iii) build an adaptable highly skilled workforce;
- iv) place our universities and colleges at the heart of the North East economy;
- v) meet 21st century transport, communication and property needs; and
- vi) accelerate the renaissance of the North East.

**4.19** The draft Regional Planning Guidance emphasises the importance of future growth in small and medium sized enterprises and improving

skills and training in the regional workforce. It states development plans should encourage a broadening of the economic base by presenting opportunities for a wide variety of business development. In particular, new development opportunities should be promoted in those areas with concentrated social, physical and environmental problems, where they can help support a sustained programme of comprehensive regeneration. The framework provided by the Regional Planning Guidance will be used throughout this Plan to help justify the overall strategy as well as particular policies.

**4.20** A Public Examination into draft Regional Planning Guidance was held in June 2000 and Secretary of State published his changes to draft RPG in April 2001 for public consultation. The final version of RPG was published in November 2002.

#### Sustainable Development

**4.21** Chapter 3 explains the holistic approach to sustainable development being adopted by the Tees Valley Structure Plan. It recognises the importance of developing a self-sustaining local economy, which is able to support the social and environmental aspects of sustainable development.

**4.22** Achieving sustainable economic growth will not be easy. It will mean reducing the amount of greenfield site development, regenerating the existing urban areas and providing a wide range of employment opportunities accessible to all. The development of some greenfield land will be inevitable, but this should be in locations which minimise the need to travel and take advantage of existing infrastructure.

**4.23** The relationship between economic growth and a high quality environment should not be underestimated. Many companies seek to locate in attractive working environments and many businesses in the tourism industry rely on high quality environments to attract their visitors.

#### The Tees Valley Economy

**4.24** Since the 1960's there has been a rapid contraction in the traditional industries of iron and steel, heavy engineering and shipbuilding. This resulted in high unemployment, a downturn in the local economy, pockets of severe deprivation and the creation of large areas of derelict land. Although various economic and environmental initiatives

have been put forward to remedy the situation, much work still needs to be done.

**4.25** Unemployment in the Tees Valley remains a key issue. In August 2001 the number of claimants was 18,515, approximately 6.1% of the workforce and almost twice the national average of 3.2%. Indicators have also shown that high levels of deprivation exist within many areas of the Tees Valley. Average incomes are relatively low, the number of single parent households is above the national average and educational achievement remains below par. In contrast, some areas are very affluent. A national study found that 55% of the wards in the Tees Valley are amongst the 25% most deprived wards nationally, whilst 23% of its wards are amongst the 30% most advantaged areas nationally.

**4.26** Despite large areas being reclaimed by the Teesside Development Corporation, English Partnerships and the Borough Councils, areas of unsightly dereliction remain. There were approximately 820 hectares of derelict land remaining in the Tees Valley in 1998. A study commissioned by the Borough Councils of Hartlepool, Middlesbrough and Stockton looked at the development options for many derelict sites along the River Tees corridor. Conclusions from the study suggest that a central theme to the strategy must be to green large swathes of this poor quality land. This should help improve the initial perceptions people have of the Tees Valley and encourage investment.

**4.27** The economic regeneration of many areas within the Tees Valley has been supported by a wide range of capital grants and incentives. The whole of the Tees Valley is classified as being eligible for Objective 2 European Structural Fund support, and all five Boroughs also have Assisted Area status. Significant amounts of new investment have also been attracted through the Single Regeneration Budget and City Challenge. The Government-funded Teesside Development Corporation, which ceased operation in March 1998, has been responsible for many large scale developments along the banks of the River Tees and at the Marina in Hartlepool. Darlington has, in the past, been ineligible for much of this assistance, despite having areas which require the major input of public resources. Rural Development Area status in East Cleveland has contributed significantly to rural regeneration in this part of the Tees Valley area.

**4.28** The resources which are currently available to 'pump-prime' regeneration could be lost or decrease significantly in value over the next few years. This is likely to necessitate even more innovative methods of attracting investment to the Tees Valley, and focusing the development that is attracted, to the urban areas.

### Employment Structure and Future Prospects

**4.29** The level of economic activity during the Structure Plan period can have a significant influence on the demand for employment land. In general terms, the more prosperous the economy, the greater the demand for employment land. Also important, is the relative performance of the various sectors of the economy, as they have differing demands for land, in terms of amount, location, and type.

**4.30** Latest forecasts indicate that around 24,400 new jobs are likely to be created between 1997 and 2016. This growth will be characterised by an increase in the number of part-time employees (principally female), and those who are self-employed, with the growth in jobs being uneven between differing industrial and commercial sectors. In general, the size of the manufacturing sector is expected to remain constant, whilst growth is likely to occur within the service sector.

**4.31** The following brief analysis considers those sectors of the Tees Valley economy which are most active. These are the industries that are most likely to experience major expansion or contraction over the Structure Plan period. The figures quoted are taken from the Draft Tees Valley Economic Strategy (JSU 1999).

**4.32 Chemicals Industry:** The chemicals industry on Teesside produces at least 300 different chemicals and is hugely important to the sub-regional economy. Teesside is the hub of the United Kingdom's chemicals industry and is a global player in the industry. At present, there are 12,000 people directly employed in the industry with a further 25,000 people indirectly employed. There are approximately 40 chemicals companies operating on Teesside including many of the world's major chemicals companies such as ICI, BASF, BP/Amoco, Du Pont, Huntsman and Union Carbide. The industry on Teesside has an annual turnover of approximately £4bn.

**4.33** The chemicals industry on Teesside is dominated by the “heavy” chemicals sector such as petrochemicals. Growth in this sector on Teesside could be moderate if the external and internal conditions are right. Teesside has a number of strengths in this sector, in particular two pipelines – the Ekofisk oil pipeline and the CATS pipeline system. There is potential to upgrade the ethane, butane and propane found in the Ekofisk and CATS systems. Therefore the prospects for processing these components appear good. The prospects for growth in the base chemicals and polymers sector are also encouraging. Huntsman, who own several of the former ICI sites hope to encourage many of their customers to locate on Teesside.



Photograph 4.1: Chemicals Industry

**4.34** At the “light end” of the industry, ICI have moved almost wholesale towards the production of the higher added-value speciality chemicals. As well as ICI, there are also a number of other companies, which specialise in this type of chemical production. The future development of the chemicals industry in the Tees Valley depends upon making the area attractive for new investment by major chemicals companies, especially those already located in the area as well as those based elsewhere. The primary objective should be to underpin, and therefore retain the existing industry, and secondly to secure additional investment. This investment is expected to be between £670m and £1.85bn over the period 1999 to 2003 and is expected to create between 300 and 900 direct jobs and between 600 and 1,300 indirect jobs.

**4.35 Offshore Industry:** Teesside established itself as a centre for the offshore oil and gas industry on the foundations of skills and facilities laid by the shipbuilding, steel and chemicals industries. Teesside’s principal area of employment in the offshore industry was platform fabrication.

This sector has declined severely in the past few years due to lack of investment in the North Sea by oil and gas companies and low oil prices. As a result the industry both nationally and regionally, is in crisis. The extent of the over-capacity in the offshore construction industry is such that 11 UK yards were bidding for two contracts in the year 2000. Until the end of 1999, the offshore industry employed 3,500 workers on Teesside in three yards at Hartlepool, Middlesbrough and Port Clarence. Since then, all of these yards have closed.

**4.36** There are two sectors of the offshore industry where growth is forecast to occur. The first is in the manufacturing and installation of equipment for sub-sea oil and gas exploration and production. The other area that is expected to grow in the longer term is the decommissioning of offshore structures. Teesside has the expertise and the facilities to dismantle oil platforms, such as deep-water access and recycling facilities for high quality metals. However, Teesside will face severe competition for this work from the Humber, the Tyne, Scotland, Scandanavia and continental Europe. There is also forecast growth in offshore renewables generation. Long term investment and short-term aid from the government is needed to ensure that the industry survives on Teesside and can compete for decommissioning work.

**4.37 Steel Industry:** The steel industry has been an important component of the Tees Valley economy since the mid 1800’s and, despite going through periods of rationalisation and change, still is today. The Tees Valley is a global player in the steel industry. 5,000 people are directly employed in the industry at five locations – Redcar steelworks, Lackenby Beam Mill, Skinningrove Special Steels Mill, Hartlepool Pipe Mill and Stockton-on-Tees Pipe Mill.

**4.38** Since mid 1998, the global situation for the steel industry has deteriorated significantly. Corus (formerly British Steel and the Dutch firm Hoogovens) have made 2,000 steelworkers redundant in the UK. A further 1,200 jobs are expected to be lost in summer 2000. The hot rolling and combined mill facilities at Darlington and Lackenby No.2 Beam Mill have been closed since summer 1999. The crisis in the steel industry is a result of falling prices for steel, export dumping of unwanted steel especially in the Asian market, the strength of Sterling against other world currencies and over-capacity in production. The future of the steel industry in the Tees Valley is relatively secure for the short to medium term. Investment is being

made in upgrading and modernising plant at the Redcar blast furnace. One of the areas where growth will occur is in recycling of metals. Both national and regional forecasts show employment and output growth in this sector, and the synergy between the iron and steel industry, recycling, the offshore sector and engineering could provide opportunities across the Tees Valley.

**4.39 Electronics:** The electronic sector is a relative newcomer to the Tees Valley economy compared with the traditional industries. The industry in the Tees Valley can be separated into four key areas:

- Electronic components and materials;
- Information Technology products;
- Consumer electronics; and
- Instrumentation and electronic control systems.

The Tees Valley has seen major investment by foreign, mainly Far-Eastern, companies such as Samsung who employed 1,450 people on two sites at Wynyard and Billingham. Other companies have located to the area in order to service Samsung. These are Yung Shin (Haverton Hill) and Woo One (Hartlepool). Plans for expansion of the Samsung site at Wynyard, which would have raised the workforce to 4,000, were shelved because of the crisis in the Asian economy and the world electronics market, and the Wynyard site has recently closed. Future prospects for the electronics industry in the Tees Valley can be described as moderate. The best prospects for the industry lie in electronic components and instrumentation and electronic control systems sectors rather than the IT products or consumer electronics sectors because they are the sectors where the majority of the indigenous companies can be found.

**4.40 Business Services:** Within the services sector the biggest growth area over the next 15 years is projected to be business and financial services. A proportion of this growth will be the result of key industries looking to concentrate on their core activities, and outsourcing non-core services. Nevertheless, the main opportunities for growth in the Tees Valley appear to lie in the provision of services for multi-media technologies, accountancy, tax, legal and advertising services and the call centre market. However, investment in training and retraining is needed in business management and Information Technology (IT) skills.

**4.41 The Knowledge Based Economy:** 35,600 people are employed in service sector jobs and companies, which can be described as knowledge-based jobs and industries, whilst only 1,350 are employed in knowledge-based manufacturing. Approximately 16% of jobs in the Tees Valley are knowledge-based industries, above the regional average of 13.7%, but below the national average of 20%. Although the state of knowledge based jobs in manufacturing is low, numbers have risen sharply in the 1990's, increasing by 150%. Between 1995 and 1999 most of the service sector jobs have been associated with call centres, telecommunications, consultancy, engineering and the construction of offshore process plants. In the manufacturing element, companies are mostly engaged in Research and Development (R&D) in the process industries, electronic assembly, microwave ovens and advanced process control systems. Both Teesside University and Durham University's Stockton Campus are expected to play a major part in the development of knowledge based industries in the Tees Valley. The following issues are seen as crucial to the further expansion of the knowledge based economy:

- entrepreneurship;
- an educated, skilled and motivated workforce
- information and communication;
- innovation, R&D and technology transfer; and
- collaboration.

#### Information and Communications Technologies

**4.42** The role of ICTs and their applications have become increasingly important as they have an impact on nearly all aspects of social and economic activity. Informatics now pervades all sectors in terms of e-mail, Internet Services and Research and Development. The location of activities is now less important due to the advances in communications technologies. Therefore it is vital that the Tees Valley grasps the opportunities presented by informatics, which include:

- Improving the Tees Valley's competitiveness and its businesses;
- Improving community access to ICT;
- Improving the quality of life;
- Increasing the number of knowledge-based businesses; and
- Raising the Tees Valley's profile for inward investment.

**4.43** The Tees Valley Informatics Strategy issued by the Tees Valley Informatics Partnership in 1998 sets out key objectives for each sector in the sub-region (business, education and communities and people) as key priorities for action in order to address the ICT needs of each of the sectors. Overall the strategy aims to ensure that the Tees Valley grasps those opportunities offered by the growth of ICT and to put the area at the forefront of the Information Age. Developing ICT access across the board will ensure that the Tees Valley is dynamic and flexible, which will allow for continual change.

**4.44** The Tees Valley, with the exception of the rural areas, is now well served by telecommunications and cable infrastructure. There are now many e-mail and Internet providers located in the area and the massive growth in the Internet has meant that many of the Tees Valley's businesses and organisations now have their own web sites/pages. As a marketing and electronic commerce tool, the Internet is having an impact on new business growth and the ability to generate new customers and develop new trading links. While the take-up of ICT technologies varies across the sub-region, general awareness is growing and the level of ownership of the equipment is increasing. However, the levels of understanding of the benefits of the new technologies is still low. There are a number of organisations which help businesses and other groups by offering advice or sign-posting services to them on ICTs such as TVIP, Tees Valley Learning and Skills Council and the Small Business Service.

**4.45** There are several key issues facing the Tees Valley in this sector. The first issue is to emphasise the importance for business to develop a greater understanding and adoption of ICTs in their strategic business plans as well as a core of business processes. Secondly, there needs to be more encouragement of inward investment by high-technology firms and to increase the levels of Research and Development activity in this area. The third of these issues is the need to invest in training (and retention of) staff in Information Technology skills in order to bring those skills to the workplace or the classroom for the benefit of the wider community. Another issue is the need to further raise the awareness of the applications and the benefits of ICTs in teaching, learning and in society generally. Finally there needs to be recognition of the importance to schools and other educational/training establishments to have Internet access and web presence

## Employment Land Availability

**4.46** The provision of employment land is a key way in which local authorities can seek to promote economic development and reduce outward migration. It is important that this provision recognises the changing nature of the national and local economy and that sufficient land is available of the right quality and in the most sustainable locations, to meet anticipated rates of development. In providing a range of quality locations, the Structure Plan can also contribute to the key economic development priorities set out at regional and sub-regional levels. The Regional Economic Strategy identifies potential for 'employment clusters' in the North East. This approach is supported in principle by the Structure Plan, which provides for the reinforcement of the existing chemical industry cluster, as well as providing opportunities for the further development of clusters for the logistics and food and drink industries.

**4.47** Unfortunately, it is impossible to predict with accuracy, many of the changes in the national and local economy which will influence the demand for employment land. New firms will open, some will close and many will expand or contract. This will lead to demand for new land in some circumstances, or it may mean more land becomes disused or derelict. The anticipated growth of the service sector is also likely to raise some interesting land use issues. Some of the companies from this sector will seek land on business parks while others may be encouraged to locate in the town centres and on other land not specifically identified for employment purposes.

**4.48** It is partly in response to this uncertainty that the Tees Valley Structure Plan identifies significantly more employment land than anticipated rates of development would appear to justify. Successive development plans for the Teesside area have made provision for large areas of employment land to cater for the projected high levels of economic growth. In reality, this growth has not occurred and the legacy of over-provision has resulted in large areas of land being allocated for employment purposes, with limited prospects of future development.

**4.49** The analysis of industrial land which may be suitable for re-allocation has been undertaken prior to drafting the Structure Plan. However, no sites of strategic importance were identified as



being suitable. The main constraint to de-allocation is the limited scope for re-allocation to an alternative use. The areas of land usually suggested for de-allocation are often poor quality and therefore unlikely to be developed for any other purpose. The proximity to potentially polluting and hazardous industry means that Health and Safety restrictions are another major barrier to the development of alternative uses, especially housing. The Tees Valley Structure Plan has therefore adopted a long-term stance. Although many of the sites are unlikely to be developed during the Plan period, their development by employment generating activities is likely to remain the most appropriate use. This should not prevent brownfield sites being “greened” in the interim. The planting of trees or other initiatives aimed at improving environmental quality is fully supported by this Plan.

**4.50** The five Local Plans that cover the Tees Valley area have allocated about 2700 hectares of land for employment uses. However, about 540 hectares of this land are not currently available but reserved by existing companies, mainly in the chemical and steel industries for their own future development. Another 1,200 hectares of land require significant investment to bring them forward for development and are only available in the long term. This leaves about 870 hectares of land which is available immediately or could be made available within 12 months.

Table 4.1 - Employment Land Availability in the Tees Valley (Ha)

	Immediate	Short Term	Long Term
Darlington	41	75	259
Hartlepool	36	73	108
Middlesbrough	26	54	1
Redcar & Cleveland	263	98	67
Stockton-on-Tees	98	105	770
Tees Valley	464	405	1205

Source: Local Authority Data/JSU 2000

**4.51** Many sites in the Tees Valley require additional servicing, improved access, the removal of contaminated soils or the resolution of multiple ownership issues before they are truly ready for development. Efforts and resources should be concentrated on removing these constraints from the existing sites before any additional areas are considered for development. Local Planning Authorities should promote the development of

these sites and consider ways in which their use can be made more attractive.

**4.52** Given that the average level of employment land development over the past 5 years is approximately 64 hectares per annum, the amount of land is generally more than adequate. However, at the local level, certain types of employment land may become in short supply over the plan period. This is particularly true of land for high quality development. It is therefore essential that the Borough Councils constantly monitor and review the allocations made in their local plans to reflect the demands of modern business and commerce. A strategic review of the Tees Valley's employment land allocations will be undertaken, which will inform the review of the Structure Plan.

### Economic Regeneration

#### EMP1

Priority will be given to the revitalisation of existing industrial estates and older industrial areas to improve their attraction to new business.

**4.53** The industrial history of the Tees Valley has resulted in many areas becoming derelict or run-down, as old industries close and limited investment causes a deterioration in the built environment. In particular, older industrial estates within the urban area have suffered from limited investment in security, landscaping and improvements to access. This has reduced their ability to compete successfully with new industrial developments and consequently rents have remained low, providing a further disincentive to invest.

**4.54** Local Planning Authorities should try to address these issues through the Local Plan process and regeneration activities. The inner-urban industrial estates are often in close proximity to a large residential population and it is therefore highly desirable to attract occupiers which generate employment. Furthermore, the availability of a range of employment sites provides an opportunity to promote urban regeneration. The improvement of all industrial estates and older industrial areas will help improve the range of premises and sites available to attract new businesses and will help generally in improving the image of the Tees Valley.

#### **EMP2**

Priority will be given to the development of business and industrial premises on brownfield sites which:

- i) recycle underused, degraded or redundant land and buildings;
- ii) are capable of being well served by public transport; and
- iii) have good existing or proposed links with footpath and cycle way networks.

4.55 The wide range of development sites available in the Tees Valley can encourage developers to select greenfield sites in preference to brownfield land. This trend is likely to continue unless further incentives are made available to encourage brownfield site development. Local Planning Authorities should support Government moves to increase the attraction of developing brownfield land and, where possible, encourage the use of brownfield land in their borough through innovative marketing and a supportive policy framework. The brownfield sites given priority should have good access to public transport, for example being in close proximity to an existing or proposed rail station or frequent bus service.

### Office Development and Use

#### **EMP3**

The Tees Valley authorities will give priority to the development and re-use of offices in the town and district centres identified under policy TC3. Proposals should be consistent with the scale and character of these centres.

4.56 The Government is committed to concentrating development for uses which generate a large number of trips in places well served by public transport. This Plan supports the development of office facilities within the urban area but recognises the current trends towards out-of-centre office development. The centres of Middlesbrough and Stockton have significant areas of vacant office space and this is unlikely to be utilised in the near future.

4.57 Modern premises with private parking facilities are being provided on sites such as

Teesdale, and this further undermines the potential for finding new tenants for the central area office accommodation. The demolition of central area office blocks is very expensive and although their conversion to residential use is a possibility, the economic feasibility of conversion is poor.

### Rural Economic Development

#### **EMP4**

Accommodation for employment uses in rural areas should be integrated within villages or be provided by the reuse and adaptation of appropriate existing buildings.

The scale of development should be appropriate to the character of the surrounding area. It should address the employment needs of the locality and where possible be accessible by public transport.

4.58 Sustainable development in the rural areas, entails accommodating necessary change while maintaining and, where possible, enhancing the quality of the environment for local people and visitors. The appeal of the countryside is central to its economic prosperity and healthy economic activity in rural areas facilitates investment to protect and improve the countryside.

4.59 Government guidance has drawn attention to the growing number of industries that can be successfully located in rural areas. Such industries provide local employment opportunities, assist agricultural diversification, encourage re-use of buildings and bring new life and activity to rural communities. This type of development will also help reduce the need for people in rural areas to commute long distances for basic services and employment. Rural Development Area (RDA) status in East Cleveland provides an important source of grant aid for appropriate development.

#### **EMP4a**

Proposals for farm diversification will be supported provided the scheme is centred on an existing complex of buildings, makes use of existing buildings where appropriate, and is consistent with the scale and character of its rural location.

**4.60** A competitive and sustainable agricultural industry is vital to the well-being of rural areas. Reform of the European Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is changing the direction of the agricultural industry, and the England Rural Development Programme (ERDP) is providing new opportunities for the industry to become more diverse and promote environmental aims. To ensure that farmers have the means to supplement their income from the farm and are thus able to maintain their roles in food production and countryside management, they must be allowed the opportunity to develop or promote other business ventures on their farms. Such enterprises may relate to agriculture generally or to the existing operation of a specific farm. Importantly however, they could involve unrelated businesses capable of benefiting from certain features of the farm, particularly redundant or vacant buildings or from the attraction of a specific location. Farm diversification schemes consistent in scale with their rural location should be encouraged to help the farming sector to generate the income necessary to guarantee the future of productive farming and countryside management.

**4.61** It is usually preferable for farm diversification schemes to re-use good quality existing buildings and put them to a new business use, rather than construct new buildings in the countryside. New buildings, either to replace existing structures or to accommodate expansion of enterprises, may be acceptable provided that they satisfy sustainable development objectives and are of a design and scale appropriate to their rural surroundings. Local planning authorities will encourage farm diversification proposals particularly, but not exclusively, where this enables access by public transport, walking and cycling. However, they will be realistic about the availability, or likely availability, of alternatives to access by car, and will view sympathetically proposals where small scale business development or its expansion would give rise to only modest additional daily vehicle movements, in comparison to other uses permitted on the site, and the impact on minor roads would not be significant.

## Strategic Review of Employment Land

### EMP4b

A strategic review of employment land allocations will be undertaken by the local authorities to identify those sites which make a realistic contribution to the Tees Valley employment land portfolio. Factors to be taken into account in judging the continued suitability of sites for employment use, include:

- i) accessibility of site (in accordance with policy T10 and policy T24a);
- ii) compatibility with neighbouring uses;
- iii) cost of site preparation;
- iv) likely attractiveness to industrial and business users; and
- v) contribution to range and choice of sites.

Land no longer required for employment purposes should be re-allocated through the local plan process to other more appropriate uses, de-allocated, or promoted for suitable temporary uses in accordance with policy ENV22.

**4.62** A strategic review of the Tees Valley employment land will take place using the criteria from policy EMP4b in order to achieve a more realistic portfolio of employment sites for the Tees Valley. This review will not prejudice the regeneration ethos currently taking hold in the area and the work being undertaken by the Tees Valley Partnership or in future by the Tees Valley Urban Regeneration Company.

**4.63** The projected changes in the employment structure of the Tees Valley have already begun to influence the demand for employment land. Although the traditional industrial estates still retain many light industrial and manufacturing uses the greater percentage of employment land take-up has been on the sites with a higher environmental quality. The new companies that have been attracted to these sites are predominately involved in the service sector or retail trade. They include companies such as Abbey National and Barclaycard at Teesdale, and Orange at Darlington.

**4.64** Most large business uses and general industrial and warehouse developments will continue to take place on industrial estates, which are well located for access by a range of transport modes, and laid out to provide suitable sites and factory premises. A large amount of land remains available on industrial estates that have been developed in recent years, so in general there is no need for large new industrial allocations.

**4.65** The precise mix of uses on individual sites will be considered by the Local Plans. Industrial, business and warehouse developments are not all necessarily acceptable on every site. For example, some general industrial uses may not be appropriate on sites close to residential areas and warehousing will not be acceptable on sites intended for high technology industries. The Local Planning Authorities will differentiate between those sites which are intended for general industrial development and those to be developed to a higher standard.

### General Employment Land

#### EMP5

No overall increase in area of land identified for general employment purposes. Significant unused allocations are currently available at the following locations

- **DARLINGTON**  
Yarm Road • Faverdale
- **HARTLEPOOL**  
Hartlepool
- **MIDDLESBROUGH**  
North Middlesbrough
- **REDCAR AND CLEVELAND**  
South Bank • Skelton
- **STOCKTON-ON-TEES**  
North Tees • Thornaby • Portrack

Local authorities will:

- i) identify any constraints which are hindering the development of the above locations, and
- ii) seek to remove those constraints in order to enable those locations to be developed

**4.66** The land in policy EMP5 is all currently allocated in Borough Council Local Plans and/or has extant planning permission. There will be no overall increase in the land identified for general employment development. These allocations will be developed prior to any new land being identified. The key aim of this policy is identify the constraints which prevent the development of the land and what can be done to overcome them.

### Business Parks and Prestige Employment Development

#### EMP6

About 540ha is available for business parks or other prestige employment development in the following general locations:

- **DARLINGTON** (about 70 ha)  
Yarm Road • Faverdale
- **HARTLEPOOL** (about 250 ha)  
Wynyard • Queens Meadow
- **MIDDLESBROUGH** (about 50 ha)  
Hemlington
- **REDCAR AND CLEVELAND** (about 60 ha)  
Redcar
- **STOCKTON-ON-TEES** (about 120 ha)  
Wynyard • East Billingham

**4.67** In order for the Tees Valley to remain competitive and to cater for the demands of modern business, it must be able to offer sites suitable for high quality and prestige development. Attracting such businesses and industry help to raise the area's profile and will boost the economy by providing jobs and attracting further investment. Opportunities exist to create links with other businesses or with higher education institutions. Local Planning Authorities will therefore retain some of the land for uses such as research and development, light manufacturing and office development.

**4.68** The existing amount of land for business parks in the Tees Valley is sufficient in all areas except for Redcar and Cleveland. The recent success of Kirkleatham Business Park in attracting firms and speculative development has meant that it is likely to be completed within the Structure Plan period.

Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council may therefore seek to make further provision for a business park type development in the Redcar/Marske/New Marske area.

**4.69** The Borough Council will need to consider whether or not this location is the most appropriate having carefully assessed alternative locations, including previously used land. Development of the new prestige business park will only be started once the Kirkleatham Business Park is at least 75% committed to occupiers.

#### **EMP6a**

Provision for a prestige business park of about 30ha may be identified in the Redcar, Marske, New Marske area. Land will only be allocated in the local plan if it can be demonstrated that there is a clear need for the development and that the development cannot be provided on previously developed land within Redcar and Cleveland or Middlesbrough.

The release of such land will not be allowed until 75% of Kirkleatham Business Park has been committed to occupiers.

### Strategic Employment Sites

**4.70** The North East has earned itself a well deserved reputation for successfully attracting major inward investment. In recent years, the attraction of companies such as Samsung and Nissan has resulted in many new jobs. To ensure that the Tees Valley continues to provide opportunities for this type of development, it is important to provide sites capable of accommodating major inward investors.

**4.71** English Partnerships recently prepared a report, (Locations for Strategic Economic Development in the North East), which helped develop a shared view on the strategic sites which should be the focus of development attention over the next decade. Sites at Kirkleatham, Hemlington Grange and Queens Meadow were identified as Strategic Sites (between 20 - 40 ha) while Wynyard was promoted as the only Premier Division Site (over 40 ha) which is currently available in the Tees Valley.

**4.72** A third list of sites and locations identified by English Partnerships were those with Strategic Potential. Because strategic sites take time to deliver, it is prudent to identify those locations, which will become the next wave of major investment sites. The two sites identified within the Tees Valley were Faverdale Reserve Site, Darlington and Eaglescliffe, Stockton. Faverdale Reserve Site is already within the development plan process, being identified for a maximum of two major inward investors by the Darlington Local Plan. However, Eaglescliffe's future inclusion in the Structure Plan was dependent on the outcome of the consultation on the Secretary of State's Proposed Changes to RPG1. In fact, the Secretary of State decided not to name the Eaglescliffe site, but accepted, in principle, the need for a strategic employment site in the broad location west of Stockton. The Secretary of State required further work, to identify more precisely where the site should be, as part of the early review of RPG1. Consultants have been appointed by One NorthEast to undertake this work. In consultation with several sub-regional partners (including Darlington Borough Council, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council, Tees Valley Development Company, Tees Valley Regeneration Company, and the Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit), the consultants will:

- i) identify more precisely where that site should be after assessing several alternative locations;
- ii) recommend a site which is deliverable and indicate when it will be needed; and
- iii) recommend a site which meets the objectives of RPG1, the Regional Economic Strategy, the Tees Valley Vision and is compatible with policies in this Structure Plan.

The consultant's report will then be used to inform the Regional Spatial Strategy and the recommended site, including a broad policy framework, will be brought forward, initially, through that document.

**4.73** Although this Plan is cautious about advocating the development of greenfield locations for industry, there are reasons why it is desirable for large scale development. In the first instance, many inward investors request greenfield locations, and if the Tees Valley is to remain competitive, it must provide an appropriate level of opportunity to satisfy such demand. At a practical level, there are no sites within the urban area, capable of receiving development at this scale.

#### EMP7

Land will be provided in the broad location of west of Stockton for a major investment site to be determined in the review of RPG1, in addition to land already allocated at Faverdale, Darlington.

Potential sites in the broad location of west of Stockton will be assessed against policies DP1 and DP2 in Regional Planning Guidance for the North East and policy SUS2 in the Structure Plan.

A comprehensive development proposal will be required for each site that accommodates a maximum of 2 large scale users. Small scale development proposals will not be permitted.

4.74 There are also sustainable development arguments, which support provision being made for large scale inward investment at Faverdale. The site is close to an existing railway line and has potential to be served by a new passenger halt as the development grows, a potential which developers should be encouraged to make full use of. Also the proximity of the railway line offers the potential to be served by sidings for the import of raw materials and the distribution of goods. Faverdale is also highly accessible by bus and road, being close to the trunk road network.

4.75 In the broad location west of Stockton, potential sites should be assessed against the relevant policies in RPG1 (particularly policies DP1 and DP2) and in this Structure Plan (particularly policy SUS2).

4.76 Small scale business projects should not be permitted on these strategic employment sites as there is currently adequate provision for such development on alternative sites. A development brief outlining the full development proposal for these sites will be required to be submitted with a planning application.

### Port Related Development

#### EMP8

Priority will be given to port related industrial development in the following areas with direct waterside access:

Hartlepool Docks;  
North of Seaton Channel;  
South Tees, Redcar and Cleveland; and  
Clarence Works, Stockton-on-Tees.

4.77 One of the reasons for the continuing presence of key traditional industries in the Tees Valley is the availability of quality dock and harbour facilities. In 2000 the ports of Tees and Hartlepool handled around 51million tonnes of freight. In recognising its prime position to take advantage of growing European traffic, Teesport is currently the subject of a £20 million investment programme. The investment will be concentrated on upgrading infrastructure in order to cater for the anticipated growth in future traffic flows.



Photograph 4.2: Shipping, Teesmouth

4.78 The Structure Plan supports the role of the ports and accepts the need to identify land for future port use and development by port related industry. The requirements are for large, flat sites adjoining the river, preferably with a deep water frontage. The movement of goods by water is generally more sustainable than road transit and should therefore be encouraged. The existing provision made by the Borough Local Plans is more than adequate to cater for any increase in port trade or for any new developments proposed by industries that require deep water access. Again no new land is being identified.

**4.79** The aim of the policy is to preserve the port facilities for those industries which will benefit from the unique facilities. In the consideration of further port related development, assessment will be made of the impact on nature conservation interests outlined in policies ENV4 and ENV5.

### Development Requiring an Airport Location

#### EMP9

At Teesside Airport, 225 ha of land will be provided for proposals requiring a location at or adjacent to an airport.

**4.80** Teesside International Airport serves a wide area including the Tees Valley, County Durham and North Yorkshire. It is well located, with easy access to the A1 (M), rail, seaport facilities and bus services. It is in recognition of these qualities, that there is currently much demand for the land surrounding the airport. In April 1999, the Secretary of State gave outline permission for development for freight handling and distribution and packaging, freight forwarding and light industrial/commercial assembly on land to the south side of Teesside International Airport. The permission is subject to planning conditions restricting the businesses to those requiring an airport location and the strengthening of the provision for public transport access to the airport.

**4.81** This Plan supports the growth of Teesside Airport, as it would bring further wealth and prosperity to the Tees Valley. The Plan encourages the future development of the airport but only by businesses and industries that require an airport location. The land surrounding the airport is by definition, scarce and other companies that do not require an airport location will be directed to a range of other industrial locations. In total, there is 225 ha of land for development at the airport, falling within Darlington and Stockton Boroughs.

**4.82** The Local Planning Authorities will identify those types of 'airport related' use which are acceptable in their Local Plans.

### Land for Potentially Polluting or Hazardous Industrial Development

#### EMP10

No new land will be identified for potentially polluting or hazardous industrial development. About 720 hectares of land for potentially polluting or hazardous industrial development is available in the following main locations:

- **HARTLEPOOL** (about 70 ha)  
South Hartlepool
- **REDCAR AND CLEVELAND** (about 330 ha)  
West of Redcar
- **STOCKTON-ON-TEES** (about 320 ha)  
North Tees  
South Billingham

Opportunities will be sought to accommodate other uses compatible with heavy manufacturing industries on land that becomes surplus during the plan period, and in the interim to accommodate temporary uses including woodland planting and environmental management for nature conservation.

**4.83** An analysis of the employment structure in the Tees Valley revealed that the chemicals, steel and offshore industries are likely to remain important to the local economy over the Structure Plan period. It is therefore important that this Plan makes sufficient provision for the expansion of existing facilities as well as for development by any new industries.

**4.84** At present, potentially polluting and hazardous industries are concentrated around the lower reaches of the River Tees, at Seal Sands, Wilton International, and Teesport and in the Corus Corridor. This area is situated away from the main centres of population and it is envisaged that any further development of potentially polluting or hazardous industries will continue to occur here (see Policy EMP10). The amount of land currently available is more than sufficient for the anticipated levels of development. Recent advances in technology have meant that many chemical companies are able to increase output without the need to physically expand the size of their plant and although some development has taken place at

Seal Sands and South Hartlepool, the overall rate of take-up of land identified for potentially polluting or hazardous industry is relatively low.

**4.85** Should any land for potentially polluting and hazardous industries become surplus to the requirements of these industries, other uses compatible with the existing heavy industries should be encouraged to locate on this land. Such uses should be non-labour intensive and not be sensitive to its surroundings. These uses may include open storage, warehousing and road haulage. Should no other use be found, temporary measures such as woodland planting or environmental management for nature conservation could be employed until such time as the land is required for industrial use.

**4.86** The development of the chemicals, metals and off-shore industries will continue to be supported. The decline in living standards that would be associated with the loss of the potentially polluting and hazardous industries is not acceptable and therefore they should continue to be supported in locations which minimise the risk to human health and the wider living environment. Where developmental proposals affect recognised nature conservation interests, policies ENV4 and ENV5 will apply.

#### Monitoring of Employment Land Availability

**4.87** Employment land availability in the Tees Valley will be monitored in order to assess whether there is a need to provide any new land for employment uses. This process allows gaps in the provision of land for each type of use to be identified. It will also allow for take-up rates of employment land to be monitored and will help to give an indication of the types of business and industry located to, or starting up, in the Tees Valley.

**4.88** The information collection for employment land monitoring will be conducted using the same categories as set out in policies EMP5 to EMP10. This monitoring information will be used to inform future reviews of the Structure Plan and will feed into the monitoring process for Regional Planning Guidance



## chapter five

### The natural and built environment

#### Introduction

5.1 The quality of the environment of the Tees Valley affects people who live and work in the area, in both its rural and urban environments, but it also has poor quality environments which need improvement and enhancement.

5.2 The Tees Valley environment has been significantly affected by changing economic circumstances. Much of the legacy of traditional heavy industry has now been removed as derelict sites and redundant premises have been reclaimed or redeveloped, although some major problem areas remain to be tackled. Change over the last 10 years or so has been less dramatic, but the decline of the local economy during the 1980's added to the problem of derelict land, and has left vacant factories and offices. Finding new uses for such sites can be difficult, although various regeneration packages have made a significant impact in several areas.

5.3 A number of major topographical features dominate the Tees Valley. From Darlington the River Tees flows over an extensive plain towards the Tees Estuary, where large areas have been reclaimed from salt marshes and mudflats. This lower section of the Tees and its estuary have a predominantly urban and industrial character still dominated by chemicals and steel making. At the mouth of the river, the estuary and adjacent wetland habitat is of international importance for migrating and wintering birds. In 1994 a Barrage was completed across the river between Middlesbrough and Stockton which altered the nature of the Tees. Upstream from the Barrage the river is no longer tidal. Primarily the Barrage is intended to enhance the visual attractiveness of the river and provide increased opportunities for recreational use.

5.4 Other main topographical features of the Tees Valley are the coast and the scarp of the North York Moors. The landscape of the south east consists of uplands divided by steep-sided, often wooded valleys, and steep cliffs to the North Sea. The moorlands form part of the North York Moors National Park and the cliffs are part of the North Yorkshire and Cleveland Heritage Coast.

5.5 The more rural parts of the Tees Valley have also been affected by change. Semi-natural woodland, grasslands, wetlands, moorland and coastal habitats have all deteriorated in quality in recent years. For example, broad-leaved woodland has been lost to agriculture, urban development and conversion to coniferous planting; herb rich grassland has been destroyed by ploughing and by the addition of fertilisers; moorland has been lost to forestry and farming; and wetlands have been reclaimed for development.

#### Strategic Aim and Objectives

5.6 In line with the structure plan's commitment to work towards achieving sustainable development, environmental principles are embodied throughout the Plan. The plan's strategic aim in respect of the conservation of the natural and built environment is:

*"to protect, sustain and enhance the countryside, coast and urban environment, improve areas of poor environmental quality, and ensure that new development contributes to environmental quality and integrity".*

More specifically the policies in the Plan seek to:

- i) conserve and enhance areas and sites given special protection under various landscape, wildlife and geological designations
- ii) maintain and improve bio-diversity by protecting and enhancing habitats
- iii) protect and enhance listed buildings, conservation areas and their settings, and protect sites of archaeological importance
- iv) achieve a better quality urban and rural environment through new development, environmental improvement and regeneration schemes and by focusing new development on previously developed land
- v) minimise any environmental damage or loss of amenity caused through development or ancillary activities
- vi) reduce pressure on the use of non-renewable resources, encourage appropriate use of renewable energy sources, and minimise the pollution of air, water, and land
- vii) ensure the protection of existing woodland resources and support strategic programmes for woodland management and development such as the Tees Forest.

## Context

### National Guidance and Initiatives

**5.7** Effective protection of the environment is one of the cornerstones of the Government's commitment to sustainable development.

**5.8** Specific advice on environmental matters in structure plans is set out in various Planning Policy Guidance Notes. However, the major responsibility is to ensure that plans are drawn up in a way that environmental considerations are taken comprehensively and consistently into account. In this way environmental improvement can be plan-led, and individual development decisions taken against an overall strategic framework that reflects environmental priorities.

**5.9** Conservation and development should not be seen as necessarily in conflict, and policies in development plans must weigh and reconcile priorities in the public interest. Recent years have seen increased public awareness of environmental issues, and both government and the wider public look to development plans to treat the environment with care, particularly impacts which may be irreversible or very difficult to undo.

**5.10** The way in which environmental issues are dealt with by the planning system has been, and no doubt will continue to be, the subject of much research. Several government departments and bodies are at the forefront of helping to develop a sustainable approach to the natural and built environment. In April 1999 the Countryside Agency was created from a merger of the Rural Development Commission and the Countryside Commission. The Agency will have an important and central role in delivering the Government's vision for the countryside which has the five items of a living countryside; a working countryside; the interdependence of town and country; protection and enhancement of the environment; and access to the countryside for all. In 1988 the former Countryside Commission developed the concept of 'countryside character' which seeks to find ways of enriching the quality of the countryside whilst accommodating appropriate development in order to complement the protection which designations offer. The aim is to try and ensure the development respects or enhances the distinctive character of the landscape and built environment. The Countryside Character approach may be especially useful when local countryside designations are reviewed as part of the local plan process.

**5.11** The England Forestry Strategy, produced by central government, describes how it will deliver forestry policies and seek out priorities and programmes for the next 5-10 years. Sustainable forestry is one component of the wider commitment to sustainable development. The Forestry Strategy will be achieved through better targeting of resources, focussing on areas of greater opportunity and need. Working in partnership with the Tees Forest (formerly the Cleveland Community Forest) will allow a framework for action to be created in the Tees Valley.

**5.12** English Nature, the Government body with responsibility for nature conservation, has developed the concept of 'natural areas' to offer a more effective framework for the planning and achievement of nature conservation objectives. They help to provide a basis for identifying special features to be protected through development plan policies. A major aspect of Government policy towards nature conservation is to encourage biodiversity – the richness and variety of plants, birds, animals and insects that exist throughout the world. A recent supplement to the 'Opportunities for Change' consultation paper, 'Making Biodiversity Happen', sets out the importance of biodiversity as a quality of life issue and indicator of the health of the environment. Locally, biodiversity can be helped through Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs) which will implement national targets for species and habitats. Local Biodiversity Action Plans have recently been prepared for Durham (which includes Darlington) and the Tees Valley (which covers the remaining four Boroughs).

**5.13** The Countryside Stewardship Scheme (CSS) forms a major part of the England Rural Development Programme. CSS is a voluntary scheme under which farmers and non-farming landowners and managers are paid subsidy to take measures which conserve and improve the landscape, wildlife and historic heritage of the countryside. The Woodland Grant Scheme, delivered by the Forestry Commission, forms a major part of government support of the management and creation of woodlands in England and is targeted to achieving England Forestry Strategy Objectives.

### Regional Guidance

**5.14** Regional Planning Guidance for the North East, states that environmental standards must be maintained and, where possible, raised. Strong protection should continue to be given to the environment of nationally and internationally important upland and coastal areas. Continued protection and enhancement is necessary for attractive and historic built environments, together with environmental upgrading in areas of poor quality such as those affected by industrial pollution and dereliction. Concentration on improvement close to the main centres of population will be of benefit to residential amenity. The natural environment also needs to be protected and improved to maintain biodiversity and to enhance existing landscape character. A healthier living environment should be created by further action to improve air and water quality.

### Sustainable Development

**5.15** As explained in chapter 3 of the Plan, sustainable development is not just about the environment. However effective protection of the environment is one of the cornerstones of sustainable development. It is concerned with global environmental issues such as climate change and acid rain; protection from poor air and water quality; and protecting and improving more local things such as wildlife, open spaces, landscape, and historic buildings and features.

**5.16** The Tees Valley environment, like the global environment, is continually subject to damage, pressure and change. Although there have been, and will continue to be improvements, the aim is to deal effectively with pressures on the environment from new development, transport schemes, recreational demands and so on. Particular priorities include the need to protect and enhance biodiversity; a commitment to protect wildlife, landscape and historic areas; promote sustainable management and improvement of the countryside; create attractive urban environments in which people can live and work; identify actions to help reduce air pollution; and encourage conservation of water resources and improvements to the water environment.

### Landscape

**5.17** The Tees Valley contains a variety of different landscapes ranging from a distinctive upland and moorland area with steep scarp slopes in the south and east; well wooded river and stream valleys; wide river floodplain; coastal cliffs and dunes; and pleasant rolling farmland in the west and north. The distinctive character for each of these different areas must be maintained and enhanced, and new development should contribute to that character. To inform this approach local authorities are encouraged to prepare formal landscape character assessments in line with the Countryside Agency's Guidance.

#### ENV1

Priority will be given to protecting and enhancing the natural beauty of the North Yorkshire and Cleveland Heritage Coast.

**5.18** Heritage Coasts, which are a national designation, represent the finest stretches of undeveloped coast in England and Wales. In the Tees Valley the Heritage Coast represents a dramatic landscape of high cliffs together with a sheltered bay at Skinningrove. The Countryside Agency and the local authorities have acknowledged the nationally important scenic quality of the Heritage Coast and recognise the need to protect it from development and recreational pressure. The North Yorkshire and Cleveland Heritage Coast Management Plan, a non-statutory document, contains policies and proposals to reconcile and manage potentially conflicting demands on the Heritage Coast area and new developments should be consistent with these policies.



Photograph 5.1: Heritage Coast

## ENV2

The quality of the following special landscape areas/areas of high landscape value will be protected by ensuring that any new development permitted minimises the impact on landscape and amenity:

- i) Eston Moor to Newton-Under-Roseberry
- ii) Eston Hills
- iii) Errington Woods and Upleatham to Slapewath
- iv) The East Cleveland Valleys and surrounding countryside
- v) River Tees Valley
- vi) River Leven Valley
- vii) Wynyard Park
- viii) Newton Hanzard/Crookfoot Reservoir
- ix) Crimdon and Nesbitt Dene area
- x) West of Darlington from High Coniscliffe to Walworth, Heighington, Redworth and the borough boundary

The precise boundaries will be reviewed in local plans

5.19 There are a number of areas in the Tees Valley where the landscape characteristics, including land use, land form and overall appearance, combine to make them of sufficient importance to warrant special recognition. These areas include the major river valleys of the Tees and Leven, the Eston Hills, the well wooded valleys of East Cleveland, the Wynyard area, Crimdon/Nesbitt Dene, and the rural area west of Darlington. The intrinsic character of these areas should be retained and enhanced, and intrusive developments diverted elsewhere. New development must be sympathetic to the character of the areas' in terms of design, siting and landscaping.



Photograph 5.2: Roseberry Topping

## ENV3

The character of the undeveloped coast will be protected and enhanced. Development, including that which requires a coastal location, will be directed away from the undeveloped coast.

5.20 The varied topography of the Tees Valley coastline includes coastal lowlands, cliff top meadows, sandy beaches, sensitive sand dune systems, towering cliffs, estuary mudflats and remnants of saltmarsh. In recognition of its national significance the coastline east of Saltburn has been designated as Heritage Coast (see policy ENV1). Other parts of the undeveloped coast have been designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) for their ecological interest. Undeveloped coastline is a diminishing resource and as such should be protected and enhanced. Planning Policy Guidance Note 20 'Coastal Planning' advises that the coast, particularly the undeveloped parts, will seldom be an appropriate location to meet the development needs of an area.

5.21 Local plans should, as advised in PPG20, define a coastal zone and contain detailed policies to conserve and enhance its landscape, conservation and leisure value. The local authorities should consider reviewing the Cleveland Coastal Zone Management Strategy, originally prepared in 1995/96, to pursue an integrated approach to the complex interrelationships operating in the coastal zone. Development and human activity in the coastal zone needs to be managed in a way which avoids damage to sensitive habitats, wildlife and earth heritage features and prevents a reduction in total resources and diversity.

## Wildlife and Nature Conservation

5.22 The Tees Valley contains a wide variety of ecological habitats. These range from internationally important coast and wetlands around the Tees Estuary to remnants of ancient woodland and semi-natural grassland. The protection of wildlife and habitats is one of the cornerstones of the Government's commitment to improving environmental quality. Opportunities should also be taken to create new habitats whenever possible. The development of a proposed Teesside International Nature Reserve will create new habitats and strengthen Teesmouths' position as an internationally important wildlife area.

**5.23** The Tees Valley area is fortunate in being at the forefront of initiatives to bring together and reconcile potential conflicts between nature conservation interests, industry and the local community. The unique Industry and Nature Conservation Association (INCA) has done much to reduce conflicts of interest. Strategies such as the Tees Estuary Management Plan and the INCA Industrial Nature Conservation Strategy have brought together environment, economic development and the community based on a sustainable approach.

#### **ENV3a**

The Tees Valley authorities will encourage and assist measures to improve biodiversity and contribute towards the delivery of UK and Tees Valley biodiversity action plan targets.

**5.24** The Government has produced a UK Action Plan for Biodiversity, the aim of which is to conserve and enhance biological diversity within the UK and contribute to the conservation of global biodiversity through all appropriate mechanisms. PPG9 on Nature Conservation also provides some guidance on biodiversity in developments, and will be revised and updated in the near future. Biodiversity conservation is an integral part of planning for sustainable development. The need to maintain and, where possible, enhance biodiversity should be regarded as an overarching concept in which land use planning has a vital role to play. At the local level biodiversity is being achieved through the Local Agenda 21 process, reference to Natural Area profiles, and the production of Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs). BAP's have been produced for Durham which includes the Borough of Darlington, and for the former Cleveland County authorities (the Tees Valley BAP). BAP's will contain local action plans for key species and habitats which are important to the conservation of the diversity of wildlife. Development plans, particularly local plans, will have a key role in the implementation of measures to improve the prospects for species and habitats set out in Biodiversity Action Plans. Particular opportunities for enhancing biodiversity are likely to flow from the proposals to implement the Teesside International Nature Reserve, the Tees Forest proposals for planting broadleaved woodland, the introduction in local plans of the Countryside

Character approach advocated by the Countryside Agency, and as a result of negotiations between developers and local authorities. The development of targets and indicators will help in measuring improvements in both species and habitat diversity.

#### **ENV4**

Proposals for development which could destroy or adversely affect, directly or indirectly, or alone or in combination with other plans or projects, a site of international importance for nature conservation will be subject to the most rigorous examination. Such development will not be permitted unless the local planning authority is satisfied that:

- i) there is no alternative solution, and
- ii) there are imperative reasons of over-riding public interest

The Tees Valley authorities will comply with the UK's international obligation in respect of those sites designated as 'RAMSAR' sites by The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, Special Protection Areas (SPAs) or potential SPAs, and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) or candidate SACs. If development is permitted, mitigation measures or compensatory provision will be required.

**5.25** The Tees Estuary and associated Cleveland Coast is a wetland of international importance and comprises intertidal sand and mudflats, rocky shore, saltmarsh, freshwater marsh, and sand dunes. It has been designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) under the EC Birds Directive and for which the Government is obliged, under EC and UK law, to take appropriate steps to avoid significant pollution or deterioration of habitats and any disturbance affecting birds. This legislation also requires the appropriate assessment of plans and projects likely to have a significant effect on the integrity of the site. It also qualifies as a Wetland of International Importance (a 'Ramsar' site) – the UK being a signatory to the 1971 'Convention on the Conservation of Wetlands of International Importance'. The SPA/Ramsar designation is an accolade emphasising the international importance of the Tees Estuary and Cleveland Coast as a vital staging post for migrating birds and a breeding site for threatened species. Development proposals will be subject to the most

rigorous examination and will normally require a full environmental assessment. Should permission be granted adverse affects should be minimised by a sequential approach: avoiding harm e.g. by excluding sensitive areas through careful layout; mitigation against harm and taking active measures to reduce the harm. If this does not address all of the development, then any residual impacts should be offset by compensation e.g. by habitat creation or improved management of other areas.

#### ENV5

**Proposals for development which could destroy or adversely affect, directly or indirectly, a site of special scientific interest or national nature reserve will not be permitted unless there are material considerations sufficient to override the nature conservation interest. If development is permitted, mitigation measures or compensatory provision will be required.**

**5.26** The most important sites for nature conservation and earth heritage are recognised through their statutory notification as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) under the Wildlife and Countryside Acts, 1981 and 1985. A number of Sites of Special Scientific Interest are identified in the Nature Conservation Review (NCR sites) or the Geological Conservation Review (GCR sites) as being of national importance in their own right and special attention should be paid to their significance in the determination of any planning application. All SSSIs represent a scarce, finite resource which can rarely be replaced or relocated. This means that any development in or near them must be very strictly controlled. They should also be positively managed to protect and where appropriate enhance their ecological value and also to provide recreational and educational opportunities where this is practical without threatening the scientific interest. The Teesmouth area has been designated as a National Nature Reserve (NNR).

**5.27** SSSI's are part of a national network of important ecological and earth heritage sites. The importance of such designated sites means that development proposals which, either directly or indirectly, affect their key interest should be subject to special scrutiny. Development will not be permitted unless the local planning authority is

satisfied that the reasons for the proposal outweigh the value of the site and the national policy to safeguard the intrinsic nature conservation value of the national network of such sites. Proposals for development will normally require a full environmental assessment.



Photograph 5.3: Tees Marshes

#### ENV6

**Proposals for development which could destroy or adversely affect, directly or indirectly, a local nature reserve, a site of nature conservation importance, county wildlife site or a regionally important/ county geological /geomorphological site will not be permitted unless it can be clearly demonstrated that the need for the proposal outweighs the need to safeguard the intrinsic nature conservation value of the site. If development is permitted mitigation measures or compensatory provision will be sought.**

**5.28** There are a large number of sites throughout the Tees Valley which are of considerable nature conservation or geological interest, and which have no national or international designation, but are important in a local or regional context. Some of these sites have been identified by the local authorities as Local Nature Reserves (LNR's). Sites of wildlife interest are generally referred to as Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI's) in the former Cleveland County area and County Wildlife Sites in the Borough of Darlington, while Regionally Important Geological /Geomorphological Sites (RIGS) (County Geological Sites in Darlington) are identified for their scientific and aesthetic value. These sites should be protected from development wherever possible and they should be appropriately managed to enhance their ecological value and provide suitable recreational and educational opportunities. Where development cannot be avoided appropriate measures should be taken to

conserve as far as possible the biological or geological interest, and to provide some form of mitigating measures or compensatory provision where damage is unavoidable. A sequential approach should be taken to secure the nature conservation interest – see paragraph 5.25.

#### ENV7

Where a development will have an effect on species protected by law this will be a material consideration in the determination of the relevant planning application.

5.29 Certain species of plants and animals are given special protection through legislation or listed in red data books (nationally rare species). The presence of a protected species will be a material consideration where a local planning authority is considering a development proposal which, if carried out, would be likely to result in harm to a protected species or habitat. Where it is possible to maintain the existing habitat or provide an alternative habitat of similar value, then development may be permitted. English Nature routinely advises that appropriate evaluation and survey is carried out by the developer, where European Protected Species are likely to be present, prior to the submission of a development proposal. It can advise on applications following receipt of appropriate survey information, and should be consulted by the local planning authority where a proposal could result in harm to protected species or their habitat.

#### ENV8

The integrity of the following strategic wildlife corridors will be maintained and where possible new development should enhance the nature conservation interest:

- i) The Coastline;
- ii) River Tees;
- iii) Billingham Beck Valley from the River Tees to Wynyard Park;
- iv) Tees Marshes from Seal Sands to Port Clarence;
- v) Greatham Creek to Crookfoot Reservoir;
- vi) Wynyard Park to Greatham Creek via Claxton; and
- vii) River Skerne.

5.30 Although it is important to protect sites with wildlife value those sites can become even more valuable if they are connected in some way, or are capable of being connected with each other or the surrounding countryside by a wildlife corridor. The width of a wildlife corridor can vary and it is not the intention to preclude development in such areas. Development can still take place but should avoid severing the corridor and where possible should include measures to enhance the corridor, for example through landscaping and/or management. Other wildlife corridors, performing a more local function, are identified in local plans or local wildlife strategies.

#### ENV9

The designation and subsequent management of local nature reserves and creation of new wildlife habitats will be encouraged.

5.31 Local nature reserves can provide an invaluable amenity and educational resource to the community. Local authorities have powers to declare Local Nature Reserves on their own land, or they can acquire land for the purpose. Local authorities can also, by agreement with landowners, declare and promote Local Nature Reserves on private land.

### Archaeological, Historic and Cultural Features

#### ENV10

The archaeological interest of the Tees Valley will be protected and preserved by:

- i) not permitting development which would have an adverse effect on scheduled ancient monuments, protected wreck sites and other sites of national importance and their settings; and
- ii) protecting other sites of archaeological interest from development where possible by providing detailed policies of preservation in situ, evaluation prior to planning determination and archaeological excavation and recording.

Where appropriate, the Tees Valley authorities will encourage and assist in the investigation of sites of archaeological interest.

**5.32** The history, culture and heritage of the Tees Valley is reflected in many buildings and features of important historic, architectural and archaeological significance. The historic environment plays an important role in the image of the Tees Valley, and can be important for tourism and leisure.

**5.33** The local authorities wish to promote a knowledge and awareness of the archaeological heritage of the Tees Valley. Archaeological remains should be seen as a finite and non-renewable resource, in many cases highly fragile and vulnerable to damage and destruction. Appropriate management is therefore essential to ensure that they survive in good condition. In particular, care must be taken to ensure that archaeological remains are not needlessly or thoughtlessly destroyed. They contain irreplaceable information about our past and the potential for an increase in future knowledge. They are part of our sense of national and local identity and are valuable both for their own sake and for their role in education, leisure and tourism.

**5.34** In appropriate circumstances local authorities should encourage and assist in the recording, conservation, research and display of sites of archaeological interest of all types and periods including those of the recent industrial past.

**5.35** The Tees Valley contains 59 Scheduled Ancient Monuments of national importance and one protected wreck site (at February 1999). Development which has an adverse effect on such sites will not be permitted.

**5.36** In addition to scheduled monuments the local authorities also maintain a record of known sites of archaeological interest (the Sites and Monuments Record). While the majority of these sites have no formal statutory protection the local authorities wish, where possible, to ensure their protection and survival.

**5.37** Developers should consult the local authority Archaeologist at an early stage to ascertain whether or not a development will affect a site of archaeological interest. Where a proposal may affect a site of archaeological interest then the local authority may request an archaeological evaluation prior to determination of the application. While there should be a presumption against development which damages or destroys an

archaeological site, there may be some circumstances where development is unavoidable. In these cases an acceptable alternative is for the local authority to require the developer to implement a scheme of archaeological investigation and recording.

#### **ENV11**

**The Tees Valley authorities will seek to identify landscapes of particular archaeological and historic importance, and ensure the protection and enhancement of such areas by encouraging appropriate management schemes and providing information about such areas.**

**5.38** Certain landscapes in the Tees Valley, for example the Eston Hills, are of particular importance because of the range and quality of the archaeological and historic components they contain. The characterisation, protection and enhancement of historic landscapes, also mentioned in PPG 16 'Archaeology and Planning', will enable better management, maintain the diversity of the countryside and encourage visitors. Landscapes of archaeological and historic significance offer a good opportunity for local authorities to promote the education and recreational attractions of archaeology. English Heritage maintain a Register of Historic Parks and Gardens which should be consulted for further information.

#### **ENV12**

**The character and appearance of conservation areas and listed buildings, and their settings, will be protected, maintained and enhanced. New development which preserves or, where appropriate, enhances their character will be encouraged.**

**5.39** In the Tees Valley conservation areas are mainly in the older villages and small town centres, although there are also a number within the main built up areas. Conservation areas can have an important role in promoting the Tees Valley, attracting visitors and enriching the lives of local people. Further conservation areas will be designated where appropriate, and existing areas will be preserved and improved through the preparation of restoration and enhancement schemes.



**5.40** Listed buildings are a finite resource. Once demolished they cannot be replaced, but they can also lose their value through unsympathetic alterations or additions. The surroundings and settings of both conservation areas and listed buildings can be important, and unsympathetic development nearby can detract from their appearance.

### Control of Urban Development

**5.41** The control of development into the open countryside plays a vital role in maintaining the character of the Tees Valley environment.

#### ENV13

Limits to development around the main conurbation, towns and villages will be maintained and reviewed in local plans to take account of future development requirements. Outside these limits development will be strictly controlled.

**5.42** The need to prevent urban sprawl and urban development in the countryside remains as strong now as it has ever been. The policy provides the basis for the Borough Councils to define limits to development in their local plans to prevent urban development occurring in the countryside. In general the limit to development around the main conurbation and towns should mainly follow the existing boundary of the built-up area, and include sites allocated for development. The area within the limit to development is not completely built up, and includes areas of important open space.



Photograph 5.4: St Hilda's Church, Hartlepool

#### ENV14

Within the main built-up areas the following green wedges, identified in local plans, will be retained for open land uses or to maintain the local identity of individual areas:

- i) between Marske and Redcar;
- ii) between ICI Wilton Works and Redcar; extending north to the coast;
- iii) west of A1053, Greystones Road;
- iv) the Spencer Beck Valley between East Middlesbrough and Eston;
- vi) the Hambleton Hill area between Nunthorpe and Ormesby and the area between Marton Road and the built-up area to the east of the Middlesbrough – Whitby railway line;
- vii) the area east of Acklam Road and west of Easterside, between the Parkway to the south and Acklam/Beechwood to the north;
- vii) Marton West Beck, from the Parkway southwards to the edge of the urban area;
- viii) the Stainsby Beck Valley between Thornaby and Middlesbrough;
- ix) the River Tees flood plain between Thornaby and Bowesfield extending westwards through Preston Park to the limit to development and continuing southwards to Eaglescliffe and Ingleby Barwick;
- x) between Ingleby Barwick and Teesside Industrial Estate;
- xi) the Leven Valley between Yarm and Ingleby Barwick;
- xii) the Billingham Beck Valley between Billingham and North Stockton;
- xiii) between North Billingham and Cowpen Lane industrial area;
- xiv) the area of open space running through Owton Manor;
- xv) the Summer Hill/Burn Valley Gardens area;
- xvi) along How Beck in Middle Warren;
- xvii) between Blackwell and Skerne Park;
- xviii) between Haughton le Skerne and Redhall; and
- xix) Cockerton.

The precise boundaries will be reviewed in local plans.

**5.43** The Tees Valley is fortunate in having areas of open land which extend from the countryside into the heart of the main built-up areas. They can comprise a mixture of agricultural land, formal or informal open space, or extensive open space surrounding uses such as hospitals and schools. Historically many of the green wedges have served to delineate distinct communities or areas within the Teesside conurbation, as well as contributing to the open space system, providing areas of formal and informal recreation, and serving as a buffer between industrial and housing developments. These functions are just as important today. They offer considerable opportunities to improve the local environment, offer scope for recreational use, and can be valuable wildlife sites and corridors. Development in green wedges should be strictly controlled and should not adversely affect their open character.

#### ENV15

Outside the main built-up areas the following strategic gaps will be maintained between individual settlements to retain their physical identity.

- i) between North Skelton and Millhome Bridge, Brotton;
- ii) between Saltburn and Marske;
- iii) between Marske and New Marske;
- iv) between Yarm and Kirkclevington
- v) between Stockton and Eaglescliffe including the Hartburn Valley between Hartburn and Bowesfield;
- vi) between Hartburn and Elton;
- vii) between Billingham and Norton;
- viii) between Billingham and Wolviston;
- ix) between North Billingham and Newton Bewley;
- x) between Hartlepool and Billingham;
- xi) between Greatham and Hartlepool;
- xii) between Hartlepool and Hart;
- xiii) between Hartlepool and Elwick; and
- xiv) between Hartlepool and Dalton Piercy.

Local planning authorities will define strategic gaps in more detail in local plans.

**5.44** Some of the green wedges are in agricultural use but suffer from trespass, theft and vandalism due to the close proximity of the urban area. If farming ceases in such areas then other open uses should be identified though these may not always give public access to the area. Development associated with existing agricultural businesses within green wedges will be considered on their merits taking into account the need to maintain an efficient and flexible agricultural industry and the affect on the openness of the green wedge. Green wedges may also absorb pressure for open land use which might otherwise be directed towards better quality land in the open countryside.

**5.45** Strategic gaps between settlements will be protected to ensure that settlements outside the Teesside conurbation and main urban areas do not coalesce and to retain the physical identity of individual towns and villages. The policy is not intended to prevent appropriate development on the edge of a particular settlement, but to ensure that a sufficient gap is always maintained between settlements so that they can still be perceived as being separate. Strategic gaps should be defined in local plans and indicated on proposals maps.

#### Maintaining and Enhancing the Character and Quality of the Environment

**5.46** Although designated areas and sites, whether of national or local significance, are an important part of the strategy for the conservation of the built and natural environment, safeguarding such areas is not sufficient on its own. A commitment to sustainable development means maintaining the character and quality of the wider environment, and seeking to upgrade and improve areas of poor quality environment where appropriate.

**5.47** Woodland cover in the Tees Valley is relatively low – only some 6 - 7% compared to a national average of 9%. Cover is unevenly distributed falling to as little as 1% in Hartlepool but rising to 11% in Redcar & Cleveland. The loss of hedgerows and hedgerow trees, which can act as a substitute for woodland in terms of landscape and wildlife conservation, continues to be a problem due to the intensification of farming and mechanised cutting.

**5.48** Measures to increase woodland and tree cover, particularly of native broadleaf species, could make a major contribution to enhancing the landscape and increasing nature conservation interest. Existing woodlands need to be carefully managed if they are to contribute to the quality of the landscape and remain as valuable wildlife habitats. While new tree planting is to be generally encouraged, there may be some areas where additional cover is not appropriate, for example in open moorland or coastal/estuary landscapes, or where nature conservation interest could be adversely affected.

#### ENV16

Woodland, trees and hedgerows will be protected wherever possible. Proposals to increase tree cover in the Tees Valley will generally be encouraged where there are no adverse affects on landscape character, nature conservation, archaeological or historic interests. The local authorities support the strategy to create the Tees Forest which will include measures to increase woodland planting for timber production, amenity use and conservation.

**5.49** As a national initiative jointly by the Countryside Agency and the Forestry Commission, Community Forests are being created adjacent to a number of urban areas throughout the country. The Cleveland Community Forest (now The Tees Forest) was designated in 1991/92 and a Tees Forest Plan has been prepared which sets out the scale and pattern of tree planting which should be encouraged over the long term. It is an indicative strategy to assist land managers, farmers, local authorities and others in making choices and decisions. The implementation of the Tees Forest project will require a ten fold increase in woodland cover over existing levels, involving an additional 10 million trees. The target is for the Forest to be in place by 2035.

**5.50** New development in both urban and rural areas should be seen as an opportunity to improve and enhance the quality of the local environment. Such opportunities can take a number of forms but examples include planting of more native species of trees, where appropriate, and seeking to create wildlife habitats within a development scheme (with particular reference to the delivery of

Biodiversity Action Plan targets); adopting high design standards which add to the quality of the proposal and its surroundings; re-using areas of vacant or underused land; providing new views or visual focal points within urban areas. Where new wildlife habitats are created, planning conditions/obligations will be used to ensure the maintenance of new habitats where appropriate. Appropriate policies to encourage good design and help new development to fit well into the local environment should be included in local plans. In particular, Village Design Statements and Countryside Design Summaries, both initiatives of the Countryside Agency, may be appropriate and could be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG). For example, Hartlepool Borough Council adopted a Village Design Statement for Greatham as SPG in 1999.

#### ENV17

New development should comply with high standards and protect and enhance not only features of recognised environmental importance but also contribute to improving the wider environment and quality of life.

These should include:

- i) Sustainable and high design standards which complement and enhance surroundings;
- ii) Imaginative landscaping and the creation and management of new wildlife habitats or corridors as part of the development;
- iii) Improvement of vacant or underused land, including tree planting, where appropriate, particularly as part of the community forest; and
- iv) Retaining and enhancing existing features of interest.

**5.51** Many urban fringe areas in the Tees Valley have experienced problems. Farming near urban areas can be difficult because of problems ranging from unintentional trespass to theft and vandalism. This affects both the viability of the farm and the appearance of the countryside.

**5.52** Urban fringe areas can also offer considerable potential. For example there may be opportunities for informal recreation areas such as picnic sites and country parks which provide good access to the countryside without involving trespass. They may also offer farmers added opportunities to develop appropriate diversified

enterprises. It may also be possible to design urban development in such a way as to discourage easy access onto adjoining farmland. The Tees Forest (see Policy ENV16) provides a major opportunity to improve urban fringe areas. Woodland provides a good environment for recreation and can absorb large numbers of people without loss of visual amenity or damage to habitats.

#### ENV18

The environment of urban fringe areas will be improved. Measures should support the creation of the Tees Forest and include:

- i) Designing urban development to discourage trespass on to adjoining farmland;
- ii) Encouraging appropriate open space or informal recreation provision between housing developments and farmland where possible;
- iii) Softening the urban edge through landscaping and tree planting; and
- iv) Ensuring that new development on the fringe of urban areas takes account of agricultural and countryside uses and activities.

**5.53** A viable farming industry is essential to the protection of countryside character and quality. However, farming does not necessarily create a pleasant environment and there are past instances of, for example, the removal of trees and hedgerows. Nevertheless, agriculture is the largest single land user in the Tees Valley, amounting to about 66% of the total land area. The decline of farming therefore would almost certainly have an adverse impact on the countryside.

**5.54** The Government's policy is that the countryside should be safeguarded for its own sake. This does not mean keeping the status quo but finding ways of improving the character and quality of the countryside. Acceptable forms of agricultural diversification should be encouraged, but recognising that benefits to the farming community must not be at the expense of landscape, nature conservation or historic interests. New buildings essential for compliance with agricultural legislation should be well related to existing groups of buildings. If this is not possible for operational reasons, special attention will need to be given to

their siting, design and external appearance with a view to mitigating their impact on the landscape. All agencies involved in rural areas should be encouraging the continuation of good farming practices with emphasis given to conservation.

#### ENV19

The character, appearance and amenity of the countryside will be improved and enhanced by:

- i) Locating new development within the existing physical framework of towns and villages wherever possible;
- ii) Encouraging opportunities to extend and improve wildlife habitats on farmland, for example through additional tree planting, retaining and creating new hedgerows, and creating new wetlands;
- iii) Giving priority to the development and use of derelict and previously developed land, rather than farmland;
- iv) Considering development proposals in the countryside on the basis of their environmental, economic and agricultural implications (including the need to maintain an efficient and flexible agricultural industry), and how they can enhance countryside quality; and
- v) Additional tree planting, including through the Tees Forest initiative.

**5.55** Local planning authorities should take into account agricultural land quality when development on agricultural land is unavoidable. Development on greenfield land, including the best and most versatile agricultural land (which is defined as grades 1, 2 and 3a, and is the most flexible, productive and efficient) should not be permitted unless opportunities have been assessed on previously-developed land and sites within the boundaries of urban areas. Land of the lower grades should normally be developed before that in grades 1, 2 and 3a except where other sustainability considerations suggest otherwise, and the aim of achieving greater countryside character may, in some instances, be better served by directing development away from lower grade land. Examples of such considerations could include biodiversity, landscape character and quality, amenity and heritage interest, and protection of natural resources.

5.56 The severance of farm holdings is an important consideration on the economic use of agricultural land, and should be avoided wherever possible.

#### ENV20

Where development on agricultural land is unavoidable:

- i) Land of the lowest grades (below grade 3a) should be used before land in grades 1, 2 and 3a, except where other sustainability issues suggest otherwise;
- ii) The amount of land developed should be no greater than is justifiably required; and
- iii) Where possible economically viable farm units should be retained and the severance and sub-division of farm holdings avoided.

5.57 The environmental condition of many parts of the urban area is poor and often compares unfavourably with other urban locations elsewhere in the country. The local authorities will continue to tackle the problem through various initiatives and regeneration schemes.

5.58 Some industrial areas present a major cause for concern with large areas of vacant or underused land, and premises in need of extensive repair and improvement if they are to be re-used. There is an impression of low investment and a lack of prosperity, with low demand exacerbating the situation. Such areas discourage and depress those who live and work there, and deter potential investors.

5.59 Areas prominent from the main road and rail corridors in the Tees Valley are important in forming an impression of the area. Improvement of poor quality areas within the main transportation corridors will help to improve image and perception.

5.60 Some parts of the urban scene are lacking in tree cover. There is considerable scope for tree planting and landscaping on unused and other sites where they will not adversely affect existing wildlife habitats, and throughout the urban areas there are many opportunities for small scale projects to improve the appearance of particular sites, provide habitats for wildlife, and assist towards the delivery of Biodiversity Action Plan targets.

5.61 Many parts of the urban area have suffered from economic decline resulting in large areas of derelict and unused land. A survey in 1994/95 showed that there were about 860 hectares of derelict land remaining in the Tees Valley. Some substantial areas of derelict land have been reclaimed and redeveloped over the last 10 years by the Teesside Development Corporation, particularly along the River Tees corridor.

#### ENV21

The urban environment will be improved through the following measures:

- i) Encouraging redevelopment and re-use of vacant and derelict sites, including landscaping and management (including wildlife habitats), where appropriate;
- ii) Identification of priority housing, industrial and commercial regeneration areas by the local authorities and other agencies; and
- iii) Tree planting and landscaping, where appropriate, in areas deficient in planting.

Priority will be given to inner urban areas, outer estates, the River Tees corridor and areas adjacent to main transport routes.

5.62 It is clearly essential that areas of derelict land should be reclaimed and the land put to some beneficial use. When preparing restoration schemes, opportunities should be taken to create new landscapes which enhance the quality of the area, and may provide new recreational and wildlife habitats.

#### ENV22

Derelict and disused land will be reclaimed with priority given to sites that have a major impact on local residents, potential investors and tourists. Where development is unlikely in the short term sites should be used for suitable temporary uses. Restoration and after-use of derelict land should have regard to overall setting, landscape character, archaeological and historical constraints, existing wildlife interests and the potential for creating new habitats and appropriate new recreational opportunities.

## Water Resources and Flood Defence

**5.63** Public concern over the quality of water and the need to conserve water is increasing and while responsibility for water resources is largely in the hands of other agencies the Structure Plan can have a role over the implications of new development.

### ENV23

**Development which is likely to prejudice the quality of surface, coastal or ground waters will not be permitted.**

**5.64** New development could have significant effects on the quality of surface, underground or coastal water. In consultation with the Environment Agency, the local planning authorities should carefully assess the implications of developments which are likely to place the quality of watercourses or groundwater at risk. Development likely to prejudice water quality will not be permitted.

### ENV24

**Land should not be allocated for development where adequate water resources do not exist, or where their provision is considered likely to pose a risk to existing abstractions, water quality, fisheries, amenity, inland navigation or conservation interests.**

**5.65** The supply of water to new developments can be a significant environmental factor. Development in areas where water resources are scarce may result in less reliable supplies for existing users, or may put existing abstractions at risk and be detrimental to amenity, water quality, fisheries, inland navigation and nature conservation. In consultation with the Environment Agency developments should be resisted where existing water supplies are inadequate, or where they cannot be augmented to coincide with the development proposed without adversely affecting the water environment.

**5.66** Watercourses, such as river and stream corridors, ponds and water features, and coastal margins, are of special importance for water resources, nature conservation, fisheries and recreation, and they can make a significant contribution to the character of the landscape.

However, some of these features have lost much of their environmental interest and character in the past through, for example, work to 'improve' water flows or reduce flood risk. However, it is now often possible to restore and enhance water environments, sometimes in conjunction with new development proposals, through improving access and water-related habitats and landscape, or by securing the restoration of natural features. A good example is the River Skerne project in Darlington which has resulted in significant environmental improvements.

### ENV25

**Measures which seek to conserve, restore or enhance the natural elements of watercourses, coastal margins and other waterside areas will generally be supported.**

**5.67** Local planning authorities will be required to carry out flood risk assessments for all site allocations that are to be promoted within flood plain areas or where development may increase the risk of flooding elsewhere.

**5.68** It is Government policy to reduce the risk from flooding. Flood risk is a material consideration and must be properly taken into account when planning new development. Proposals for new development should be assessed against principles set out in PPG 25 'Development and Flood Risk'. In particular a risk based approach should be applied to development proposals through the application of a sequential test in relation to flood risk zones. PPG25 advises that development in low and medium risk flood zones, and in developed areas of high risk flood zones, may be acceptable subject to appropriate flood mitigation measures. The Environment Agency recommends that Local Planning Authorities should encourage the use of sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS) where appropriate, and that potential developers should explore SUDS solutions before proposing conventional surface water drainage systems.

**5.69** "Development constructed without regard to flood risk can endanger life, damage property and require wasteful expenditure on remedial works. While flood defence works can reduce the risk of flooding, they cannot eliminate it", (PPG25, paragraph 10). Development should be directed away from high risk flood zones which are sparsely developed or undeveloped, or which act as a functional flood plain.

#### ENV26

New built development should be avoided wherever possible in the undeveloped floodplain and should be strictly controlled. Local planning authorities should adopt a sequential approach to identifying land to be allocated/used for development purposes based on the degree of risk likely to be involved:

- i) New development should be avoided in locations where it would be liable to cause or exacerbate flooding elsewhere;
- ii) particularly sensitive development such as hospitals, schools and emergency services should not be permitted on any land where there is a risk of flooding or where the access routes are similarly affected;
- iii) residential, commercial and industrial development may be permitted on land inside currently developed areas where there is a risk of flooding provided there are appropriate mitigation measures put in place to minimise the risk of flooding elsewhere, the development is designed to resist flooding and there are suitable warning and evacuation procedures in place; and
- iv) residential, commercial and industrial development should not be permitted outside currently developed areas in locations where there is a high flood risk. Any development should be wholly exceptional and limited to essential transport and utilities infrastructure which should be designed and constructed to remain operational and accessible at all times, result in no net loss of floodplain storage capacity, not impede water flows and not increase flood risk elsewhere.

5.70 “The promoter of development in flood risk areas is responsible for assessing the flood risk to the development and to others elsewhere”, (PPG25, paragraph 20). In applying the sequential test, consultation should take place with the Environment Agency on the distribution of flood risk and the availability/suitability of flood defences. The Agency has prepared indicative flood plain maps to assist in this process.

#### Hazard and Pollution

5.71 There are a large number of installations in the Tees Valley notified to the Health and Safety Executive as using or storing potentially hazardous materials. The existence of these installations can act to limit further development close to them.

5.72 The main efforts to reduce current levels of pollution depend on legislation implemented primarily by the local authorities, the Health and Safety Executive, and the Environment Agency. The Structure Plan is concerned with the location of new development which may add to pollution levels, and also the control of new developments in areas affected by pollution.

#### ENV27

Strict control will be exercised over the location of new plants or factories regarding their hazard potential. Developments involving large numbers of people will not be permitted near hazardous installations and areas allocated for potentially polluting and hazardous industry. Other developments will be permitted if, after consultations with the relevant agencies, the level of risk is considered acceptable.

5.73 New hazardous industrial developments should be carefully controlled. Development proposals in the vicinity of existing hazardous installations may be appropriate, provided that they do not involve the congregation of large numbers of people. The major source of guidance is the Health and Safety Executive.

5.74 It is important to consider carefully the location of new plants and factories that make emissions. These will lower the quality of air and cause nuisance by depositing material in surrounding areas damaging the health of residents and affecting their quality of life. There is also a risk of pollutants combining in the air. The overall aim is to improve air quality. The Environment Agency and Environmental Health Officers in the Borough Councils will be consulted about potentially polluting developments, and measures taken to minimise any pollution.

#### ENV28

Measures will continue to be taken to reduce air pollution. Strict control will be exercised over the location of new plants or factories which add to air pollution. Proposals will be considered against the following criteria:

- i) the location in relation to housing, prestige industrial areas, special protection areas/ramsar sites, sites of special scientific interest and sites of nature conservation importance; and
- ii) the level and type of emissions.

Careful consideration will be given to development proposals on land which is seriously affected by atmospheric pollution to ensure that any risks are acceptable.

5.75 Problems caused by excessive noise, vibration and dust can be minimised by ensuring that new industry, which may create levels of nuisance unacceptable to the local authorities is not permitted near to residential or commercial developments and conversely by not locating residential or commercial developments near to existing industry likely to cause nuisance.

#### ENV29

Potential environmental problems caused by noise, vibration and dust will be minimised by:

- i) Locating new developments liable to cause nuisance at a suitable distance from residential and commercial areas.
- ii) Resisting proposals for residential and commercial development on land that is experiencing excessive levels of noise, vibration or dust.

#### ENV30

Development on, or in the vicinity of, land which is known to be, or may be contaminated will only be permitted where all of the following criteria are met:

- i) evidence is submitted to show that the possibility and nature and extent of contamination has been properly investigated and taken into account;
- ii) any remedial measures necessary to deal with the contamination are effective; and
- iii) there will be no detrimental effect on the environment or unacceptable risks to the health and safety of the local population as a result of the disturbance of contaminants during and after the development.

5.76 Contaminated land poses a pollution risk whether it is in a derelict state, or is as a result of disturbance caused by redevelopment activity, or is an active industrial site. Examples of various types of activity which cause contamination include:

- coal-gas manufacture
- landfill sites and other waste disposal activities
- chemical manufacture
- heavy industry
- sewage treatment works
- metal refining
- oil refining and hydrocarbon storage



## chapter six

## Housing

## Introduction

**6.1** This section deals with future housing requirements in the Tees Valley. It indicates the number of new houses required in each District (excluding new dwellings needed to replace houses which may be demolished during the plan period - see paragraph 6.27); identifies in broad terms the main locations for new housing development; and considers the role of strategic housing policy in moving towards sustainable development in the Tees Valley. Within this framework, local plans will set out more detailed policies at the District level and will identify specific housing sites.

## Strategic Aim and Objectives

**6.2** The strategic aim in respect of housing is:

‘to make adequate land available to meet the housing requirement, minimise the amount of development on greenfield land, and help to create more sustainable communities.’

**6.3** More specifically the policies in the Plan seek to:

- i) ensure that a range and type of housing is available to meet changing requirements, including the needs of small households, low income groups and the executive market;
- ii) make fullest use of the existing dwelling stock, concentrate most additional housing development within urban areas and maximise the use of previously developed sites and buildings so as to reduce the need to build on greenfield sites;
- iii) ensure that new housing sites are well related to existing settlement patterns, are capable of being served by good public transport networks and do not require or place excessive demands on service infrastructure; and
- iv) assist in creating thriving, sustainable communities through ensuring good standards of design, amenities and facilities.

## Context

## National Planning Guidance

**6.4** The government’s policies on planning for housing are set out in revised Planning Policy Guidance Note 3 ‘Housing’, published in March 2000.

**6.5** The government’s aim is to create a more sustainable environment and more sustainable communities. Developing new housing on previously-used sites is central to the approach, together with a firm commitment to the protection of the countryside.

**6.6** The government’s objectives include:

- meeting the housing requirements of the whole community;
- providing wider housing opportunity and choice, a better mix of size, type and location, and creating mixed communities;
- providing sufficient land but giving priority to re-using previously-developed land in urban areas, bringing empty homes back into use, and converting existing buildings in preference to the development of greenfield sites;
- creating more sustainable patterns of development with good accessibility by public transport to jobs, education, health facilities, shopping, leisure and local services;
- reducing car dependency; and
- promoting good design and efficient use of land.

## Regional Planning Guidance

**6.7** Regional Planning Guidance for the North East (RPG1) was issued by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in November 2002. The housing strategy in RPG1 adopts an integrated approach that recognises both the role of new housing and the improvement or replacement of unsatisfactory existing housing in areas of low demand and abandonment to the regional objectives of regeneration. RPG1 contains the following targets on housing:

- turn around the incidence of low demand for housing by 2010;
- provide by 2008, 60% of additional housing on previously-developed land and through conversions of existing buildings and by 2016, 65%; and
- reduce the regional housing vacancy rate to 3%.

**6.8** RPG1 sets out the overall provision for new housing in the form of annual average rates for each strategic planning area to 2006. Indicative rates are provided for post 2006. These indicative rates will only be justified if:

- there is evidence of household growth resulting from the economic renaissance of the region and stemming of out-migration; and
- it is demonstrated that the increased provision will not adversely affect the successful regeneration of areas of low demand nor give rise to further abandonment.

The indicative rates will need to be confirmed through the early review of RPG1.

**6.9** The average annual rate for the Tees Valley 2002-2006 is 1,250, and the indicative annual rate post 2006 is 1,500. These annual rates are expressed as net additions to the stock and do not include any allowance for the replacement of cleared dwellings. There is to be no compensatory provision for demolitions of empty dwellings arising from low demand and abandonment. If local authorities wish to replace those dwellings they will need to be considered as part of the annual rates.

**6.10** RPG1 also specifies:

- the need for challenging targets in development plans for the re-use of previously-developed land for housing to help achieve the regional target;
- the importance of a sequential approach to the identification of land for development to give priority to previously-developed land and buildings in the most sustainable locations; and
- the need to manage the release of land for housing that gives priority to the re-use of sustainable previously-developed land, and also takes account of the wider effects of greenfield land releases on the regeneration of urban areas.

### Sustainable Development, Regeneration and Housing Market Re-structuring

**6.11** Movement towards the achievement of the principles of sustainable development is one of the major challenges facing the Tees Valley over the next 20 years and beyond. The Government is stressing the need to create sustainable

communities with a good quality of life, and the type and location of future housing development will be central to that aim. The priority is to find environmentally sensitive long-term solutions to housing requirements.

**6.12** The policies in the Structure Plan develop the themes of minimising the need for development to spread into the countryside; maximising the amount of new housing development which can take place within the existing built-up areas, particularly on previously developed sites; and making the built-up areas more attractive places in which to live. This includes ensuring excellent facilities and amenities such as open space standards, local shopping and community services.

**6.13** Regeneration is a theme running throughout this Plan. This includes not just the regeneration of individual housing areas, but also whole communities and areas of the Tees Valley. Population losses from certain parts of the Tees Valley have made regeneration programmes difficult to achieve and implement. Population loss from the Tees Valley has probably always been unevenly distributed. In particular losses through out-migration from the east of the Tees Valley are high compared with losses from central and western parts such as Stockton. While it is not practical to change this situation in the short to medium term, an aim of the Plan is to attempt to at least start the process of redressing the balance. The Structure Plan, in line with one of the stated policy objectives of RPG1, seeks to reduce migration losses from the Tees Valley as a whole. The distribution of the overall housing requirement from RPG1 between the Tees Valley authorities reflects an approach that seeks to address the problem of population loss, particularly from the Redcar and Cleveland area.



Photograph 6.1: Housing Demolitions / Low Demand Housing

**6.14** RPG1 has highlighted the problems facing many parts of the region of low demand and housing abandonment. The definition of low demand, given by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, is areas 'where housing is difficult to let or sell because there are not enough households in the area looking for homes; and housing, which is difficult to let or sell because it is of a type, or in a particular type of neighbourhood, which has specific problems which make it very unpopular relative to other housing available.'. A study by the Centre for Urban and Regional Studies in June 2002 ('North East England: changing housing markets and urban regeneration') has identified significant problems of low demand in the Tees Valley. Some 59,400 dwellings (22% of the stock) are identified as being at risk. The greatest problems are in Middlesbrough and Hartlepool, with a band of stock also at risk from central Stockton through to Redcar.

**6.15** The draft North East Regional Housing Strategy (North East Housing Forum, January 2003) proposes a number of measures in response to the challenge of changing housing markets, including:

- an increase in clearance linked to regeneration of main urban areas;
- a review of the Regional Spatial Strategy to concentrate more on the redevelopment of urban sites;
- a shift in resource allocation to give greater priority to improvement of private sector housing conditions alongside the public sector; and
- strengthened partnership working to meet community housing needs.

The strategy will be considered by the newly established North East Housing Board, which will submit the final version to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in July 2003.

**6.16** An appropriate response to the problems of low demand in the Tees Valley is still being formulated. An integrated approach involving all key players will be developed. Four broad themes have already been identified as the starting point for the Tees Valley Housing Strategy:

- market restructuring;
- additional housing requirements;
- investment in existing stock; and
- community needs.

**6.17** Market restructuring will be the key priority. Major policy decisions are likely to lead to:

- a reduction in overall stock numbers;
- the social sector reducing at a greater level pro rata;
- re-establishment of a healthy private sector market;
- improvement in the standards of public and private sector stock;
- increased attractiveness of stock for all sections of the community;
- vibrant town centres with varied and attractive forms of new stock and new housing products; and
- concentration of housing investment in areas with an attractive environment.

### Housing Requirement and Monitoring

**6.18** The number of households in the Tees Valley is expected to increase from about 277,400 in 2002 to about 297,200 by 2016. The Structure Plan seeks to ensure that land is provided for about 20,000 dwellings net over the same period. This is shown in the table below:

Table 6.1: Net Housing Requirement, Tees Valley, 2002 – 2016

Year	2002	2006	2011	2016
Population	649,700	643,900	639,800	638,300
Households	277,400	282,500	289,900	297,200
Housing Stock	282,800	287,800	295,300	302,800
Requirement (Net)		5,000	7,500	7,500

**6.19** The net level of new housing required in the Tees Valley is set out in RPG1. In arriving at this provision for the Tees Valley and other areas in the Region, RPG1 has taken account of the following factors:

- the vision of a dynamic economy, healthy environment and a society where everyone has the opportunity to achieve their full potential;
- the regional strategy and approach to development;
- current knowledge of the availability of land and buildings in urban areas suitable for housing development;

- links between improving and reusing existing housing stock, its renewal where necessary and the need for additional dwellings; and
- environmental and other policy considerations.

**6.20** A robust monitoring procedure will be put in place to show how the Structure Plan policies are performing and to provide an early warning of the need to alter policies and forecasts or change their direction. Monitoring will include:

- demographic factors – population change, migration trends, households and changing household structure and composition;
- housing land availability and urban capacity;
- housing completions and permissions – greenfield land and previously-developed land, particularly since March 2000 when PPG3 was issued; and
- demolitions.

**6.21** Monitoring results will inform both the early review of RPG1 and the review of the Tees Valley local plans.

### Current Land Supply

**6.22** At April 2002 housing allocations and commitments amounted to about 12,200 dwellings. This is shown in table 6.2 below. Commitments relate to sites with planning permission, and allocations to sites without planning permission but identified in a local plan or with a Council resolution.

Table 6.2: Housing Allocations and Commitments (dwellings)

District	Commitment		Allocation		Total
	Green*	PDL**	Green*	PDL**	
Darlington	525	1,025	150	225	1,925
Hartlepool	1,566	915	218	601	3,300†
Middlesbrough	26	205	424	459	1,114°
Redcar & Cleveland	1,180	545	560	78	2,363
Stockton-on-Tees	2,892	452	132	0	3,476
<b>Tees Valley</b>	<b>6,189</b>	<b>3,142</b>	<b>1,484</b>	<b>1,363</b>	<b>12,178</b>

\* Green = Greenfield site

\*\* PDL = Previously developed site

† Based on figures in proposed revised local plan

° Includes sites identified as unviable in Middlesbrough Councils urban capacity study

### Maximising the Capacity of Urban Areas

**6.23** In line with current national and regional advice the Structure Plan seeks to make the maximum use of land within existing urban areas, and particularly previously-developed land, for new housing developments in order to minimise the amount of greenfield land needed.

**6.24** All the Tees Valley authorities are carrying out studies of urban capacity. These are currently at different stages of preparation and completion but the assessment of additional urban capacity given below for 2002 reflects latest knowledge. The capacity figures below represent dwellings which may be provided in addition to existing commitments and allocations.

Darlington	2,500 dwellings
Hartlepool	520 dwellings
Middlesbrough	830 dwellings (plus an additional 700 dwellings at Middlehaven – see paragraph 6.25)
Redcar & Cleveland	1,120 dwellings
Stockton-on-Tees	1,260 dwellings

**6.25** Middlehaven is a strategically important site close to Middlesbrough town centre. The capacity and rate of housing is presently uncertain, reflecting issues such as an untested market, the need to secure continued public sector investment, access to the town centre, public perception of the area, and the availability of local schooling. A study, commissioned by Middlesbrough Council, English Partnerships, Tees Valley URC, and One NorthEast, is currently underway to review and extend the existing development framework, assess the market potential for a range of mixed uses, and provide a robust development concept and delivery plan. 700 dwellings is considered to be a realistic amount of housing that could be achieved during the plan period given the uncertainties, but the study may conclude that a higher or lower figure is more appropriate. A further major regeneration scheme may proceed during the plan period at Victoria Harbour, Hartlepool. This is likely to be a mixed-use scheme, including residential development. Given the early stage of the project no allowance has been made in the Hartlepool urban capacity figure in paragraph 6.24.

## Policies

**H1**

Provision will be made for a total of about 20,000 new dwellings between 2002 and 2016, excluding those required to replace dwellings to be cleared as a result of low demand and abandonment. The replacement of dwellings which are not cleared as a result of low demand and abandonment will be additional to the rates specified in this policy. The annual average rate between 2002 and 2006 will be about 1,250 dwellings (5,000 dwellings in total) and the indicative annual average rate post 2006 will be about 1,500 dwellings (15,000 dwellings in total). This provision will be distributed between each district as follows:

- **DARLINGTON**  
about 950 2002-2006 (240 p.a.);  
about 2,850 post 2006 (285 p.a.)
- **HARTLEPOOL**  
about 750 2002-2006 (190 p.a.);  
about 2,250 post 2006 (225 p.a.)
- **MIDDLESBROUGH**  
about 950 2002-2006 (240 p.a.);  
about 2,850 post 2006 (285 p.a.)
- **REDCAR & CLEVELAND**  
about 800 2002-2006 (200 p.a.);  
about 2,400 post 2006 (240 p.a.)
- **STOCKTON-ON-TEES**  
about 1,550 2002-2006 (390 p.a.);  
about 4,650 post 2006 (465 p.a.)

**6.26** In the Tees Valley between 2002 and 2016 about 20,000 new dwellings will be required to meet the expected growth in households. Provision post 2006 is only indicative at present as stipulated in RPG1. The requirement after 2006 will be subject to confirmation through the early review of RPG1 and will be informed by such factors as:

- number of low demand dwellings;
- success of initiatives to tackle the low demand problem;
- net annual completions;
- household growth;

- migration;
- economic performance; and
- urban capacity studies.

**6.27** The replacement of dwellings which are not cleared as a result of low demand and abandonment will be additional to the rates identified in policy H1. Any empty dwellings replaced due to factors associated with low demand and abandonment will be considered as part of the rates in policy H1. Policies and options to tackle the problems of low demand and abandonment in the Tees Valley are still being developed. Housing market restructuring will consider the need for future clearances within the context of:

- the surplus of social housing;
- surplus of certain types of housing stock e.g. back of pavement terraces;
- scope for improving older terraced housing;
- opportunities for new housing;
- regeneration priorities; and
- meeting community needs.

**6.28** The distribution of the overall housing requirement reflects local district circumstances, including current housing land commitments. For example, Darlington's position to attract footloose, service activities given its good transport links and potential to benefit from Regional Selective Assistance. In Redcar and Cleveland the requirement enables the issue of population decline to be addressed by giving flexibility for a choice of location within the Borough. There is increasing evidence to suggest that out-migration from Middlesbrough is higher than previously thought, and the latest Census data seems to confirm that the Borough is now experiencing higher out-migration than elsewhere in the Tees Valley. The distribution outlined in policy H1 may result in such high levels continuing. This will however be carefully monitored under the 'plan, monitor and manage' approach, and the extent to which an increased housing requirement or a re-distribution between the districts can address this issue will be assessed as part of the process leading up to the early review of RPG1 and the review of the Tees Valley local plans.

6.29 Planning Policy Guidance Note 3 'Housing' makes clear the Government's commitment to concentrating most additional housing development within urban areas and minimising the amount of greenfield land developed. It advocates the adoption of a search sequence in identifying sites to be allocated for housing in development plans. This search sequence should give priority to the re-use of previously-developed land and buildings.

#### H1A

In allocating sites for new development, local plans will follow the search sequence of:

- i) previously developed land and conversion of existing buildings within urban areas;
- ii) other urban land subject to maintaining appropriate standards of urban green space and conserving (and where possible enhancing) the character of the area;
- iii) urban extensions, where the land is accessible or realistically capable of being made accessible to services and jobs by public transport and non-car modes; priority to be given to the use of previously developed sites and conversions before greenfield land.

The target for the proportion of housing development to be provided on previously developed land and through conversions of existing buildings is 60% by 2008, and 65% by 2016. Borough councils should each include a target within their local plans based on the outcome of their urban capacity studies.

6.30 Policy H1A identifies the search sequence which should be followed for local plans in the Tees Valley. Steps I and II will be informed by the preparation of detailed studies of urban capacity through which each Borough Council should seek to maximise the amount of housing on previously developed land. The results of such studies are however likely to demonstrate that it will not be possible to use all previously-developed land in the urban areas for housing. Issues to be considered will include the cost of remediation of severely contaminated sites, viability in economic terms, and sustainable development factors such as location and access to employment, shopping and other facilities.

6.31 In step II examples of other urban land could include vacant land not previously developed, land allocated, but not developed, for employment purposes (informed by the results of a review of employment land, see Economy chapter, Policy EMP4A ), and land identified as urban green space such as allotments or other open space. Although the latter should be acknowledged as a possible source, its practical potential is likely to be limited as it will be important to retain most urban green space for a whole range of reasons (for example, quality of life, visual amenity, recreation, education, nature conservation etc.).

6.32 In step III preference should be given to the use of previously-developed land on the edge of urban areas before greenfield land. In identifying possible locations for extensions to the urban area, local plans should have regard to factors such as location and accessibility, infrastructure, physical and environmental constraints, and the potential to build new communities. However, where previously developed sites perform poorly in relation to these criteria then greenfield sites may take priority. Further detail is given in PPG3, paragraph 31 and 32.

6.33 A number of other criteria relating to accessibility and transportation will also be relevant in considering the allocation of new housing sites, and these are referred to in policy T24A in the Transport chapter.

6.34 In the Tees Valley the proportion of housing development that has occurred on previously-developed land was about 41% between 1995 and 2000. PPG3 (paragraph 23) advises structure plans to adopt land recycling targets. A target can be a useful way of setting the direction and magnitude of change, and in the context of housing can provide impetus to reviewing unused allocations as part of a review of local plans. PPG3, paragraph 40 refers to the process of local planning authorities reviewing applications to renew existing permissions in the light of sustainability criteria and the re-use of previously-developed land and buildings.

6.35 The target of achieving 60% of new housing on previously-developed land by 2008, and 65% by 2016 is aspirational and will not be easy to achieve. The significant amount of greenfield housing land with planning permission in some Boroughs means that it will be difficult for some

authorities to contribute substantially to the regional target and not exceed the annual provision rates set out in RPG1. Other factors which will influence progress towards the target include

- the identification of additional opportunities in urban capacity studies for the re-use of previously developed land
- the availability of funding constraints to open up the potential of sites such as those affected by contamination, and
- the role of organisations such as One NorthEast and the Urban Regeneration Company in helping to make sites available for development.

**6.36** Tackling the issues raised by low demand and abandonment both in the North East and elsewhere in the country has become one of the Government's main priorities. In the Tees Valley local authorities and key players in the housing sector are working in partnership to develop a strategic response to the problems. Planning policies at the regional, sub-regional and local levels need to complement and support measures designed to address housing market failure – this includes the economy, the environment, and town centres as well as housing.

**6.37** New housing development should complement initiatives dealing with low demand and abandonment. In particular new housing schemes should not exacerbate the low demand problem or have the effect of transferring the problem to another area.

**6.38** New housing schemes should make a positive contribution towards achieving sustainable development and building sustainable communities. Local plans should identify appropriate criteria to meet local circumstances, but factors could include:

- Alternative uses, for example would the site be more appropriate for employment or community uses?
- Relationship to the surrounding area and local community, and the role of new development in helping to create a sustainable residential environment
- Meeting the housing needs of the community as identified through housing needs assessments and housing strategies

### H1B

Support will be given to measures that complement the re-structuring of the Tees Valley housing market. Local plans should ensure that new housing development:

- does not result in further abandonment or adversely affect successful regeneration of areas of low demand;
- has regard to the principles of sustainable development outlined in policy SUS2;
- contributes to the creation of sustainable local communities; and
- meets local needs and circumstances.

**6.39** It is important that there is some flexibility in determining proposals for new housing developments both in the light of changes to national and regional guidance, and to respond to local needs and initiatives. New housing development should complement the priorities identified in local plans and local and sub-regional housing strategies.

### H2

Within the overall requirement for 20,000 new dwellings 2002 - 2016, strategic Greenfield sites may be identified for a total of up to 2,000 dwellings in the following general locations:

- south of Middlesbrough
- adjacent to the main urban area of west Stockton.

Land will only be allocated in local plans in these areas if it can be demonstrated that there is a clear need on the basis of the urban capacity studies, the search sequence identified in policy H1A, and that it will not prejudice achieving the recycling target, the successful regeneration of areas of low demand, or give rise to further abandonment. The release of such land will be phased in accordance with policy H2A. Development briefs will be prepared for such land.

**6.40** The structure plan strategy seeks to achieve as much new housing as possible on sustainable sites within the urban areas in order to minimise the amount of development that will be needed on greenfield sites. However taking into account current commitments and allocations there may be a requirement for new greenfield sites to accommodate up to 2,600 new dwellings over the plan period, as summarised in the table below:

Table 6.3: Housing Requirement by Borough, 2002 – 2016

	Darlington	Hartlepool	M'brough	R & C	Stockton	Tees Valley
Net req.	3,800	3,000	3,800	3,200	6,200	20,000
Allocations & commitments	1,925	3,300	1,110	2,360	3,480	12,180
Urban cap.	2,500	520	1,530*	1,120	1,260	6,930
New strategic greenfield land	–	–	1,160	–	1,460	2,620

\*Includes 700 at Middlehaven – see paragraph 6.25

**6.41** Although the table above indicates a requirement for new strategic greenfield land for up to 2,600 new dwellings, policy H2 identifies a total of only 2,000 dwellings. This is to allow for the fact that not all of the Tees Valley urban capacity studies have been finalised and the requirement may decrease as a result of their findings. Further sites may also be identified within the urban areas as work progresses on the housing market restructuring initiative. The shortfall occurs principally in Middlesbrough and Stockton-on-Tees which lie at the heart of the Teesside housing market. Development in the two locations identified in policy H2 will not only meet the needs of the respective Boroughs but could also serve the wider Teesside market area. The scale of existing commitments and allocations suggests that a strategic housing allocation is likely to be required in Middlesbrough in the short to medium term to help reduce out-migration and retain/attract economically active age groups, while that for Stockton-on-Tees is likely to be required only towards the end of the plan period. The situation will however require careful monitoring, particularly the extent to which housing land in one area can meet requirements from other parts of the sub-region. Assessments of urban capacity will also require regular review.

## H2A

Local plans should include a co-ordinated phasing mechanism to manage the release of greenfield land taking account of current and best practice and local circumstances. The phasing should encourage the prior development of previously developed land and buildings to enable the achievement of the recycling target in policy H1A and should not undermine the regeneration of urban areas.

**6.42** New strategic land allocations must be sustainable and should therefore meet a number of general criteria. These include:

- i) sites should be well related to the existing pattern of development, with access to local facilities;
- ii) sites should be capable of being served by good public transport as an alternative to the private car;
- iii) there should be no detrimental effect on important landscape, conservation, wildlife or other environmental concerns; and
- iv) appropriate infrastructure can be provided in a sustainable manner.

**6.43** There is scope for further development to the south of Middlesbrough, an area which has seen significant development over the last 20 years or so. Development in this general location can take advantage of existing infrastructure, and would be in proximity to new employment opportunities and to the Coulby Newham district centre. New development could be served by extensions to existing bus services into central Middlesbrough or by a feeder service into any rapid transit network. There is considerable potential to create a sustainable, mixed use, urban extension.

**6.44** In Stockton on Tees further development adjacent to the main urban area to the west of Stockton would consolidate the existing pattern of development; offer the potential to improve the local environment; would have good access to a range of facilities in the adjoining urban area; and could be served by good public transport through extensions to the bus network, with the possibility of a feeder service to any future rapid transit system.

**6.45** Development briefs will be prepared by the relevant Borough Councils for strategic greenfield



housing sites. These will provide detail on the form and content of housing schemes and any strategic planning obligations required, for example in relation to public transport services. At present it is anticipated that the strategic allocation of up to 2,000 new dwellings will be divided between the two broad locations in policy H2 in approximately equal proportions.

**6.46** While the majority of new greenfield housing land required will be in the general locations identified in policy H2, there may be a need for other, non-strategic, greenfield sites to meet particular local needs and circumstances. Such sites will be allocated through local plan reviews and will be identified as part of the search sequence outlined in policy H1A and the sustainability criteria outlined in policy SUS2.



Photograph 6.2: New Build, Dixons Bank

#### H4

Increased residential densities will be sought on appropriate sites within and on the edge of built-up areas. Sites could include those:

- i) adjacent or close to existing or proposed rail stations;
- ii) close to other major transport nodes such as bus stations or main bus routes;
- iii) in or adjoining town, district and local centres.

Care will be needed to ensure that increased densities are appropriate to the scale and character of the site and its surroundings and that there will not be any detriment to local and residential amenity.

**6.47** An essential part of the Plan, monitor and manage approach set out in PPG3 is the managed release of housing sites in support of the planning strategy contained in both regional planning guidance and development plans. Managing the release of sites allows local planning authorities to influence not just the location of new development, but the type of site released, the order in which they are released, and the timing of development.

**6.48** In the Tees Valley managing the release of housing sites through phasing will be an essential tool in ensuring that:

- Progress is made towards achieving the Tees Valley recycling target of 60% by 2008, and 65% by 2016 for housing development on previously developed land and buildings;
- the availability of greenfield land does not prejudice achieving the above target and the strategic aim of regenerating the urban areas; and
- each Borough Council can coordinate the release of land to meet its own requirements in terms of variety and choice of type and location of sites, and in relation to the type and amount of unused housing land currently committed and/or allocated in local plans.

**6.49** The Borough Councils should draw on current best practice (for example 'Planning to Deliver - The Managed Release of Housing Sites: Towards Better Practice, DTLR July 2001) to try to achieve a common method or set of principles for phasing housing land in local plan reviews.

**6.50** One way to maximise the number of dwellings which can be accommodated within existing urban areas is to design housing schemes to achieve the highest number of dwellings on a site without detriment to the quality of urban life.

**6.51** Sites which are likely to be particularly appropriate for high density residential schemes include:

- i) those adjoining or close to major public transport infrastructure such as rail stations, bus stations or bus routes with a very frequent service or; and
- ii) those within, say, a 10 minute walk of town centres where residents can readily get to good services, employment opportunities and public transport on foot or by cycle.

**H5**

Local plans will include policies to facilitate the provision of affordable housing where there is demonstrable local need.

**6.52** The design of higher density new housing on urban sites will vary depending on local circumstances. Decisions about dwelling mix, density and aspects such as the amount of car parking provision will be determined by factors such as surrounding land use, scale and density of adjacent developments and level of open space/garden requirements. The aim, however, should be to maintain a high quality of amenity. Planning Policy Guidance Note 3, paragraph 58 advises that developments of less than 30 dwellings per hectare net make inefficient use of land, and that densities of between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare net are more efficient.

**6.53** 'Affordable' or 'low cost' housing is intended to meet the needs of local people who for financial reasons are unable to compete for accommodation in the open housing market. This situation increasingly occurs in rural areas where there are pressures on the limited housing stock from people outside the local community who can afford to pay more for their housing than local people.

**6.54** The need for affordable housing is acknowledged as a material planning consideration which may be taken into account in formulating development plan policies. Where there is a proven lack of affordable housing to meet local needs, local authorities may seek to negotiate with developers for its inclusion in new schemes. In the Tees Valley affordable housing appears only to be a significant issue in certain parts of the rural area, although Housing Needs assessments may identify affordability problems in parts of the urban areas.

**6.55** Local plans will, where appropriate, identify levels of local need, indicate overall targets for the provision of affordable housing, and determine specific sites for development.

**6.56** Household structure will continue to change during the plan period. There will be an increase in the number of elderly people, many of whom will be living on their own. There will also

be increases in single parent households and the number of young, single people living on their own, and fewer households will consist of a married couple with children.

**H6**

Where appropriate local plan housing allocations and proposals for development should provide for a range of house types including:

- i) the requirements of smaller households and disadvantaged groups; and
- ii) small scale, high quality, low density housing.

**6.57** Although PPG3 advises against the inefficient use of land, and seeks higher densities for new housing development, it is considered that a number of special circumstances apply in the Tees Valley which merit the provision of some small scale, high quality, low density housing. These circumstances include:

- a lower than average percentage of good quality medium and larger houses in the existing stock;
- the risk of out-migration of higher income groups e.g. senior managers and company executives, with a corresponding increase in commuting, and
- the potential deterrents to inward investment and the retention of successive businesses if the Tees Valley cannot offer a full range of housing opportunities.



Photograph 6.3: Retirement Home, Linthorpe Road, Middlesbrough

**6.58** Provision of low density, high quality housing can be made, for example, either as part of a larger housing scheme or on small sites within the urban areas or villages, subject to other development plan policies.

#### **H7**

Local plans will guide the location and provision of new gypsy sites. Sites should:

- i) be in areas frequented by gypsies;
- ii) have reasonable access to essential services and facilities;
- iii) be relatively unobtrusive or capable of screening; and
- iv) have adequate work space and play space.

**6.59** Prior to the introduction of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, both Durham County Council and the former Cleveland County Council had made adequate provision for gypsies in the Tees Valley area. Local authorities are now no longer under a statutory obligation to provide such sites. There is likely to be an increasing tendency for gypsies to promote their own sites and while this is to be encouraged, normal planning policies should continue to be applied. (see for example Policy ENV18).

#### **H8**

Support will be given to measures which make better use of the existing housing stock, including:

- i) maintaining and improving existing houses to a high standard;
- ii) bringing empty houses back into use and identifying initiatives to reduce the vacancy rate;
- iii) reducing under occupation; and
- iv) ensuring that the environment of housing areas is of a good quality.

**6.60** Although the Tees Valley Housing Market Re-structuring Initiative will address issues of clearance and improvement as part of its consideration of options, making good use of existing housing stock will represent a sustainable solution in many instances and will help to reduce the need to develop on greenfield sites. Adequate resources must however, be available to tackle under investment and improve the existing stock. Measures to bring empty houses back into use and reduce the vacancy rate should be supported. It is also essential that improvements in the housing stock are accompanied by environmental and infrastructure improvements in order to increase the quality of life for local residents and ensure that the full potential of the housing stock is realised.

## chapter seven

### Transport

#### Introduction

**7.1** The sustainable land use strategy developed in the Tees Valley Structure Plan is crucially reliant on a sustainable transport policy being in place. This structure plan seeks to follow sustainable objectives by minimising the amount of greenfield sites given over to development and reducing the amount of harmful emissions which pollute the atmosphere and threaten the long-term health of the Tees Valley community. Both of these key objectives are influenced by, and serve to influence, the sustainable transport strategy, which has been developed.

**7.2** The ethos of the transport vision for the Tees Valley, which is already broadly adopted as a transport policy for the five Tees Valley authorities, is that private motorised travel is the greatest source of environmental pollution in the transport sector, and causes the greatest pressure to give over valuable greenfield sites to new roads, and therefore is the main target to be controlled and constrained in the future.

**7.3** A key component of transport policy in the Tees Valley is social inclusion. Transport and the ability to procure services needed for day-to-day life is regarded as a right for all, not a few. The provision of improved public transport will mean that more people who do not have access to a private motor car (which in 1998 comprise 38% of all households in the Tees Valley) (Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions, National Trip End Model: TEMPRO v3.1, January 1998) are able to get around safely, comfortably and efficiently. Indeed, the fact that car ownership is low means that measures to improve the speed and efficiency of public transport, such as bus lanes, can be implemented before congestion becomes a serious problem and with relatively little impact on other transport users.

#### Strategic Aim and Objectives

**7.4** The strategic aim for transport policies in this chapter is to develop a safe, environmentally friendly and efficient transport system, which serves the needs of all residents, industry and commerce in the Tees Valley. From this aim the following objectives can be identified:

- (i) To encourage the use of more sustainable modes of transport, such as walking, cycling and public transport;
- (ii) To promote viable alternatives to the private car and encourage the transfer of freight from road to more suitable modes;
- (iii) To locate development in areas which are presently served by public transport or can be served by public transport in the future; and
- (iv) To ensure that the transport system is efficient and accessible to all; and
- (v) To improve the economic prosperity in the Tees Valley, including tackling peripherality, opening up areas for development and facilitating the efficient movement of goods.

**7.5** The vision for transport in the Tees Valley is based on encouraging the use of sustainable modes of transport such as railways, buses, cycling and walking. The central focus to this long term transport vision is an improved railway network, to serve the needs of passengers and businesses alike, which will provide an excellent network of high quality, fast public transport links across the Tees Valley. This vision involves the re-use of redundant railways, the construction of some new railways, the opening and re-opening of new passenger stations and freight facilities.

**7.6** Two important components of the transport vision are currently being investigated. A new multi-modal crossing of the River Tees between South Bank and Port Clarence (Policy T3A) will create many new opportunities for travel between the communities on the north and south banks of the river. The development of a rapid transit system in the sub-region (Policy T3B) will play a large part in the vision of creating an efficient transport network for the Tees Valley. Both schemes are currently subject to feasibility studies, and further work will be undertaken during the period of this plan.

**7.7** The development of the railway network will need to be supported by improvements to other sustainable transport modes such as buses, walking and cycling. This system will form the backbone of a more sustainable transport network across the whole of the Tees Valley, providing convenient and attractive transport choices for many more people in the Tees Valley than are currently available.

**7.8** This structure plan sets out the basis for land use and development in the Tees Valley, and as such

both informs and is informed by other initiatives in the sub-region. An important document in this process is the Tees Valley Baseline and Scenario Study report, produced by GHK Consultants. This contains a vision to develop the Tees Valley into a high quality business and residential area. The future transport network will help to contribute to that vision.

## Context

### National Guidance

**7.9** The policies in this chapter are based on the Government's Planning Policy Guidance Note 13: Transport, which relates to the interface between land use planning and transport planning. The three central themes of PPG13 are:

- to reduce growth in the length and number of motorised journeys;
- to promote more sustainable alternative transport systems as replacements, including public transport, cycling and, for short journeys, walking; and
- over time, to reduce the reliance on the private car through the greater harmonisation of land use and transport policies.

**7.10** The tenets of Government Planning Policy Guidance are reinforced by the Road Traffic Reduction Act 1997, which imparts on local authorities the duty to set targets for constraining road traffic growth and draw up policies which will deliver these targets. Delivery of targets will rely both on road traffic restraint and the putting in place of attractive, convenient alternative modes of travel. The role of the telecommunications revolution in reducing trip making is a further key component of longer term traffic reduction plans.

**7.11** The National Air Quality Strategy and Air Quality Regulations 1997 identify air quality targets to be achieved by 2005. These are based on the detrimental health effects of air pollutants and the cost of feasible abatement technology. A reduction of emissions from transport sources is central to the Government's strategy. This will be achieved through improvements in vehicle design and through local air quality management strategies outlined in local transport plans. The policies outlined in this chapter will aid the implementation of local air quality management strategies in the Tees Valley.

**7.12** The publication of 'A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone' (Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions; July 1998) heralded a new direction for transport policy in the UK. The main focus of the policy is the establishment of an integrated transport strategy. This means integration between different types of transport, land use planning, the environment and other policies on education, health, social inclusion, crime prevention and economic regeneration. Local authorities have been given increased powers in both the planning of the transport system and in the collection and spending of revenue to fund schemes.

**7.13** The government has developed the proposals contained in "A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone" through a series of publications and policy documents. These include:

- A New Deal For Railways
- A New Deal for Trunk Roads
- Sustainable Distribution: A Strategy
- From Workhorse to Thoroughbred: A better role for bus travel.
- Inland Waterways
- Road Safety Policy
- Ports Policy
- Breaking the Logjam
- Revision of Planning Policy Guidance Note 13
- The Ten Year Plan

**7.14** A core part of the proposals outlined in the White Paper is the introduction of Local Transport Plans (LTPs). LTPs have a five year funding horizon and are subject to statutory public consultation. An important facet of this new Central Government policy is to achieve greater integration between land use and transport planning. The revised PPG13 includes maximum car parking standards for new developments, increased importance to public transport provision and a requirement that development plan land allocations should include accessibility as a criterion.

**7.15** The Ten Year Transport Plan sets out how the government aims to achieve the broad objectives set out in the White Paper and subsequent daughter documents. The plan envisages a large increase in transport related

investment, by both public and private sectors, and in many cases with public and private sectors working in partnership. It predicts a significant decrease in congestion over the life of the Plan. The Tees Valley is committed to embracing the principles of government transport policy and taking every opportunity to further the implementation of the 10 year plan.

### Regional Guidance

**7.16** Regional Planning Guidance for the Northern Region (RPG1) was published in November 2002.

**7.17** RPG1 identifies two key strategic priorities for transport in the North East:

- achieve accessibility throughout the region and for all sections of the population; and
- reduce the environmental impact of communications activity, both locally and globally.

**7.18** The Guidance encourages development that reduces the need to travel and promotes passenger interchange between modes. The use of traffic management techniques to introduce priority for buses is encouraged.

**7.19** Road construction is limited to schemes that will:

- meet localised capacity requirements;
- improve road safety;
- reduce adverse environmental impact; or
- provide new opportunities for redevelopment and regeneration.



Photograph 7.1: Queen Elizabeth Way, Stockton

**7.20** The Guidance also requires that former rail corridors are protected in order to retain their potential as transport links. The role of light rail, tram or guided bus should be assessed to supplement the limited rail system in the Tees Valley.

## Sustainable Development

**7.21** A modern transport system is vital to the future of the Tees Valley. Transport networks must support the policies contained within the Tees Valley Structure Plan which are designed to improve the local economy, increase prosperity and reduce social exclusion. This must be achieved through a transport system that minimises damage to peoples' health and the environment. The needs of the communities in the Tees Valley now, and in future generations, must be considered.

## Transport Policy

### T1

Transport policies and proposals for new transport infrastructure in the Tees Valley will be developed primarily to provide a safe and efficient transport network. Proposals will be evaluated against the following criteria:

- i) maintenance of and improvement to the safety of the transport network;
- ii) improvement to the environment of the Tees Valley;
- iii) their contribution towards providing better sustainable transport mode choices;
- iv) their contribution towards a socially inclusive transport system which all existing and potential travellers can use and afford;
- v) their contribution towards restricting the rate of traffic growth; and
- vi) their impact on the economic well-being of the Tees Valley's residents and businesses, including their contribution towards regeneration.

A range of alternative measures to deal with identified transport problems, incorporating some or all transport modes, will always be evaluated to ensure that the achievement of the above criteria is maximised.

**7.22** Transport policies and proposals in the Tees Valley will be evaluated against a range of criteria. The development of a safe and efficient transport system for all users is central to the Tees Valley Structure Plan. In order to achieve the maximum

benefit from the above criteria a range of transport modes and alternative measures will always be considered.

**T2**

The Tees Valley authorities will work in partnership with each other, regional government, central government, rail operators, bus operators, ports, airports and other private sector partners to develop a sustainable integrated transport system.

**7.23** The policies in this structure plan have not been developed in a vacuum. The local authorities in the Tees Valley are already committed to transport policies, strategies and programmes which are based upon sustainable aims and social inclusion. These policies are most commonly expressed in the Local Transport Plan documents which the five Tees Valley authorities submit to central Government to bid for capital funding for transport projects. These are designed to deliver a more sustainable transport system which is less environmentally intrusive and meets the needs of all residents and businesses.

**7.24** The five Tees Valley authorities have fully embraced the belief that transport problems, and in particular road traffic problems, can not be alleviated simply by increasing capacity through road construction. Constructing roads to cater for demand encourages more car use ahead of other modes, encourages greater journey length and encourages new journeys by car which would otherwise not have taken place.

**7.25** In the Tees Valley there are still new roads that need to be built, and existing roads which need to be improved. These roads are needed to facilitate adequate communications with other parts of the country, to bypass communities that suffer from poor environmental conditions, to foster economic regeneration of derelict sites and to release capacity elsewhere in the network for public transport, cycling and walking.

**7.26** The transport strategy laid down for the Tees Valley concentrates on improving alternatives to the private car, principally public transport (bus, rail and perhaps light rapid transit), cycling and walking. The Tees Valley is fortunate that the severest traffic congestion seen in some parts of the

United Kingdom is not experienced here. However, with current predictions of traffic growth in the region it will not be long before sustained and severe traffic congestion is experienced on many of the Tees Valley's roads. The transport strategy therefore seeks to act now to improve facilities for alternative modes to the private vehicle and encourage their use to avoid future grid-lock.

**T3**

The needs of people with disabilities and mobility impairments must be fully incorporated into all transport systems.

**7.27** Public transport alone is not enough for the many people in the Tees Valley who suffer from disabilities or other mobility impairments. It is therefore crucial that the needs of the disabled and mobility impaired underpin all transport systems designed in the future so that inclusion of all members of society in the Tees Valley is achieved. Public transport operators should ensure that their vehicles comply with the Disability Discrimination Act and that adequate provision is made for wheelchair access and storage.

**Rural Transport**

**7.28** The Tees Valley includes a large amount of rural land as well as the main urban centres. Land use and transport planning policy tends to be dominated by the issues and concerns of urban areas. Whilst the vast majority of issues remain equally applicable for both urban and rural areas there are several factors unique to rural areas that must be considered.

**7.29** For many of the residents in rural communities the private car is an important and often only means of obtaining goods, services and reaching facilities. A longer journey than for urban residents is often required, whilst public transport services are often less frequent and more expensive than in urban areas.

**7.30** The authorities in the Tees Valley recognise the special needs of rural areas and the need to ensure that as wide a range as possible of services are accessible to residents in such areas. It is important to ensure that suitable public transport services are available in order to link rural communities to each other and to the main urban centres and to reduce the dominance of the private

car. The role of cycleways, greenways and quiet roads in enhancing the quality of rural life and providing sustainable transport alternatives will be encouraged.

**7.31** Rural Transport Partnerships offer a way of bringing together stakeholders affected by transport issues in rural areas. Such partnerships can achieve a great deal by recognising the difficulties faced by all members and providing solutions which are the most efficient and effective way of solving the transport problems of rural areas. Rural Transport Partnerships may have an important part to play in those parts of the Tees Valley outside the main urban areas.

### A Twenty Year Transport Strategy

**7.32** Within the twenty year period of this Structure Plan it is envisaged that existing transport problems will significantly worsen if they are not tackled directly. The use of public transport by more people is a central theme to solving these problems, and it is intended to achieve this by a careful combination of encouragement and restraint.

**7.33** Public transport use will only grow if the network is fast, reliable, frequent, affordable, safe and goes between the right places at the right times of day. The five Tees Valley authorities have already taken early strides towards implementing such a network, but there is still much work to be done over the next few years. This structure plan must also bear in mind that the loose regulation of buses and railways means that local authorities can only achieve so much on their own. The Tees Valley authorities are committed to working in partnership with bus and rail operators to improve all aspects of public transport services. Beyond this the Tees Valley authorities are willing to explore the possibilities that changes to the regulatory framework for public transport provision may bring in the future, to see if a new system of delivering public transport in the Tees Valley might give better value for money and a better service to passengers.

**7.34** The Tees Valley authorities are also strongly committed to the greater use of cycling and walking as a transport mode, particularly for shorter journeys when a car is often unnecessary. The Tees Valley Cycling Strategy has laid down a framework for expanding the use of cycles and the facilities available for cyclists. The Tees Valley authorities are committed to following local action plans which

will facilitate this expansion. Similarly, the transport, planning and urban regeneration policies in the Tees Valley all recognise the importance of walking as a key mode of travel, and measures to encourage walking will be systematically implemented in the coming years.

**7.35** With the alternative modes of transport significantly improved, it is still the case that a large number of journeys will be made by motorised private vehicles, principally cars, motorcycles and goods vehicles. This structure plan must recognise this fact and develop ways of ameliorating the environmental impact of such journeys.

**7.36** The Tees Valley authorities are committed to managing the demand for travel by road, and have developed a Tees Valley-wide framework which targets certain sectors of the road transport market that cause particular environmental and safety problems, or are particularly suitable for other more sustainable modes. These target transport sectors are:

- single occupant commuting by car to town centres and major out-of-town centres involving long-stay car parking;
- journeys to school by car;
- short journeys more suitable for cycling and walking, especially short distance shopping trips; and
- long distance bulk freight movements which are suitable for transport by rail.

**7.37** A number of measures are being implemented within the Tees Valley to persuade motorists and companies in the above categories to consider alternative modes for their journey. These include:

- the control of parking charges and supply to restrain long stay parking;
- the reallocation of road space to more sustainable forms of transport, such as buses, cycles and walking;
- the improvement of awareness to encourage travellers to consider the full financial, social and environmental costs to themselves and others of their transport choices;
- improvements to safety levels along key local transport corridors, for instance on the approaches to schools;



- encouragement to major companies to transport goods by rail where possible and assistance in seeking Government grant for rail freight facilities; and
- in the long term, the consideration of road pricing, road tolls or permit systems to charge for use of the highway in a private vehicle during certain (or all) times of the day.

**7.38** To identify the most suitable mode for freight movements, users should consider six key criteria: availability, reliability, flexibility, security, speed and cost. To encourage a modal switch from road, measures must be developed that favour rail, water and multi modal freight movements in this assessment process.

**7.39** Within the period of this plan it is recognised that the role of telecommunications in reducing the need to travel will increase. It is recognised that business will still involve frequent meetings but that the rising cost of private car travel and falling costs of telecommunications will divert a limited amount of business travel into tele-meetings, tele-conferences, tele-services and increase the opportunities for tele-commuting.

**7.40** The implementation of the above measures will serve to limit the growth in demand for private vehicle journeys, and perhaps even reduce actual levels of road traffic below those currently seen. The success of these policies is crucially dependent on the means of travel, such as good public transport, being in place. It is clear that there is a strong interaction between the measures that encourage use of public transport, cycling and walking, and those which discourage the use of private vehicles for certain key travel market sectors. The following policies develop how the Structure Plan can encourage, at a strategic level, these measures to be implemented.

### A New Tees Crossing

**7.41** A component of the long term vision for the Tees Valley is a new crossing of the River Tees between South Bank and Port Clarence. The new crossing of the Tees will have a profound influence on the image and future use of land either side of the lower reaches of the Tees Estuary. The crossing will also open up numerous new opportunities for passenger and freight movements using a far more direct means of access than is presently available. Examples of the kinds of movement which would greatly benefit from such a crossing would be

Middlesbrough to Hartlepool, Redcar to Hartlepool, Redcar to Stockton and Wilton to Billingham.

**7.42** The principal purpose of the new crossing would be to provide a new rail access across the Tees Estuary. However, in order to allow bus access across the estuary and to maximise the benefit of the crossing to the communities, workplaces and brownfield sites either side of the crossing it is likely that a road crossing would also be needed. A multi-modal estuary crossing, perhaps incorporating separate cycleway and walkway, is a bold statement of the Tees Valley's commitment to an integrated transport system that serves the needs of all members of the community. The development of secure park and ride sites at either side of the crossing would link to frequent rail and bus based public transport systems accessing a wide variety of destinations on the other side of the river.

**7.43** The viability of such a scheme requires further appraisal, but the local authorities in the Tees Valley are committed in principle to the development of a new crossing of the River Tees. A study into the feasibility of the proposed Tees Crossing is now underway.

#### T3A

A new Tees Crossing may be built between South Bank and Port Clarence and a feasibility study is to be carried out by the local authorities into the scheme. In the meantime, routes which would serve the intended alignment of the crossing are to be protected from development which would prejudice its completion. The local authorities are to investigate the extent to which various modes of transport can be incorporated into the crossing.

### Rapid Transit System

**7.44** Considerable time and resource were expended by Cleveland County Council in the late 1980s and early 1990s in planning a light rapid transit (LRT) network for the Tees Valley. The conclusion of this work was that an LRT between Hardwick, Stockton, Middlesbrough and Ormesby would be viable as a medium term option.

**7.45** The transport case for the LRT system still stands. It will provide a fast, frequent and comfortable means of transport between some of

the key journey attractors in the Tees Valley. It will also complement the existing rail network and form part of the public transport backbone for the Tees Valley on which bus, cycle and pedestrian networks can be based. The Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit, on behalf of ONE North East, has recently appointed consultants to prepare a feasibility report looking at the options for a rapid transit system, either light rail or bus based.

**7.46** If the proposed Rapid Transit System is based on light rail technology, further development, legal processes and construction will take many years. It is probable that the complete system will be opened in stages, with the core route being constructed first to enable demand and acceptance to develop over time. Any parts of the system which are reserved for use but which are not currently required for the rapid transit system may be used for busways or Green Routes as discussed in paragraphs 7.84 to 7.90. This incremental approach will allow maximum use to be made of the reserved corridors.

**7.47** Stage 1 of the consultants' work is due to complete in January 2002. Following that, and dependent on the outcomes and conclusions, further work will be undertaken.

### T3B

The alignment of the proposed light rapid transit system between Hardwick and Ormesby via Stockton, Teesdale and Middlesbrough will be protected as a public transport route.

## Walking and Cycling in the Tees Valley

**7.48** The benefits of walking and cycling are apparent for all to see. They consume only resources which are renewable. They improve the health of individuals involved as well as the health of the wider community and the environment. They are flexible in routeing in a way that motorised travel can never be. Despite all these outstanding virtues walking, and particularly cycling, are often not considered as realistic transport choices.

**7.49** There are many reasons for this. Many people are elderly, disabled or laden with shopping and find walking and cycling are not realistic options. Others are just unfit and do not regard cycling and walking as a way of improving personal health. Cycling is considered unsafe, often with

some justification, as road layout and motorist behaviour can sometimes make cycling an intimidating form of transport. As more people reject cycling and walking in favour of the car, these problems of course get worse, and this vicious circle is something which local authorities in the Tees Valley are committed to arrest.

**7.50** In 1998 the Tees Valley authorities jointly published the Tees Valley Cycling Strategy. This document built on the Cleveland Cycling Strategy of 1995 to incorporate Darlington and to pay due regard to the latest developments in cycle promotion, most notably the National Cycling Strategy. A strategic network of cycle routes has been, and continues to be, developed. Further policies on cycle parking facilities, cycle provision in new development, the needs of cyclists on existing highways, promotion, safety and guidance for major employers were also included. The Tees Valley authorities are committed to both implementing the policies of the Cycling Strategy where possible and monitoring the success of the Strategy in encouraging cycle use. Further development of the Cycling Strategy and related matters will be taken forward in partnership with Sustrans, the sustainable transport charity.

### T4

Further additions to the strategic network of cycle routes will be made in the Tees Valley area. Links with routes outside the Tees Valley will be encouraged.

**7.51** A strategic cycle network has been identified for the Tees Valley. Many sections of the network have already been completed. The Tees Valley is fortunate to be served by one of the major cycle routes in the United Kingdom, National Cycle Route 1. This passes through Middlesbrough and Stockton on its way between Dover and Inverness.



Photograph 7.2: Cycle Route, Hartburn, Stockton

**T5**

Cycling facilities must be incorporated in to appropriate new developments, and provision made at transport interchange points.

7.52 This strategic network supports the local cycling networks being developed by Tees Valley authorities which feed the main cycle routes and provide local access between housing, retail, commercial and leisure developments. All new developments must provide adequate cycling facilities for residents, customers and employees. Local access for cycles is also being improved to existing attractions.

**T6**

Priority will be given to the interests and safety of pedestrians in all future development. Safe, convenient and secure pedestrian routes will be provided along identified pedestrian desire lines. The needs of pedestrians will be held uppermost in the design of new development.

7.53 Discouragements to walking are often experienced in the Tees Valley similar to those experienced by potential cyclists. It is often the case that the motor car is the chosen mode of many for an extremely short journey (for instance to a local school) which would be undertaken just as quickly by foot with less environmental damage and at less cost. The fact that the choice of the motor car is made despite the apparent attractions of walking demonstrates that pedestrian networks are not, or are perceived as not, sufficiently safe and convenient. Careful planning of new development, and sensitive remedial traffic management at existing development, can go a long way to addressing these real and perceived threats to the pedestrian. These traffic management issues are developed further later in this chapter.

7.54 The encouragement of cycling and walking features strongly in the Tees Valley authorities' requirement that Travel Plans (formerly known as Green Travel Plans) should be submitted for all new major developments. This requirement, and the encouragement of the proprietors of existing major developments to develop similar Travel Plans, are discussed later in this chapter.

**T7**

A strategic network of greenways will be developed. This strategic network will complement local greenway and rights of way networks.

7.55 One way of achieving increased cycling and walking activity between the urban areas, rural communities and the open countryside in the Tees Valley is through the development of a network of Greenways. Greenways will be a network of largely car free off road routes that connect facilities and open spaces in and around towns, to the countryside. Their use may be shared by people on foot, bike and horseback and will serve commuting and leisure uses. Such a network will complement the existing strategic and local cycle network and increase the opportunities for sustainable transport within the Tees Valley.

7.56 When Greenways, cycle ways and foot-paths cross or share existing roads, measures should be taken to ensure that traffic travels at appropriate speeds. The Countryside Agency's quiet roads initiative aims to make some minor roads more attractive for those who wish to walk, cycle or ride along them. The scheme is analogous to the home zone scheme in urban areas. Such schemes should be considered in order to broaden the travel choices available to people and reduce the dominance of the private car.

### Railways in the Tees Valley

7.57 The Tees Valley has a rich heritage in railway development, and is known around the world for some of the railway achievements over the last 170 years – the world's first fare paying passenger railway between Stockton and Darlington is perhaps the prime example of this. The Tees Valley once had a dense network of railways built to serve a variety of purposes including the carriage of passengers, the serving of mining and heavy industry and the transfer of goods and minerals from ship to land. The region is criss-crossed with railway alignments, particularly in the main urban centres of Darlington, Stockton, Middlesbrough and Hartlepool as well as the former ironstone mining areas in East Cleveland.

## T8

The alignments of former railways will be protected from development which would prejudice their use as transport corridors. The expansion of the Tees Valley's rail transport system will be considered along the following corridors:

- i) Middlesbrough – Guisborough;
- ii) Guisborough – Saltburn;
- iii) Tees Crossing, with rail connections to Billingham, Graythorp and South Bank.

To enable this, the following existing and future railway alignments will be protected from further development:

- i) the former Guisborough railway between Morton Grange and north Skelton, including a spur to Guisborough Town Centre;
- ii) South Bank to the proposed Tees Crossing south approach;
- iii) Port Clarence freight railway to proposed Tees Crossing north approach; and
- iv) Seal Sands railway alignment between Graythorp and proposed Tees Crossing north approach.

**7.58** Despite this heritage, the railway network which now remains is relatively sparse. There are national routes serving Darlington and Middlesbrough, with East Coast Main Line and Cross Country trains connecting Darlington to London, Scotland, Yorkshire, the West Midlands, the South West and Wales while Transpennine trains connect Middlesbrough, Thornaby and Yarm to Yorkshire and Lancashire. Within the region and its immediate environs there are the principal east-west passenger rail axis between Darlington and Saltburn, the Durham Coast route between Middlesbrough, Stockton, Hartlepool and Wearside/Tyneside, and the Esk Valley Line from Middlesbrough to Whitby.

**7.59** The Tees Valley also benefits from good facilities for rail freight, although some of these facilities are now largely unused and in disrepair. Regular freight services use branch lines between Saltburn and Boulby Potash Mine, Norton and

Ferryhill (the Stillington line) and between Billingham and Port Clarence. Major industrial sites such as Teesport, CORUS Redcar and the major chemical plants at Wilton and Billingham are served by their own railway sidings. Major rail freight handling depots are located at Wilton Freightliner Terminal and Tees Yard, although the wide expanses of Tees Yard which once housed a thriving goods shunting operation are now largely disused.

**7.60** The network of passenger and freight railways which currently exist form an excellent framework on which a new, modern railway system for the Tees Valley can be based. The reopening of disused railway alignments and the provision of key new infrastructure are the opportunities which can encourage the rail network to expand.

**7.61** The Tees Valley has a legacy of disused railway alignments which could be brought back into use to improve the public transport network in the region. Supplementing these reopened alignments with a new crossing of the River Tees would provide a new network that could serve many more of the journey demands which currently exist between urban and industrial centres in a convenient, fast and sustainable fashion.

**7.62** These railway alignments include:

- the Middlesbrough to Guisborough branch via Nunthorpe;
- the Guisborough to Saltburn branch via North Skelton and New Skelton;
- the Port Clarence line between Old Billingham and the proposed Tees Crossing; and
- the Seal Sands line between Graythorp and the proposed Tees Crossing.

When complete this network alongside the existing network will allow a direct means of access between all major settlements in the Tees Valley as well as stimulating the possibility of new sustainable development for housing and/or industry in East Cleveland, the Tees Estuary and Seal Sands areas. The completed network would comprise of loops north and south of the Tees Crossing which resemble a figure of eight. Improved linear rail connections to Tyneside/Wearside (via Seaham), Durham/Tyneside (via Stillington), Darlington (via Allens West) and Northallerton (via Yarm) would feed into this figure of eight system.

### Passenger Railways

**7.63** In the short term it is recognised that the existing passenger rail network has a vital part to play in the development of a network of public transport routes that incorporates railways, Busways, bus priority measures and other bus improvements. To this end the Tees Valley authorities will continue to press for improved rail services across the Tees Valley, including the enhancement of passenger rolling stock standards, the improvement of journey speeds and frequencies, the reintroduction of early morning, late evening and weekend services and the opening of new rail halts on existing lines. In the case of the Stillington branch between Norton and Ferryhill the Tees Valley authorities will also work with railway companies to identify whether existing freight only lines are suitable for passenger trains.

#### T9

Increased use of passenger railways will be sought by the provision of new rail stations, reopening former stations, relocating existing stations and improving service frequencies on existing passenger and freight rail lines. Facilities at existing stations will also be improved including making all stations accessible to the disabled and provision for passengers using bicycles for part of their journey.

**7.64** The Tees Valley authorities have medium term aspirations, backed up by comprehensive transport studies, for the level of service which is needed on existing rail services in the Tees Valley. These include more frequent trains between Hartlepool and Stockton/ Middlesbrough/ Saltburn, more trains stopping at some stations on the Darlington to Saltburn line and an improved service on the Middlesbrough to Nunthorpe rail line.

**7.65** The Tees Valley authorities are also lobbying for improvements to the Transpennine rail services, which would involve faster running times on key sections across the Pennines, higher frequencies and new faster more comfortable rolling stock. It is also important that longer distance rail service frequencies are maintained and enhanced at Darlington Bank Top station.



Photograph 7.3: Thornaby Station

**7.66** In order to complement the above improvements in service levels a programme of new railway stations has been developed. These new stations, some of which are to be located on sites previously occupied by closed stations, will come together with the existing station network to provide new opportunities for fast, frequent and reliable public transport provision for local residents, employees and visitors.

**7.67** New stations are proposed in Hartlepool Borough on the Newcastle-Sunderland-Stockton-Middlesbrough Durham Coast rail line at **North Hartlepool** and **Hart Station**. Hart Station rail halt would be located in the vicinity of the station which previously served this community, while North Hartlepool would need to be carefully located on the railway embankment near West View Road. Both stations would provide new public transport opportunities for residents, visitors and, in the case of North Hartlepool, employees, to the north of the Hartlepool urban area. The cases for the reopening of recently closed **Greatham** station and a new station at **Graythorp**, both to the south of the Borough, are also worthy of investigation should new development in the vicinity of these stations provide the potential to justify a service once more.

**7.68** Further south on the Durham Coast rail line a new station is proposed at **Old Billingham**, the site of the original Billingham station at the Station Road level crossing. This station would serve surrounding residential areas and could also serve shopping, education and leisure purposes in Billingham town centre. A further new station at Roseworth, between Stockton and Billingham, is also planned. Located next to the A1027 ring road, this will serve a residential area. Old Billingham is expected to open in 2003, with Roseworth following by 2005.

7.69 Between Darlington and Saltburn new stations are proposed at The Ings and Middlehaven. The Ings will serve new residential developments to the south east of Redcar urban area. Middlehaven will serve the proposed major commercial, residential and leisure development in the vicinity of Middlesbrough Dock as well as the Cellnet Riverside Stadium. Major improvements including platform relocation are also planned at Redcar Central. Teesside Airport and South Bank presently only enjoy a very limited service, and it is intended that these stations benefit from a more frequent service in the future. Teesside Park may also have the potential in the future for a new rail halt should future connections to the retail and leisure park from existing rail and bus interchanges prove inadequate.

7.70 On the Middlesbrough-Nunthorpe line a new station at James Cook University Hospital, which would also be able to serve the Prissick School Base and the residential area of Park End, is proposed to open in 2006. investigations into increased train frequencies on this line are continuing as part of the Rail Vision for the Tees Valley.

7.71 In addition, smaller scale passenger rail connections will be investigated for the Middlesbrough to Normanby branch and the Saltburn to Loftus branch and the feasibility of new stations will be considered at a variety of other locations.

7.72 The development of such a network would mean that the standard of infrastructure and vehicles currently seen in the Tees Valley would need to be improved. A consistent and comfortable design of station, new comfortable vehicles more suited to intra-urban use and a new approach to ticketing, information and marketing would all form part of a package for passengers to provide the public with a real, affordable alternative to the car for many more journeys than can be currently catered for.

7.73 The role of guided busways and other modes will form an integral part of all future analysis as the Tees Valley strives to achieve a comprehensive, integrated transport system.

## Rail Freight

### T10

The development of an integrated and efficient freight transport system will be encouraged. Proposals for new freight sidings and branch lines will generally be approved. In reviewing unused local plan employment allocations, local authorities should favour the retention of previously developed land, with existing or potential rail access, for uses which generate a large volume of goods movements.

7.74 The history of industrial development in the Tees Valley and the nature of present day heavy industry both mean that many products and raw materials are brought into and taken out of the Tees Valley by rail. This practice is encouraged by the Tees Valley authorities, and it is recognised that more goods in the Tees Valley could still travel by rail. Some existing industries, and potentially many future industries, can make good use of nearby rail facilities to reduce the need for heavy goods vehicle use for some journeys. The prospect of large, medium and small sized enterprises and road hauliers working together to combine raw materials and finished goods together into loads more suited to rail travel is also encouraged. The use of Freight Quality Partnerships to develop this sector should be investigated where possible.

### T11

Improvements to existing road/rail transfer facilities e.g. at Wilton will be supported. Locations for possible new facilities will be identified at sub-regional level, and such sites will be safeguarded in local plans.

7.75 The initiatives of the privatised rail freight companies to compete with, and indeed often work in partnership with, road hauliers in transporting containers and single rail wagon loads of goods is a welcome turn around for the rail freight industry. Existing road-rail transfer facilities at Wilton, which are experiencing considerable growth in traffic, will be encouraged and the capacity of road and rail links serving this terminal will be closely monitored to ensure that bottlenecks which could inhibit the use of this facility do not occur.

**7.76** Beyond Wilton, there is the potential for other road-rail transfer facilities to be provided, including the piggybacking of road trailers on rail wagons. The Tees Valley authorities, in conjunction with rail operators and infrastructure providers, will identify suitable sites for further road-rail transfer sites and protect these from inappropriate development. An example of such a site is Faverdale in North Darlington, which is already protected for use as a rail terminal in the Local Plan.

### Buses in the Tees Valley

**7.77** Across much of the Tees Valley the main, and sometimes the only, form of public transport is the bus. The bus retains the flexibility to run on most roads, can come in a variety of sizes and is able to provide a competitive alternative to the private car when free from delay. The public transport policies relating to buses in this structure plan aim to consolidate the flexibility and improve the attractiveness of the bus as the mainstay public transport mode in the Tees Valley.



Photograph 7.4: Bus Station, Middlesbrough

**7.78** Since 1985 bus services have largely been provided by commercial operators who tailor their services to provide a bus network that protects their business objectives. This policy will normally accord with the needs and wishes of the travelling public at large, but in some instances this is not the case. Some bus services are still funded by local authorities, in the Tees Valley these services are mostly early morning, late evening, weekend and school services. The cost to local authorities of running buses in the Tees Valley has been dramatically reduced since 1985 – however, there has been a widely perceived decline in the service level which commercial bus operators provide to the travelling public.

**7.79** The attraction of a bus service to a travelling passenger relies on a series of journey elements being in place. Among these are:

- the traveller must have sufficient information available to know that the service exists and serves the travellers' requirements, including bus stopping times, frequencies, connections and journey times;
- the bus can be boarded near the travellers' origin;
- the bus can be alighted near the travellers' destination;
- where interchange between buses is necessary, information on departure times and bus stop location for the onward journey should be readily available;
- the bus service arrival and departure time must be reliable, and when delays and cancellations occur it would be advantageous for travellers to be informed;
- in urban areas and recognised rural communities the bus service must be frequent;
- the journey time should be competitive with alternative modes;
- the journey fare should be competitive with alternative modes;
- the bus stop waiting facilities at the place of boarding must be adequate;
- the bus should be warm, comfortable and clean; and preferably
- the bus should be accessible to all members of the community, including those with mobility impairments, and should be perceived as safe and secure for all members of society at all times of the day.

These elements can be summarised as the right route, frequency, reliability, journey time, cost, comfort and information to satisfy travel demand.

**7.80** The delivery of all of these elements of a bus journey relies on a partnership between local authorities and bus operators. In recent years it has become more common for such partnerships to flourish, and this is a trend which the Tees Valley authorities and Central Government are keen to foster. Bus quality partnerships rely on the local authority providing:

- the appropriate highway infrastructure to make bus journey speeds competitive and reliable;
- the appropriate kerbside infrastructure to make waiting for a bus a pleasant experience, to allow all members of the community to board the vehicles easily; and
- to give the travelling public the information they need in a clear and concise fashion.

In return for the infrastructure investment of local authorities, bus operators undertake to provide a frequent, fast bus service with modern, accessible-to-all vehicles, staffed by knowledgeable and courteous staff. Operators will often be strongly involved in the provision of information as well.

**7.81** Through such partnerships the entire experience of catching a bus is made more conducive, and importantly more competitive with the experience of driving a car. In other areas bus quality partnerships have not been introduced without problems. The recent legislation to introduce legally binding contracts between operators, local authorities and other interested parties in certain circumstances is welcomed. The Tees Valley authorities are all committed to the concept of quality partnerships in bus service provision and are pursuing such schemes in conjunction with their bus operator partners.

**7.82** Bus Quality Partnerships are currently in place in limited places throughout the Tees Valley. It is hoped that over time the arrangements can be developed to cover a more comprehensive set of criteria, including minimum specifications for first and last bus times, service frequencies and service quality which the operators are obliged to adhere to in return for incentive payments from local authorities. Government legislation would be needed to allow such agreements between the operator and local authority.

**7.83** To achieve a public transport system within the Tees Valley that satisfies the demand for travel, bus services that operate beyond and adjacent to the Tees Valley should be co-ordinated. In these circumstances, cross-boundary arrangements for service co-ordination, information provision and non-commercial services should be developed with adjacent local authorities and service operators.

**Policy T12 renumbered T3B**

### Bus Green Routes in the Tees Valley

#### T13

A network of Bus Green Routes will continue to be provided, implementing bus priority measures on key links and at key junctions as well as providing high quality bus facilities.

The network will comprise:

- Stockton Town Centre to Middlesbrough Town Centre;
- Stockton – Thornaby – Ingleby Barwick;
- Middlesbrough to North Ormesby;
- Coatham Road and West Dyke Road, Redcar;
- York Road, Hartlepool;
- Haughton Road, Darlington;
- Yarm Road, Darlington;
- North Road, Darlington;
- West Auckland Road/Woodland Road, Darlington; and
- Coniscliffe Road, Darlington.

**7.84** The above description of local authority commitment to future bus quality partnerships may imply that little has been done by local authorities in the Tees Valley. However, investment to develop bus priority measures along several bus corridors in the Tees Valley has been undertaken, with much more planned for the future, under the Bus Green Routes initiative.

**7.85** Bus Green Routes encapsulate a total package of measures which improve bus journey speeds and reliability, at the expense of slowing general traffic where necessary, and also enhancing the on-street and kerbside infrastructure available for bus operators and passengers to use. These packages of measures provide high quality routes which enhance the attractiveness of the bus to existing and potential future users. A network of Bus Green Routes was identified by Cleveland County Council in a study of passenger transport completed in 1993. A similar network of routes is currently being drawn up for Darlington as part of the town's transport strategy. Green Routes have already been implemented: in Middlesbrough and Stockton town centres; in the Middlesbrough to Marton corridor; and between Stockton, Norton and Billingham town centres. Work is soon to begin



on further Green Routes along the Acklam Road corridor between Middlesbrough, Coulby Newham and Hemlington, and in the Yarm Road corridor between Stockton and Yarm town centres.

**7.86** An ambitious network of further Green Routes are proposed by the Tees Valley authorities. These include:

- Stockton Town Centre to Middlesbrough Town Centre;
- Stockton – Thornaby – Ingleby Barwick;
- Middlesbrough to North Ormesby;
- Coatham Road and West Dyke Road, Redcar;
- York Road, Hartlepool;
- Haughton Road, Darlington;
- Yarm Road, Darlington;
- North Road, Darlington; and
- West Auckland Road/ Woodland Road, Darlington.

**7.87** When future Green Routes are combined with those Green Routes already completed or currently under construction the result is a comprehensive network of bus priority measures across most of the major bus corridors which experience delays in the whole Tees Valley sub-region. The Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit in conjunction with the Tees Valley authorities will investigate which other corridors could benefit from the implementation of Green Routes over and above those on the above list. This investigation will include: routes in West Stockton; the extension of the Stockton to Billingham Green Route to Hartlepool; further bus priority measures along the Marton Road corridor in Middlesbrough; the Ormesby Bank/Berwick Hills corridor; and key corridors in Guisborough, South Bank, Eston and Normanby.

#### Busways

##### T14

A network of busways in major public transport corridors will be provided to work in conjunction with the Green Route network. Busways will be dedicated for bus use only so as to maximise journey speed and reliability, and the feasibility of guided busways in these corridors will be investigated.

**7.88** The network of bus Green Routes described above is almost exclusively concerned with making best use of existing road space to keep buses flowing more quickly and more reliably. The ultimate way of ensuring that buses are unimpeded by other motorised traffic is to provide segregated routes for bus use only. In the Tees Valley these routes have been termed Busways. Segregated busways allow for high speed, high frequency bus operation along dedicated corridors that can provide a high quality public transport package. Suitable Busway corridors in the Tees Valley have already been identified by previous studies. These are:

- East Middlesbrough Busway;
- Stockton to Middlesbrough Busway;
- Stockton to Roseworth Busway; and
- Middlesbrough to Ormesby Busway.

**7.89** A key component of the Busways is the fact that bus operations are unaffected by other traffic movements along transport corridors. Clearly this component relies on Busways being enforced so that general traffic does not use the bus-only routes. This can be achieved by traffic regulation orders and signing, and these orders can also be reinforced by physical measures such as traffic signals, junction design and movable barriers. The concept of a guided bus, where buses are automatically steered, either physically within a concrete channel or electronically by a wire sunk beneath the carriageway, is a potent means of self-enforcement for Busways. Guided busways also improve ride quality, speed, image and reduce land take in constricted corridors. The local authorities will continue to investigate whether the Tees Valley Busways will benefit from being constructed as guided busways.

**7.90** The busways between Stockton and Middlesbrough, Stockton and Roseworth, and Middlesbrough and Ormesby will be constructed using the alignments reserved for the LRT system and existing carriageways. If an East Middlesbrough busway is constructed this will be located within the East Middlesbrough transport corridor.

East Middlesbrough Corridor

**T15**

Land in the east Middlesbrough corridor, between Longlands and Nunthorpe, adjacent to the existing railway line, will be reserved for transport uses in line with the objectives in local transport plans.

7.91 The land between Longlands and Nunthorpe adjacent to the railway line has been subject to a number of technical studies. The potential of this land to serve the transport needs between central Middlesbrough and the residential areas to the south and east of Middlesbrough has been established.

7.92 Solutions to the traffic problems in the south and east of Middlesbrough need to look wider than the single corridor alongside the rail line. Any new transport provision here will affect, and be affected by, conditions on the parallel routes of Marton Road, Ormesby Road and to a lesser extent Cargo Fleet Lane. Proposed new schemes should consider how road space can be best used throughout the entire area.

7.93 An additional route between the centre of Middlesbrough and the south and east of the town would have many benefits given the current level of congestion along Marton Road, Ormesby Road and Cargo Fleet Lane. The options for the corridor will need to include improvements to public transport provision, in particular the existing rail line between Middlesbrough and Whitby via Nunthorpe. The exact implementation details will need to contain a balance between public and private transport, as defined by the rest of this chapter. The potential for light rail along the East Middlesbrough Corridor will be investigated as part of the rapid transit study.

Ports and Shipping in the Tees Valley

**T16**

The development of port facilities on the Tees Estuary and at Hartlepool will be supported. Opportunities to improve rail and road access should be taken.

7.94 The Tees and Hartlepool Port Authority is one of the major port authorities in the United Kingdom, and Teesport is the second largest deep water port in the country. The ports are clearly an important element to the economy of the Tees Valley, and provide a key transport artery for goods and raw materials between the North East of England and sea ports across the world, particularly Western and Northern Europe. The further development of coastal shipping routes could provide a sustainable and environmentally friendly method of transporting bulky and non perishable goods within the UK.

7.95 It is therefore crucial that the port continues to prosper for the benefit of the Tees Valley. The Tees Valley authorities will ensure that the ports are provided with adequate road and rail links to maintain their business. The use of railways to transport goods away from the ports will be encouraged. Local authorities will work closely with the port authority to assist expansion plans and provide adequate land for associated developments such as warehousing.

Airports in the Tees Valley

**T17**

Priority will be given to the expansion of Teesside International Airport as a passenger and freight facility with regard to sustainable development. Public transport access should be improved in association with the growth of traffic and airport related development implemented under policy EMP9.

7.96 Teesside International Airport is a fast growing and increasingly important part of the transport network in the Tees Valley and provides benefits for all five Authorities. It is an integral component of the region's transport network and offers a wide range of passenger and freight services.

7.97 Further growth of passenger related facilities and supporting infrastructure will be encouraged. The airport should ensure that access to the site by rail and bus is adequate and that public transport provision meets current and future demand. These matters are currently being discussed by the Air Transport Forum.

**7.98** The recent planning permission for the development to the south of the runway provides a unique opportunity for major airport related development including freight transit, storage, assembly and distribution uses together with supporting activities and infrastructure. This major expansion is expected to create new employment opportunities and will be supported.



Photograph 7.5: Teesside International Airport Terminal

**7.99** To provide a framework for the future development of air transport services within the context of sustainable development, integrated transport and economic growth, regional airports are essential. The population of the Tees Valley is primarily served by Teesside International, Newcastle and Manchester airports. The government is currently undertaking a study of air services in the North of England. This study will result in the formulation of a policy for air transport in the North of England.

### Road Infrastructure in the Tees Valley

**7.100** The Tees Valley sub-region benefits from an excellent strategic road system which provides efficient and reliable connections between the main town centres, main industrial areas and other key generators of traffic. The main east-west links are the A66, the A689 and the A174, which are two lane dual carriageway standard throughout most of the sub-region. The main north-south link is the A19 which is now three lane dual carriageway standard throughout the main conurbation.

**7.101** Despite this excellent strategic road infrastructure being in place there are still gaps in the network which need to be plugged. The need for these roads is based on:

- the relief of communities from the problems of traffic congestion;

- the reduction of traffic on key urban routes that allow the implementation of bus priority measures; and
- the role of roads in facilitating economic regeneration on key industrial and commercial sites.

Many of the roads still needed in the Tees Valley sub-region fulfil more than one of the above needs.

**7.102** A trunk road is a highway which constitutes part of the national system of routes for through traffic and for which the Secretary of State for Transport is the highway authority. The trunk road network in the Tees Valley consists of the following:

- A1(M) : between Low Coniscliffe (Darlington Borough boundary) and Coatham Mundeville (Darlington Borough boundary);
- A19(T) : between Crathorne (Stockton-on-Tees Borough boundary) and Sheraton (Hartlepool Borough boundary);
- A66(T) : between Blackwell Bridge (Darlington Borough boundary) and A19(T);
- A174 : between A19(T) and Greystones Roundabout, Lackenby; and
- A1053 : between Greystones Roundabout, Lackenby and Teesport.

**7.103** A primary road is highway designated as the most satisfactory all-purpose route for through traffic between two or more places of traffic importance. The primary road network in the Tees Valley consists of the trunk road network and the following:

- A66 : between A19(T) and Teesport.
- A67 : between Piercebridge (Darlington Borough boundary) and A19(T).
- A68 : between Royal Oak (Darlington Borough boundary) and Darlington Town Centre;
- A167 : between Coatham Mundeville (Darlington Borough boundary) and Croft-on-Tees (Darlington Borough boundary);
- A171 : between Cargo Fleet and Scaling Dam (Redcar & Cleveland Borough boundary);
- A172 : between A66 and Nunthorpe Village (Middlesbrough Borough boundary);
- A174 : between Greystones Roundabout, Lackenby and Staithes (Redcar & Cleveland Borough boundary);

- A179 : between Hartlepool Town Centre and A19(T);
- A689 : between Wynyard (Hartlepool Borough boundary) and Hartlepool Town Centre;
- A1043 : Nunthorpe Bypass; and
- A1150 : between A167 Harrowgate Hill and A66(T) Great Burdon Roundabout.

#### T18A

Subject to the completion of statutory requirements and procedures, the following improvements to the trunk and primary road networks will be carried out:

- i) A66 Long Newton interchange;
- ii) Darlington eastern transport corridor.

#### T18B

The alignments of the following proposed improvements to the trunk and primary road networks will be protected from development:

- i) A19 Wolviston second Samsung access;
- ii) Tees Crossing approach roads at South Bank and Port Clarence, A1046 Seal Sands link road and A178 Tees Road/B1277 Brenda Road;
- iii) Darlington cross town route; and
- iv) A66 Darlington bypass dualling.

The alignments will be developed incorporating landscaping and environmental improvements.

**7.104** The major strategic road schemes which are to have their alignments protected are as follows:

- A66 Long Newton Interchange;
- Darlington Cross-Town Route
- Stainton Way Extension to Swan's Corner; and
- Tees Crossing Approach Roads and A1046 Seal Sands Link Road.

The Tees Valley authorities are also actively lobbying for trunk road improvements in adjacent areas on the A1 and A66 trunk roads. Proposals will be developed in line with the New Approach to Appraisal (NATA) and the Guidance on Multi Modal Studies (GOMMS).

#### South Stockton Link

**7.105** The South Stockton Link is a new road connecting Stockton Town Centre, the A66 trunk road, Bowesfield Industrial Estate, Preston Farm Industrial Estate and Ingleby Barwick. The link performs a series of functions to assist the transport network in Stockton, Thornaby and beyond. The link will:

- provide traffic relief to A1045 Thornaby Road, thus allowing traffic calming and bus priority measures to be implemented in Thornaby;
- provide traffic relief to A1305 Victoria Bridge which will allow bus priority measures to be accommodated on the approach to Stockton town centre from the east, as part of the proposed Middlesbrough-Stockton Green Route;
- allow the development of the Ingleby Barwick to Stockton Green Route, via Thornaby.
- provide a direct route for buses between Ingleby Barwick and Stockton;
- include a dedicated cycle track throughout its length, encouraging the use of this mode by residents in Ingleby Barwick.
- provide a much needed third road access to the rapidly expanding town of Ingleby Barwick, whose existing accesses on A1045 Thornaby Road and A1044 Low Lane suffer severe congestion;
- provide traffic relief to A135 Yarm Road, thus assisting in the performance and effectiveness of the Stockton – Yarm Green Route which passes along this road; and
- allow improved access to Stockton Town Centre from the A66.

**7.106** The South Stockton Link has been divided into three stages, one of which was built between Concorde Way and Bowesfield Lane in the early 1990s. Funding for the scheme was obtained through the Local Transport Plan process, and other sources and construction is now underway.

### A66 Long Newton Interchange

**7.107** The Long Newton Interchange on the A66 trunk road will replace the present at-grade priority junction arrangements at both ends of Long Newton village. The village was bypassed when the A66 dual carriageway was constructed, but safety problems have been experienced at the junctions either end of the village for traffic crossing the main carriageway, and buses can suffer severe delays when turning right to enter and leave the village from/to the A66.

**7.108** The growth in passenger numbers and the growth of employment as a result of the freight handling facility at the Airport means that improved access from the trunk road network is necessary to avoid severe traffic problems in Long Newton village. A road improvement, Mill Lane, has already been constructed north of the Airport, but this stops just south west of Long Newton village. The interchange will provide the final part of this new access to the Airport from the A66 and a developer contribution has been secured.

**7.109** A grade-separated junction is to be constructed to the west of Long Newton village with an interchange roundabout being constructed to the south of the A66 carriageway. This roundabout will be connected to the eastbound A66 carriageway by a single carriageway two-way overbridge. Construction of this junction will allow the central reservation gaps on the A66 carriageway to be stopped up at both ends of Long Newton village. Public transport and local traffic access between Long Newton and Elton will be retained by reopening the old A66 alignment between the two villages for local traffic only.

### A19 Wolviston Second Samsung Access

**7.110** This improvement to the trunk road will be required when the Samsung facilities to the east of Wynyard reach their latter stages of development. The timing of this road improvement is dependent on the expansion of the Samsung development.

### Darlington Cross-Town Route and A66 Darlington Bypass Dualling

**7.111** In 1997 Darlington Borough Council became a unitary authority, separating from Durham County Council and joining the Tees Valley authorities. One of the key tasks which the new authority set itself was to develop an

integrated transport strategy for the town. The Darlington Transport Strategy is currently being prepared by the Borough and the Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit, and a transport model has been constructed.

**7.112** This transport strategy will look at the feasibility and need for a wide variety of transport schemes, including improvements to the strategic highway network. One scheme to be investigated in this work is the Darlington Cross-Town Route.

**7.113** The Cross-Town Route will provide a new strategic route across the town. It will provide necessary access to new development sites to the east and north west of the town and contributions from developers will be sought to part fund the scheme should it go ahead – indeed a short section of the route in Faverdale has already been constructed with developer funding. The route will also relieve the high traffic flows, particularly heavy goods vehicle flows, currently using roads to the north of the town to travel between the A1 and A66 from origins to the north. These roads have significant residential frontage and suffer severe environmental problems caused by the high traffic volumes.

**7.114** The section of the route between the A66(T) and B6279 Haughton Road, known as Darlington Eastern Transport Corridor, was awarded funding through the Local Transport Plan process. Subject to statutory procedures, the Eastern Transport Corridor will open in 2004 incorporating a cycleway as part of the Darlington to Stockton Greenway. Improvements to the A66(T) Darlington Bypass, including the upgrading of the section between Great Burdon and Morton Park to 2-lane dual carriageway standard, are being investigated by Darlington Borough Council, the Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit and the Highways Agency.

**7.115** Further work on the remaining section of the Cross Town Route, between Faverdale and B6279 Haughton Road will be undertaken during the period of this plan.

**7.116** As part of the assessment of new developments in Darlington and the need to remove through traffic from certain streets in north Darlington the feasibility and need for: constructing north facing slip roads at the A1(M)/A66(M) High House grade separated junction; and the construction of A66 Darlington

Bypass (North) between Great Burdon, north of Harrowgate Village and the A1(M)/A68 interchange will be analysed. Also of note is the campaign by a number of local authorities to widen the A66 to dual carriageway standard throughout between Scotch Corner and Penrith (all of which is outside the Tees Valley boundary).

#### Tees Crossing Approach Roads and A1046 Seal Sands Link Road

**7.117** Additions to the strategic road network envisaged in the long term are the approach roads to the proposed Tees Crossing. These roads will link the new crossing, which will connect South Bank with Port Clarence to the A66 South Bank Bypass and to the A178 Seaton Carew Road/A1185 Seal Sands Road. These roads incorporate the proposed A1046 Seal Sands Link Road, alignments of which have been protected for many years in order to allow a heavy goods vehicle route to be provided between Seal Sands and Haverton Hill avoiding the Port Clarence residential area, which is currently subject to a HGV restriction. The standard and detailed alignment of these link roads has yet to be determined.

**7.118** The proposed Tees Crossing will enable the provision of a direct route between locations south of the Tees and the centre and main industrial areas of Hartlepool via the A178 and B1277. This will increase the strategic importance of these roads. The established road improvement corridor along the A178 and B1277 should therefore continue to be safeguarded from permanent development.

#### Stainton Way Extension to Swan's Corner

##### T19

The proposed alignment for the Stainton Way extension to Swan's Corner will be protected from development, in order to permit access to the Gypsy Lane Park and Ride Scheme. The alignment will be developed incorporating landscaping and environmental improvements.

**7.119** Stainton Way is an important orbital distributor road to the south of Middlesbrough which connects the A174 Parkway with Hemlington, Coulby Newham, Marton and Nunthorpe. The route is of single carriageway standard apart from the section east of A172

Dixons Bank, which is two-lane dual carriageway standard. At present this dual carriageway section ends in the vicinity of The Avenue, Nunthorpe and feeds into Gypsy Lane, a narrow road with a number of bends, a railway level crossing and significant residential frontage development.

**7.120** The proposed extension would allow the dual carriageway to extend eastwards to the north of Gypsy Lane, cross the Middlesbrough-Whitby railway north of Gypsy Lane station and then curve south eastwards and join Swan's Corner roundabout, the present junction of A1043 Nunthorpe Bypass, A171 Middlesbrough Road, A171 Ormesby Bank and Guisborough Road. The local highway authority already owns the properties on Rothesay Grove which would need to be demolished to accommodate the link to Swan's Corner.

**7.121** The extension would provide a vital access to the proposed Gypsy Lane Park and Ride site. This proposed park and ride facility would either be served by rail or busway in the future. The extension would also relieve traffic levels on Gypsy Lane, which suffers from severe environmental problems due to significant volumes of peak hour rat-running traffic.

##### T20

The environmental impact of heavy goods traffic on roads will be tackled by:

- i) encouraging the transfer of freight to rail;
- ii) implementing measures to restrict goods vehicle traffic on unsuitable roads;
- iii) encouraging lorries to use the trunk and primary road network; and
- iv) encouraging development alongside rail freight sidings and branch lines.

#### Heavy Goods Vehicles

**7.122** Goods vehicle movements are a vital part of the economy in the Tees Valley. Goods vehicles do cause problems of noise, emissions, vibrations and intimidation in some circumstances, particularly when using roads in built up areas. The Tees Valley authorities will seek to route goods vehicles onto the trunk and primary road network wherever possible and limiting the disturbance caused by heavy vehicles in urban areas, thus minimising these impacts.

**7.123** The development of rail-road transfer facilities, trial use of piggyback operations and improved rail freight links from the Tees Valley to the rest of the UK will be supported in order to encourage the transfer of freight from road to rail when appropriate.

**7.124** The role of Freight Quality Partnerships to limit the disturbance caused by heavy goods vehicles in urban areas will be investigated. Measures to reduce heavy goods vehicle movements in the peak hours, reduce disturbance caused by out-of-hours deliveries and to improve the environment will be supported. The agreement on tanker routeings in Teesside demonstrates the results that can be achieved when operators and local authorities work together.

#### Roadside Services

##### T21

New roadside services or the extension of existing services will be permitted on the strategic road network only where there is demonstrable need for the facility, the development can be satisfactorily integrated into the landscape and highway safety issues are adequately addressed.

**7.125** The motorway and primary road network caters for a wide variety of long distance journeys through and within the Tees Valley. It is important that motorists using the motorway and primary road network are able to access roadside facilities at regular intervals for the purpose of filling up with fuel, using the toilet, making a telephone call and obtaining refreshments. While it is preferable for these roadside facilities to be provided in built-up areas, there will inevitably be some stretches of roads, especially motorways and primary roads passing through the countryside, where roadside services are needed outside the built-up area.

**7.126** The function of roadside service areas is in some cases changing, with a tendency for other activities not directly related to the needs of passing motorists, for example drive-through restaurants and travel lodges, being located alongside the motorway and primary road network. Care must be taken that when such proposals are brought forward in the future to ensure that they will not affect the efficiency of the motorway and primary

road network by increasing local traffic flows and congestion. New roadside services should also not affect road safety, the local environment and the viability of nearby shopping facilities.

**7.127** The provision of suitable roadside facilities for lorry drivers is essential. Motorway service areas already provide short stay parking and many offer overnight parking and shower facilities. Local authorities should identify locations on the primary road network where roadside facilities for lorry drivers are inadequate and should favour proposals that make proper provision for the needs of lorry drivers over those that do not.

#### Traffic Management

##### T22

Traffic management and traffic calming proposals will be implemented:

- i) to improve road safety, real and perceived, and reduce road traffic casualties;
- ii) to encourage road traffic reduction as part of local authorities' traffic reduction plans;
- iii) to give priority to buses and other public transport vehicles over general traffic where public transport vehicles suffer traffic delays;
- iv) to encourage travel to school by cycling and walking, and to discourage travel to school by private car; or
- v) to improve cycling and walking facilities where road traffic inhibits the use of these modes.

**7.128** Traffic management is often a matter for individual highway authorities rather than strategic land use plans. It is however useful to set down the criteria for implementing traffic management schemes in the Tees Valley in this structure plan. The primary aim of traffic management is to secure the convenient and safe movement of vehicles and other traffic. The reduction of road traffic levels, improvement of journey speeds and reliability for buses and improvements for those walking and cycling, particularly to school are also important justifications for traffic management schemes. In practice many traffic management proposals satisfy many, sometimes all, of the above criteria.

### Parking Policies in the Tees Valley

**7.129** It has been recognised that the control of publicly and privately operated car parking at major destinations is a key tool which can be used to control demand for the car in the Tees Valley. The five Tees Valley authorities have agreed a demand management framework which outlines how car parking will be used to control demand for road space over time (Darlington Borough Council, Hartlepool Borough Council, Middlesbrough Borough Council, Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council, Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit, Demand Management in the Tees Valley – A Policy Framework, July 1998.). This agreement will form a central plank of the Road Traffic Reduction Plans currently under development by all of the Tees Valley authorities.

**7.130** The policies on car parking are divided into four aspects: publicly-operated car parking supply; the balance between publicly-operated short stay and long stay parking; the cost of publicly-operated short stay and long stay parking in major centres in the Tees Valley; and the implementation of parking charges for privately-operated non-residential car parking at major destinations in the Tees Valley.

**7.131** For the purposes of these parking policies the major destinations in the Tees Valley are defined as follows:

- Billingham Town Centre;
- Darlington Town Centre;
- Guisborough Town Centre.
- Hartlepool Town Centre;
- Middlesbrough Town Centre;
- Redcar Town Centre;
- Stockton Town Centre;
- Teesdale
- Teesside Park Retail and Leisure Parks.
- Hartlepool Marina; and
- Portrack Lane.

#### T23

The Tees Valley authorities and private developers will work together to enable development while managing demand for car parking within and adjacent to urban areas and retail locations. Park and Ride Schemes will be investigated at locations within and adjacent to urban areas of the Tees Valley to serve the needs of town centres. Publicly available town centre car parking supply will be held at 1998 levels, and the supply of parking will be, where feasible, reduced in line with the improvement of public transport. The balance between long stay and short stay town centre parking supply will be altered through time to reduce the supply of long stay parking.

#### T24

Long stay car parking charges in publicly-operated car parks will be increased ahead of the rate of inflation. Harmonisation of long stay charges between town centres, giving regard to different sizes, purposes and public transport accessibility will be sought. The levying of long stay parking charges for private non-residential car parking at major centres will be investigated.

**7.132** The supply of publicly-operated car parking can be a key determinant on choice of travel mode for most journeys. If supply of car parking significantly exceeds demand then travellers will be able to rely on a parking space being available and will be less likely to consider the use of other modes. The supply of car parking space in town centres has developed over many years, and it is not possible to radically reduce car parking supply overnight. However, there should be a presumption against the planning of new car parks in major centres of the Tees Valley other than those spaces associated with specific retail and commercial developments, and the Tees Valley authorities should carefully consider whether to replace existing parking space elsewhere in major centres where publicly-operated car parks are developed for alternative uses.



**T24A**

In allocating sites for new development and reviewing unused allocations, local plans should take account of the following locational criteria.

Potential employment sites should:

- be well related to the strategic transport network;
- minimise disturbance to sensitive land uses along access routes where the type of development will generate a large volume of goods movements; and
- be well served or realistically capable of being well served by public transport, foot and cycle way networks, where the type of development will generate a large volume of people movements.

Potential housing sites should:

- be well served or realistically capable of being well served by public transport e.g. close to major transport nodes such as railway or bus stations, or main bus routes;
- have good existing or proposed links with footpath and cycle way networks; and
- provide good access to services and facilities e.g. close to town, district or local centres.

Potential retail, leisure and major office sites should be in accordance with policy TC4

**7.133** One of the main targets for demand management in the Tees Valley are peak hour commuter journeys which park all day in the major centres. The control of long stay publicly-operated car parking is therefore very important to achieve demand management targets. The Tees Valley authorities should seek to reduce long stay publicly-operated parking supply where possible and consider giving these spaces over to short stay parking in areas where significant shortfalls in short stay supply exist.

**7.134** The scope for reducing long stay publicly-operated parking supply is likely to be limited in most major centres. The cost of parking in these car parks is therefore crucial in influencing the mode

choice of commuters. The Tees Valley authorities are committed to increasing charges in long stay publicly-operated car parks above the prevailing Retail Price Index. A shared policy for increasing long stay publicly-operated car park charges in major centres has also been agreed to ensure that town centre competitiveness is not compromised by parking policy.

**7.135** At present local authorities in the Tees Valley are able to closely control the cost and supply of public car parking but are not able to control private non-residential parking. Legislative changes may be implemented in the future which could change this situation. Were this to occur the Tees Valley authorities would look closely at the feasibility of placing long stay parking charges on privately-owned car parking in the major centres identified in paragraph 7.131. The Tees Valley authorities will also seek to control the development of privately owned car parking facilities available for public use at a cost, both temporary and permanent.

### Transport Requirements for New Developments

**7.136** The Tees Valley authorities share a common set of requirements for new developments which, inter alia, include transport infrastructure requirements, parking standards and associated highway measures. These development guidelines are under constant review to ensure that they coincide with the other transport policies pursued by the Tees Valley authorities.

**T25**

**New development will be located and designed to give priority to walking, cycling and public transport access.**

**7.137** In order to deliver the integrated sustainable transport system described earlier in this chapter it is vital that the layout of new development gives priority to the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users rather than motorists. This can be achieved by ensuring all households on a new housing estate have a convenient through route suitable for use by buses within easy walking distance. Similarly, new commercial and industrial development layouts should be designed with pedestrian, cycling and public transport needs uppermost.

**T26**

Maximum standards will be operated for parking supply at new developments. These maxima should not attempt to cater for all potential parking demands for any given development. Operational parking and customer parking will be permitted provided adequate controls on these spaces are implemented to prevent their use by long stay commuters.

7.138 Parking standards are now set as maxima rather than minima, a crucial change which allows parking supply at new development to be restricted where appropriate. Tees Valley parking standards are set by local authorities and contained in the "Design Guide for New Development".

**T27**

Major planning applications should be accompanied by a transport assessment and travel plan. Contributions towards capital and revenue funding for public transport, walking and cycling improvements will be sought from developers where appropriate, particularly in association with the strategic housing land identified in policy H2

7.139 The Tees Valley authorities now expect major development proposals, which will have a significant local or regional transport impact, to be accompanied by a Transport Assessment and travel plan which will set down ways in which travel to and from the development by employees, customers and residents can be encouraged onto public transport. This should be undertaken using the guidelines identified in revised PPG13. The feasibility of requiring contributions from developers to improve local public transport networks as well as the local highway network is currently being investigated at national and local levels. Contributions to capital and revenue funding for public transport and for walking and cycling improvements will be sought that are necessary, relevant, and related in scale to the development.

## chapter eight

### Town centres and shopping

#### Introduction

**8.1** The principle of sustainable development reinforces the need to make maximum use of town centres. Town centres are multifunctional. The town centres in the Tees Valley serve an important social and economic function of which shopping is only a part. The centres contain significant levels of public and private sector investment. They have a mix of land uses, provide high levels of accessibility by a variety of modes of transport to employment, cultural, leisure, tourist, social, health and community facilities. The centres are important to the quality of life in an area and the retail function underpins these centres.

#### Strategic Aim and Objectives

**8.2** The Structure Plan has policies designed to achieve the following aim and objectives which stem from the overarching theme of sustainability. The strategic aim is to maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of the town and district centres, strengthening the role of the main settlements as the principal shopping and service centres. From this aim, the objectives are:

- i) To ensure that everyone has convenient access to a wide choice of shopping, leisure and other facilities;
- ii) To encourage the location of new development where a choice of transport mode is available in order to minimise the length of the journeys; and
- iii) To further encourage the use of public transport to easily access the town and district centres.

#### Context

##### National Guidance

**8.3** The policies in this Structure Plan reflect the Government's national policies and advice. The main national guidance for town centres and shopping is set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 6: Town Centres and Retail Developments. PPG6 emphasises the importance of a plan-led approach to promoting development in town centres. It adopts a sequential approach to selecting sites for development for retail, employment,

leisure and other key town centre uses, starting with sites in the town centre, then edge-of-centre (defined in terms of easy walking distance), district and local centres, and only then other sites which are well served by a choice of means of transport. It is regarded by the Government as a major step in promoting planning policies that will produce more sustainable patterns of development, and confirming a policy commitment to revitalising town centres.

**8.4** Other relevant guidance notes are Planning Policy Guidance Note 13: Transport and Planning Policy Guidance Note 1: General Policy and Principles. PPG13 follows the principles of sustainable development, aiming to reduce reliance on the private car, promoting suitable alternatives and enabling people to reach everyday destinations with less need to travel. PPG1 underlines the fact that the Government's desired approach to planning is one of achieving sustainable development. The recently revised PPG1 particularly emphasises mixed use and urban design as being particularly important considerations, both of which are extremely relevant to town centres. Mixed use development can help create vitality, diversity and can also reduce the need to travel. PPG1 also expressly states that good urban design can help promote sustainable development, improve the quality of the existing environment, attract business and investment, reinforce civic pride and a sense of place, and hence helps to sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of the town centres.

##### Regional Guidance

**8.5** The town and district centres throughout the Region serve an important social and economic function. As in PPG6, the Regional Planning Guidance states that structure plan policies should identify strategic locations and criteria for retail development. Wherever possible, such development should be located within or on the edge of existing town or district centres. Sites must be easily accessible by public transport. Structure plan policies should set the strategic land use framework for further improvement to the economic health and attractiveness of the town and district centres.

## Sustainable Development

**8.6** Sustainable development seeks to deliver the objective of achieving, now and in the future, economic development to secure higher living standards while protecting and enhancing the environment. In terms of town and district centres, a sustainable framework to use already developed areas in the most efficient way, while making them more attractive places to live and work is paramount. Urban regeneration and re-use of previously developed land are important supporting objectives for creating a more sustainable pattern of development.

**8.7** Regarding retail development, this Plan is committed to concentrating development for uses which generate a large number of trips in places well served by public transport, especially in town centres rather than in out-of-centre locations. The development of land is preferred within urban areas, particularly on previously developed sites, provided that this maintains a good living environment, before considering the development of greenfield sites.

## Town Centres and Shopping in the Tees Valley

**8.8** The predominant theme of the Structure Plan is one of revitalisation. So, with regard to town and district centres and shopping, the Plan seeks to improve the current centres by encouraging developments such as offices, leisure, entertainment and cultural facilities, as well as shops. In recent years, these activities have been affected by a trend to out-of-centre locations. For example, town centre cinemas and restaurants have been affected by large multi-screen developments, with associated eateries and entertainment facilities on out-of-centre sites such as Teesside Park.

**8.9** The Tees Valley has a well developed hierarchy of town centres. Planning policies at all levels (national, regional, strategic and local) are now, using the sequential test set out in PPG6, trying to direct as much new development as possible to the existing centres in order to maintain and enhance their vitality and viability. Over the past twenty years, there have been some major changes in retailing. The number of large stores, both food and non-food has increased significantly in out-of-centre locations. Several retail parks have been established including Teesside Park (Stockton-on-Tees), Tees Bay (Hartlepool) and Darlington

Retail Park. This has often been at the expense of shops in traditional town centres. It is not only the shopping function that has moved out-of-centre in recent years. For instance, in the Tees Valley, offices have been developed in Teesdale and a multiplex cinema has been built at Teesside Park. In order for the town centres in the Tees Valley to sustain and improve their vitality and viability, this trend must be reversed and any new development be encouraged within or on the edge of the town centres.

**8.10** Some centres have suffered badly through shop closures and a generally run down appearance. Town centres have responded to this through refurbishment and pedestrianisation schemes, whilst some have appointed town centre managers to co-ordinate improvement projects. Many people however still find out-of-centre shopping attractive for its ease of car parking and the large variety of goods on offer. But, many out-of-centre stores are poorly served by public transport, and access for those people without a car is difficult. Out-of-centre developments are, in general, far too car orientated and therefore not sustainable. On the other hand, town centres, through their public transport links are accessible to most of the community. By providing convenient and accessible locations for a wide range of facilities they allow one journey to serve several purposes and therefore reduce the need to travel.

**8.11** The diversity of uses in town centres and their accessibility to people living and working in the area make an important contribution to their vitality and viability. Whilst recognising and supporting the retail function of the primary shopping area, town centres contain a number of different but complimentary uses which can reinforce each other, making town centres more attractive. Leisure and entertainment facilities, museums and libraries, hotels and conference centres, street markets, pubs and restaurants, universities and colleges all add variety. Town centres contain, and should retain a wide range of uses that need to be accessible to a large number of people. Therefore, although retailing should continue to underpin such centres, it is only part of what ensures the health of town centres.

**8.12** The following sections of this chapter deal with the policies for town centres and shopping in the Tees Valley. There are policies relating to maintaining and enhancing the vitality and viability of centres, accessibility issues, defining the hierarchy, the sequential approach to the location of development, and making maximum use of the town centres in the Tees Valley.

## Maintaining and Enhancing the Vitality and Viability of Town & District Centres

### TC1

The Tees Valley authorities will seek to maintain and strengthen the vitality and viability of the town & district centres. Measures to achieve this will include:

- i) enhancing the appearance, safety and environmental quality of the centre;
- ii) encouraging a mix and diversity of uses within the centres and the provision of a wide range of retail, leisure, social, educational, cultural, residential and commercial facilities;
- iii) promoting the reuse of vacant buildings;
- iv) retaining and increasing residential accommodation within the centres; and
- v) encouraging the preparation of town centre strategies. These should be integrated with local plan policies to enhance the quality and attractiveness of the urban area.

**8.13** The purpose of Policy TC1 is to maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of town and district centres and improve the environmental quality of town centres for residents, pedestrians, cyclists and the disabled. Much more can be achieved by taking a comprehensive view of town and district centre activities and uses. Government advice and best practice suggests that comprehensive strategies are needed to enhance the quality and mix of shopping and broaden the centres' attractions, as well as improving the aesthetics. The vitality and viability of town and district centres must also be maintained in order to compete with the internet shopping market which is certain to grow over the structure plan period.

**8.14** Current Government guidance sees a fresh emphasis on mixed use development and design. Within town and district centres, mixed use development can help create vitality and diversity and reduce the need to travel. It can be more sustainable than development consisting of a single use. Town and district centres have important roles to play in the community. They are traditional

shopping locations, providing a range of shops and are well served by both road and public transport. Competition from out-of-centre stores means that if these centres are to remain successful they need to be continually improved and the diversity of uses within them need to be increased. Such improvements will help to achieve the urban regeneration aims of this plan.

**8.15** Urban design is the relationship between different buildings. It is the relationship between buildings and the streets, squares, parks, waterways and other spaces which make up the public domain. Urban design is the nature and quality of the public domain and also the relationship between one part of a village, town or city with other parts. Urban design affects the patterns of movement and activity which are thereby established, so in short it is a strategic issue dealing with the relationships between all elements of the built and un-built space. Good design should therefore be encouraged everywhere. It can help promote sustainable development, improve the quality of the existing environment, attract business and investment, reinforce civic pride and provide a sense of place. It can also help secure public acceptance of necessary new development. The preparation of town centre design frameworks and urban design and/or development briefs for major sites within or near town centres should be encouraged and supported. Developments should not be viewed in isolation from their surroundings

**8.16** Town and district centres must provide a high quality environment if they are to continue to be places where people wish to come. The design of proposals for retail development should have proper regard to their relation with their surroundings and should develop and enhance local character. Designs which add interest and variety, and which reflect local context should be encouraged. Street furniture and signs, if not well designed and co-ordinated can cause visual clutter. Street furniture and paving materials are key issues in improving the environment of town centres.

**8.17** Attracting housing to town and district centres can assist in keeping the centre alive by night as well as by day. Initiatives such as town centre enhancement schemes, 'living above the shop', improved security, the reuse of derelict and reclaimed sites, pedestrianisation and traffic calming will help in improving the quality of town centres, making them more attractive to shoppers and other users.

**8.18** Effective management and promotion of town centres will help to enhance their vitality and viability. Good town centre management brings together the relevant public agencies, residents, retailers, leisure operators, developers and investors and will ensure the proper co-ordination and development of services to the town centre. Detailed non-statutory town centre management strategies drawn up within the context of the local plan, can bring forward a number of initiatives including environmental improvements and the enhancement of open space, crime prevention and safety improvements, improved accessibility, the provision of public art and promotional advertising. This approach can help generate a sense of pride among residents and give confidence to investors and retailers.

#### Accessibility

##### TC2

Access to the town & district centres by all modes of transport will be maintained and enhanced, and multi purpose trips will be encouraged.

**8.19** For town and district centres to compete effectively with out-of-centre development, they should be easily accessible by public transport and must also remain attractive to people who arrive by car. The local planning authorities should draw up traffic management strategies, make sure that there is adequate and reliable public transport provision, and provide good quality car parking. This helps to give confidence to investors and retailers.

**8.20** Good access to town centres is essential, but heavy demand for access by car can create congestion, pollution and parking problems, which can seriously affect the convenience, attractiveness and competitiveness of town centres. PPG6 highlights three key issues regarding access to town centres. These issues are as follows:

- i) to manage both access by car and parking as part of an overall strategy for the centre;
- ii) to promote improvement in the quality and convenience of less environmentally harmful means of transport so that they provide a realistic alternative to the car; and
- iii) to meet the access and mobility needs of disabled people.

**8.21** Town and district centres are the focus for uses that generate a large number of trips. They act as the hub of public transport networks. Focusing development in town centres can make it easier to provide good public transport, or enable one car journey to serve several purposes. This can help reduce the number and length of car journeys, and can therefore play an important role in reducing the need to travel and reliance on the private car.

**8.22** One of the main characteristics of out-of-centre retail developments is their reliance on car-borne shoppers. To a large extent this is due to these developments being frequently inaccessible by other forms of transport. Another reason is the type of goods sold, which often necessitate car travel. Out-of-centre retail developments should be situated in locations which are accessible by a range of transport modes e.g. walking, cycling, bus and rail.

**8.23** The quality of the shopping environment, particularly in terms of providing attractive traffic free areas is considered a high priority along with the provision of adequate and convenient car parking and equally convenient public transport. Encouraging the further use of public transport and improving facilities for cyclists, pedestrians and the disabled will inevitably help sustain the vitality and viability of the town centres in the Tees Valley. Improving the accessibility will also reduce the pressure for extra car parking. Controlling public car parks serving the town and district centres by means such as limiting the duration of stay and pricing will enable the comprehensive management of demand for parking in the centre, with priority given to short stay parking.

#### A Hierarchy of Centres



Photograph 8.1: Redcar Town Centre

### TC3

In considering proposals for development, the Tees Valley authorities will take account of the following hierarchy of centres in terms of the size of the development, scale, massing and character.

The hierarchy is as follows:

**Town Centres** Middlesbrough (sub-regional)  
Darlington (sub-regional)  
Stockton  
Hartlepool  
Redcar

**District Centres** Billingham  
Thornaby  
Guisborough  
South Bank  
Berwick Hills  
Coulby Newham  
Saltburn  
Yarm  
Loftus  
Marske  
Eston  
Cockerton  
North Road

Local plans will identify lower order centres and contain policies to support them.

**8.24** This two tier hierarchy contains all of the town and district centres regarded as being strategically important in the Tees Valley and was selected according to a number of criteria. The first criteria considered was that of retail floorspace in each centre.

**8.25** Other criteria were applied when deciding the hierarchy. Factors considered included size of catchment area, range of facilities provided (offices, leisure, banks, community facilities, other services etc.) and public transport provision. Information regarding the size and uses within centres is collected every 2 years in the 'Tees Valley Shopping Floorspace Survey'. An assessment of floorspace, uses and other factors such as accessibility took place in the 2001 study 'Defining the Town Centre Hierarchy in the Tees Valley'.

**8.26** Middlesbrough is the largest town in the Tees Valley and fulfils a sub-regional role. A combination of covered, pedestrianised and on street shopping environments make Middlesbrough

an attractive and strategically important centre. As a sub-regional centre, Middlesbrough also has an important administrative role, represented by offices of local and central government, law courts, public utilities, commercial offices, and the University of Teesside providing an important academic focus.



Photograph 8.2: Darlington Town Centre

**8.27** Darlington was a sub-regional centre in County Durham before local government reorganisation and, like Middlesbrough also has an administrative role. Darlington serves a wide sub-region of the western side of the Tees Valley, South Durham and North Yorkshire with a catchment population of over 250,000. The amount of retail floorspace, its location and considerable catchment area justifies Darlington continuing as a sub-regional centre in the Tees Valley.

**8.28** Stockton is the third largest centre in the Tees Valley. It also has an administrative role and is classified within the hierarchy as being a town centre. The town centre is focused on the High Street. The shopping environment has been significantly improved by a pedestrianisation and environmental improvement scheme. A broad range of uses exist within the town centre which is also a major focus of public transport. Hartlepool, located to the north of the Tees Valley area serves a town centre function, meeting both convenience and comparison goods shopping needs, and having

other town centre uses, with office, service and leisure provision. Although smaller than both Stockton and Hartlepool, Redcar is also regarded as being a town centre in the Tees Valley, justified in terms of floorspace, its catchment area and the provision of other town centre uses such as leisure facilities. It is the focus of shopping activity in the Borough of Redcar and Cleveland and is therefore designated a strategically important town centre within the Tees Valley. Redcar would benefit from an increased administrative role, with public and private sector offices located in, or on the edge of the town centre.

**8.29** The district centres identified all serve the convenience shopping needs of the catchment population with some also serving a lower order comparison goods function. Billingham and Thornaby were both built in the 1960s to meet the needs of the two developing communities. Guisborough is an historic market town serving rural hinterland and is of comparable size in retail floorspace terms. All provide a range of district centre functions such as shops, leisure and community facilities and all centres are well served by public transport.

**8.30** In the cases of South Bank and Berwick Hills, the majority of the retail floorspace is made up by one food superstore as opposed to a number of retail units. These locations however are still regarded as being district centres since they have other facilities within the centre such as banks, surgeries, leisure facilities and community centres, thus providing a range of facilities for people. They are therefore strategically important.

**8.31** Coulby Newham and Saltburn are both similar in terms of floorspace size. Both provide a range of facilities to justify their designation as town centres. Yarm is slightly smaller, and whilst also considered a 'district centre' in terms of the hierarchy, the settlement is an historic market town serving the surrounding rural area. Its fine buildings and distinctive townscape make the district centre an important conservation area. Yarm also offers shops selling high quality and distinctive comparison goods, while the restaurants and public houses make it a popular place for evening entertainment. It is also well served by public transport and hence is regarded as a strategically important town centre.

**8.32** Retail demand for Marske is limited primarily by the size of the resident population and its proximity to the town centre of Redcar. It is well

used for convenience shopping by the local population. There is traditional linear development along the High Street which opens into a town square. There is also a more modern development dating back to the 1970s which is in need of refurbishment. Eston has a limited amount of office floorspace, but the diversity of units suggests that Eston should continue to have a strategic role.

**8.33** Loftus is a linear centre, with a small prime pitch close to the few multiple traders. The population is not sufficiently high to attract interest from most multiple retailers. However, the centre is important to the largely rural area of East Cleveland. The more remote areas of East Cleveland rely heavily on local shops. People who live in rural areas need reasonable access to a range of services. Village shops can play a vital economic and social role in rural areas. They play a crucial role in maintaining villages as viable communities.

**8.34** Setting out a hierarchy of town centres is strongly recommended in PPG6. Town centres in the Tees Valley vary widely in size, function and the range of facilities they provide. In the light of this, Policy TC3 aims to guide future retail development and ensure that it is appropriate to the role of the respective centres. Thus for instance, the size and scale of development likely to be permitted in Middlesbrough will differ from that appropriate in Guisborough. However, the decision to recognise this hierarchy, with Middlesbrough and Darlington as the sub-regional centres, should not be seen as entitling them to any expectation of additional development at the expense of their neighbouring centres.

### District Centre Options in Greater Eston

**8.35** The Greater Eston area, especially South Bank and Grangetown, suffers from particular problems of isolation and has declined in terms of both retail provision and population over a number of years. Accordingly there is a need to achieve the regeneration of the area. A potential solution may be the development of a new district centre to serve South Bank, Grangetown and Eston. Any proposal for a new centre should be justified on need grounds and be able to demonstrate that a sequential approach has been followed in the selection of a preferred site. Any proposal should be able to show how the wider regeneration of the Greater Eston area will be assisted and to demonstrate how the existing role and function of



Eston district centre will be safeguarded. If the proposal is in an out-of-centre location, it should be subject to safeguards to ensure that the retail element does not proceed in isolation. If a new centre can be justified on the above grounds, it should be brought forward through the local plan process and its scale determined by a retail capacity study / impact study when a planning application is submitted.



Photograph 8.3: Wellington Square, Stockton

## The Sequential Approach to Retail Development

### TC4

A sequential approach will be applied to large scale retail developments, major new office (except those falling within the B1 business category of the Use Classes Order), leisure and entertainment uses with first preference for town centre sites where suitable sites or buildings are available for conversion, followed by edge-of-centre sites, district and local centres, followed by out-of-centre sites and, lastly, out-of-town sites, that are in locations that are accessible by a choice of means of transport.

**8.36** Policy TC4 attempts to direct large scale shopping developments to the town centres or the edge of the centres. These areas are accessible to all members of the community by public and private transport, and are located close to residential areas which enables access by cycle and on foot.

**8.37** In general, large scale retail development should take place within established shopping centres. Locating large scale retail developments in the centres of the towns in the Tees Valley will help ensure their continued vitality and viability. If there are no sites available, the edge-of-town centres may prove a suitable alternative. If there are no edge-of-centre sites convenient, then district and local centres will be looked at. Only when no suitable sites can be identified in these locations will out-of-centre sites be considered. This sequential approach applies to both food shopping and comparison shopping. It should be remembered however, that smaller developments can also impact against centres, depending on the nature of the proposal or the size of the centre.

**8.38** 'Large scale retail developments' include major shopping facilities such as large convenience stores, retail warehouses, hypermarkets, retail parks and factory outlet centres. This means shopping developments with a retail floorspace of about 2500m<sup>2</sup> gross. For retail applications below 2500m<sup>2</sup>, floorspace may or may not be considered strategic in retailing terms, but other structure plan policies may be relevant.

**8.39** The reference to the edge of a town centre in Policy TC4 means the area where shopping ceases to be the main use and mixes with various office, service, industrial or storage uses. It does not extend to an area where these or other uses predominate. The reference to edge in TC4 also needs to satisfy the PPG6 definition. PPG6 defines the edge of a town centre for shopping purposes as "a location within easy walking distance (i.e. 200-300 metres) of the primary shopping area, often providing parking facilities that serve the centre as well as the store, thus enabling one trip to serve several purposes". Limits are determined by local topography, including barriers to pedestrians such as major roads and car parks, the strength of attraction of the town centre and the attractiveness of the route.

**8.40** For other uses, such as offices or leisure, PPG6 states that the definition of edge-of-centre may be more extensive, based on how far people would be prepared to walk. For offices this is likely to be in the region of 500 metres from the station or other public transport interchange.

**8.41** Although the Plan is aiming to direct development to the existing town centres, there may be circumstances where retail development may be acceptable elsewhere. For instance, certain types of specialist retailer such as DIY and homecare stores which need extensive space and have particular site and locational requirements. These cannot always be met within existing centres. It should be possible in many cases to locate these types of development on the edge of existing town centres. If there are no edge-of-centre sites available then such developments should be located within the existing built up area of the Tees Valley on out-of-centre sites.

#### TC5

Proposals for large scale retail developments and leisure development, outside of town centres, and extensions to or the redevelopment of existing out-of-centre shopping centres & leisure developments, will only be permitted where:

- i) the development is justified in terms of need;
- ii) the likely cumulative effects of the proposed development, together with recently completed developments and outstanding planning permissions, would not undermine the vitality and viability of any nearby town or district centre;
- iii) in the case of retail, the proposal is not within an area identified for open space purposes;
- iv) the proposed development would not result in a shortage of industrial premises or readily available and serviced land. Major retail developments should not be developed on prestige industrial sites; and
- v) the proposed development will incorporate measures to reduce the need to travel, reduce the length of journeys, make it safer and easier for people to walk, cycle or use public transport.

Large scale retail developments should improve the local environment and be located on derelict or disused land.



Photograph 8.4: Teesside Park

**8.42** Major out-of-town retail developments are not generally acceptable because they generate many unnecessary journeys, are overly reliant on the use of the private car and are not easily accessible by other modes of transport. Thus, households without a car (38% in 1998 in the Tees Valley area, Source: DETR National Trip End Model, 1998) cannot easily make use of these developments. Out-of-town developments can also have a detrimental effect on the countryside, which should be kept for its own sake.

**8.43** PPG6 advises that commercial competition as such is not a land-use planning consideration, therefore, the possible effects of a proposed new retail development on existing individual retailers will not normally be a factor in planning decisions. However, when considering planning applications for large scale shopping developments in out-of-centre locations, local planning authorities should take account of the possible cumulative impact on the vitality and viability of any nearby centre. The ministerial statement on need referred to leisure as well as retail development. Therefore in terms of leisure, the type of developments which TC5 would apply to includes cinemas and bowling alleys.

**8.44** Indicators of vitality and viability are given in Figure 1 of PPG6. They include commercial yield on non-domestic property (though many commentators have advised caution in the use of yields because they reflect a wide range of factors that are not all to do with vitality and viability of a town centre), pedestrian flows, vacancy rates, diversity of uses, retailer representation and profile, retailer demand or intentions and the physical structure of the centre. The physical condition of the buildings is another indicator of vitality and viability.

**8.45** The overall strategy of the Tees Valley Structure Plan is one of sustainable urban growth, by containing the majority of new development within the existing urban area and as much of the remainder as possible on public transport corridors on the edge of the existing urban area. Proposals for out-of-town developments should normally be refused. While new development should normally be located within the urban area, town cramming should be avoided. Proposals for development on land allocated for open space uses in local plans should normally be refused unless appropriate open space provision can be made elsewhere.

**8.46** A strategic review of employment land in the Tees Valley is underway. Whilst the review of employment land will help to inform considerations over the existing allocation of land, retail development on industrial land should not result in a shortfall of strategically important land or a shortage of locally available land for specific types of industrial development.

**8.47** Large scale retail developments attract considerable numbers of people the majority of whom, make the journey by car. The sustainable development principles on which the structure plan is based, recognises that increasing the number of journeys and the length of journeys, particularly by car is unsustainable. Paragraph 89 of PPG13 Transport states that new retail development proposals should assist in reducing the need to travel and reduce the length of journeys through various measures including the provision of Green Transport Plans (for proposals over 1,000sqm). Similar thresholds in Annex D of PPG13 also require GTPs for other 'town centre' uses including those relating to jobs, leisure and services. Modes of transport other than the car are generally more sustainable and therefore development proposals should also include measures which make it easier to walk, cycle and use public transport, to and from the development.

**8.48** Town centres perform an essential role in the provision of shopping and other services, accessible by both public and private transport. New investment is needed if they are to retain their vitality, and shopping development will be encouraged subject to environmental, traffic and access considerations. Policy TC5 relates solely to the strategic issue of maintaining the role of the shopping centres in the urban areas and principal settlements. However, similar considerations may be relevant to more local shopping facilities which will be considered in local plans.

**8.49** Only if material considerations indicate otherwise should the policy be breached. Out-of-centre retail developments do already exist in the Tees Valley in the form of retail parks, single retail warehouses and superstores. However, town centre and edge-of-centre locations are preferred for future retail development.

**8.50** The majority of the existing built environment needs improving and new development provides an opportunity to do that. Locating new out-of-centre retail development on derelict or disused land will normally improve the environment as well as reducing the demand for greenfield sites. However, a proposal which meets other criteria should not be refused solely because it does not improve the environment or is not located on derelict or disused land. Conversely, proposals located on derelict or disused land are unlikely to be approved if they breach any of the other criteria.

### Other Town Centre Uses

**8.51** The purpose of the sequential approach in TC4 is to guide uses which attract trips to the town and district centres. These centres are already well served by public transport and contain a mix of uses which encourage multi-purpose trips. Town centre office development should be especially encouraged. Locating offices in the town centres allows full advantage to be taken of public transport services that focus on town centres, an important consideration for commuting journeys that involve a long stay all day at a single destination.

**8.52** Town centres have an important role as cultural and civic centres and in providing for leisure interests. The vitality and viability of town centres can be assisted by locating new leisure, cultural and recreation facilities in central areas. Locating leisure facilities within the centres will also provide the opportunity to use public transport, as such central locations have better provision, hence adhering to the principles of sustainable development.

**8.53** According to PPG6, attracting people into town centre outside of normal shopping hours will mean addressing the needs for :

- i) access, particularly co-ordination of public transport with the hours of entertainment/leisure operators;

- ii) safe, secure car parking close to such uses, where possible shared with complimentary daytime uses;
- iii) good street lighting; and
- iv) complementary uses, such as restaurants and pubs.

**8.54** Increasing the range of facilities in town and district centres to include greater provision for leisure, arts and recreation has the added advantage of attracting people into the centres outside of normal shopping hours, keeping the centre vibrant for most of the day. This will also mean making maximum use of the existing car parking facilities beyond normal shopping hours. Increasing other facilities and encouraging the use of the centres after the shops have closed will inspire confidence in the centres which could then lead to further inward investment.

**8.55** So, the diversity of uses in town and district centres makes an important contribution to their vitality and viability. The Tees Valley authorities should therefore encourage diversification of uses in the town centre as a whole. Different, but complimentary uses during the day and in the evening can reinforce each other, making town centres more attractive to local residents, shoppers and visitors. However, other uses should not be allowed to over concentrate and impact against the retail function.



*Photograph 8.5: Centre North East*

## chapter nine

### Leisure, recreation and tourism

#### Introduction

**9.1** In accordance with the overall strategy of the Plan, the development of leisure, recreation and tourist facilities needs to be encouraged in a sustainable way. This chapter contributes towards the aim of sustainable development by ensuring adequate provision of open space and other leisure facilities, promoting sustainable tourism, helping to enhance environmental resources, reducing the need to travel, and promoting the use of public transport, cycling and walking.

**9.2** Leisure is becoming a more important part of people's lives. Many people have more leisure time as a result of early retirement, working fewer hours, receiving more holidays or being unemployed. Most types of sport and recreation have seen increases in numbers and frequency of participation. More leisure time, rising car ownership and a concern for a healthy lifestyle have been important factors. The trend of increasing participation is expected to continue which will lead to the need for new or improved facilities. Pressure on facilities for formal and informal recreation is increasing. The pressure often takes place in areas with high environmental value.

**9.3** The underlying principle of tourism in this structure plan is the achievement of an acceptable and sustainable balance between development and policies protecting and conserving the natural and historic environment on which tourism depends. Tourism and recreation developments can result in significant inputs to the local economy by creating jobs both directly and in related sectors as well as introducing potential inward investors to the area. In particular, tourism development can help to strengthen and diversify the rural economy.

**9.4** An important part of the structure plan strategy is the need to maintain the vitality of the town and district centres. The sport, entertainment, leisure and tourist activities which take place in these centres form an important part of their overall attraction and this policy complements the policies for town centres in Chapter 8.

#### Strategic Aim and Objectives

**9.5** The strategic aim for leisure, recreation and tourism is to encourage opportunities for leisure and the development of tourism facilities which are easily accessible to all. From this aim the objectives are:

- i) To encourage sport, entertainment and cultural development in the town and district centres where appropriate, or elsewhere in the built-up areas;
- ii) To use the green wedges and land on the fringe of the urban area for leisure developments which are not appropriate within the built-up areas;
- iii) To develop the potential of the River Tees and the coast for recreation;
- iv) To cater for recreation in the countryside without harming the environment;
- v) To protect existing sport and recreational facilities including open spaces and playing fields;
- vi) To develop a sustainable tourism industry which benefits the local economy, strengthens and diversifies the rural economy, and maintains and enhances the environment; and
- vii) To ensure that, in any location, leisure and tourist developments achieve a suitable balance between the needs of visitors, local communities and the environment, promoting the sustainable use of resources in these developments.

#### Context

##### National Guidance

**9.6** The policies in this chapter reflect the Government's national policies and advice. The main national guidance for leisure, recreation and tourism is set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 17: Sport and Recreation, and Planning Policy Guidance Note 21: Tourism.

**9.7** PPG17 relates to the role of the planning system in promoting opportunities for the provision of facilities for sport and recreation, and for safeguarding open space with recreational value. It acknowledges that sport and recreation warrant the same level of recognition in planning terms as housing, retail and economic development. Structure plans are expected to set out policies for leisure and recreation which give full weight to sport, recreation and open space needs and, where appropriate, encourage development of facilities. Planning authorities are urged to balance the need to designate land for development with the need to protect open land from development.

**9.8** PPG17 attaches great importance to the retention of adequate recreational open space in urban areas. It is important that people have access to open space close to where they live. In planning for sport and recreation in the countryside, care should be taken to preserve or enhance the characteristics important in the locality.

**9.9** In March 2001, the Government published a consultation paper on the revision of PPG17. The revised draft guidance updates the previous guidance issued in 1991 and significantly extends its scope by dealing in more detail with planning for open space. It also provides a clear statement of the Government's intention to protect existing sport, open space and recreation facilities and create new ones. It complements the Government's commitment to concentrate new development, especially housing, on previously developed land and to minimise the development of previously undeveloped land (such as playing fields), especially in urban areas. The guidance will also help to realise some of the broad objectives of the Government's Sports Strategy.

**9.10** The revised draft guidance advises planning authorities to:

- Adopt a strategic approach and plan positively for the provision and enhancement of well-designed recreational and sporting facilities and open spaces;
- Provide the strongest protection for open space that is, or that has the potential to be, of value to the community;
- Resist development pressures which could diminish recreational provision;
- Ensure that sport and recreation facilities are easily accessible by a choice of modes of transport, and where appropriate, are centrally located; and
- Provide good quality open space and built recreation facilities as an integral part of new communities in order to make them attractive places to live.

**9.11** PPG21 outlines the economic significance of tourism and its environmental impact, and therefore its importance in land-use planning. It explains how the needs of tourism should be dealt

with in development plans and in development control. The PPG focuses on broad principles and general criteria that are relevant to most types of tourist development. It recognises the important contribution that tourism can make to both the national and local economies, and in the creation of new job opportunities.

**9.12** PPG21 also highlights the fact that the promotion of tourism can lead to pressures on existing attractions which can be detrimental to future tourist activity. Planning therefore has a vital role to play in facilitating and encouraging opportunities for the growth of tourism whilst at the same time protecting those features which act as tourist attractions.

**9.13** PPG6: Town Centres and Retail Development (DoE, 1996) also has an important bearing on leisure, recreation and tourism development. The guidance encourages major leisure development to be located in town centres in order to maintain and enhance their vitality and viability.

**9.14** The Urban White Paper, "Our Towns and Cities: The Future" (DETR, 2000) sets a new vision for urban living, which offers a high quality of life and opportunity for all. In terms of leisure, culture and sport, it acknowledges that they are an essential ingredient to a lively and vibrant town and city stimulating social and economic well-being. The Government aims to deliver improved access to culture, leisure and sport in deprived areas by the establishment of various initiatives such as Sports Action Zones. Other measures include £130m for the Spaces for Sport and Arts Schemes in schools for their use outside the school day and developing a Culture on-line service.

**9.15** The Rural White Paper, "Our Countryside: The Future. A Fair Deal for Rural England" (DETR, 2000) sets out the Government's vision for the future of England's countryside. In terms of leisure, recreation and tourism, the White Paper sees market towns as key locations for leisure development and as foci for tourism. Tourism is seen as important to the rural economy and its continued growth is vital as it can help other rural business grow. However this must be in the context of sustainable development.

**9.16** Other key strategies include "Tomorrow's Tourism" (DCMS, 1999), which sets out the Government's strategy for continuing the growth of

Britain's tourist industry, "A Sporting Future For All" (DCMS, 2000) and "The Government's Plan For Sport" (DCMS, 2001), which sets out the Government's aims to enhance the nation's sports facilities and to bring more people into sport.

#### Regional Guidance

**9.17** Regional Planning Guidance for the North-East Region recognises the importance of sport, leisure and recreation to the region. It states that the region has a variety of resources which are of strategic importance for sport, leisure, and recreation and that they should be realised to their full potential. It goes on to state that plans should make adequate provision for both formal and informal recreation.

**9.18** The guidance advises that development plans should address the growing and varied demands for sport and recreation including the recreation/open space needs of strategic development. New facilities and infrastructure would fit within a framework of policy for the environment and should not compromise the integrity of wildlife and the landscape. Development plans are expected to minimise and resolve conflicts between different activities. They should ensure facilities are accessible to all sections of the community.

**9.19** As regards urban areas, the guidance states that plans should recognise the potential of the urban fringe for recreation as a means of reducing car journeys. Also it recognises potential of derelict sites within towns in terms of providing urban open space. The guidance states clearly that development plans must also have regard to the strategies and guidance issued by other bodies such as Sport England, Northern Sport and Northern Arts.

**9.20** Regional Planning Guidance for the North East (RPG1) was issued by the Secretary of State in November 2002.

#### Other Information

**9.21** At present there is no strategy for sport and recreation in the North East to supersede "Priorities for Progress" which covered the period 1994-1999. However, following the recent establishment of the North East Regional Sport Board a strategy may be developed in the future. Currently each of the local authorities in the Tees Valley are at various stages in producing their own sport and recreation strategies.

**9.22** A strategy for tourism in the region has been prepared by the Northumbria Tourist Board entitled "A Strategy for Tourism in Northumbria 1998 – 2002". It is intended that this will lead to the emergence of a high quality and profitable tourism industry acting as a positive force for enhancing the quality of life and status of the North East of England. The main thrust of the strategy is to further develop the Region's cultural assets and market position and to capitalise on the Region's strategic 'gateway' position in relation to northern Europe, whilst promoting the principles of sustainable tourism development.

#### Sustainable Development

**9.23** The predominating theme of sustainable development applies to the policies for leisure, recreation and tourism. When considering recreation, sport and tourist developments it is essential to achieve a balance between the needs of the visitor, the local residents and the environment. The general principles of sustainable development are therefore considered in each case.

**9.24** For instance, sustainable development reinforces the need to make the maximum use of town and district centres and to make them 'alive' at all times of the day. Therefore, by encouraging leisure, sport and entertainment uses to locate in the town and district centres, their vitality and viability is increased. A diversity of uses in such areas can reduce the need to travel, promote a choice of transport mode and keep the town and district centres healthy and vibrant.

**9.25** The environment has an importance which outweighs its value as an asset for leisure, recreation and tourism. Its enjoyment by future generations and its long term survival must not be prejudiced by short term considerations. This Plan seeks to achieve a sustainable balance between the needs of people and the environment, promoting the sustainable use of resources for any development.



Photograph 9.1: Band Stand  
Albert Park, Middlesbrough

### Leisure, Recreation and Tourism in the Tees Valley

**9.26** There are a great number of opportunities for leisure, recreation and tourism in the Tees Valley, including the Heritage Coast, the River Tees, the Cleveland and Teesdale Ways, the Tees Forest, the town centres and the open countryside. Opportunities exist for formal and informal recreation. The area has facilities for both local people and visitors, including hotels, museums and parks.

**9.27** For example, the River Tees and the coast provide further opportunities for recreational development. The barrage has created a valuable sporting and recreation resource for a number of water sports and is of regional and national significance. Indeed, the white water course is one of only two in England. The barrage has also created a flat 1000m straight which is of regional significance for rowing. Countryside recreation is also becoming more popular and there is scope for further development throughout the Tees Valley, particularly in the Tees Forest.

### A Sequential Approach

**9.28** An important part of the Structure Plan strategy is to maintain the vitality of the town and district centres. The sport, leisure and entertainment facilities which take place in these centres form an important part of their overall attraction and this policy complements the policies for town and district centres in chapter 8. The centres are easily accessible by public transport. This must be an important consideration in an area where there is high unemployment and only 38% of households in the Tees Valley do not have access to a car.

**9.29** A sequential approach to leisure development is set out in Policy TC6, which aims to broaden the appeal of town and district centres by encouraging a mix of uses, including leisure and recreation activities. The policy however, does not restrict development within the built up area exclusively to the town centres. There may be other locations, perhaps near schools or other sports facilities which are acceptable.

**9.30** Open spaces, recreation and sports facilities located within urban areas are particularly important because they are within short distances of the majority of the population and can often be

easily reached by public transport, cycling and walking. Open spaces, recreation and sports facilities in urban areas can be under pressure for development, and once lost cannot always be replaced.

**9.31** The principle of sustainable development reinforces the need to make maximum use of town and district centres and to make them vibrant at all times of day. Encouraging leisure, cultural and entertainment uses in town and district centres increases their vitality and viability. A mix of use in such areas, including leisure and recreation facilities such as cinemas, bowling alleys and sports centres can minimise the need to travel, promote a choice of transport mode and keep the town and district centres alive for more hours in the day.

### The Location of Leisure, Recreation and Tourism Developments

#### L1

Priority will be given to leisure, recreation and tourism developments which:

- i) are located on brownfield land;
- ii) are located close to the communities they are designed to serve;
- iii) make adequate provision for people with disabilities;
- vi) are within easy reach of public transport; and
- v) enhance the amenity and environment of the surrounding area.

Development which would lead to a loss of leisure, recreation or tourism facilities will be resisted.

**9.32** The Plan seeks to safeguard and encourage the improvement of opportunities for recreation. Policy L1 lists the criteria which will be assessed when considering the location of leisure, recreation or tourism developments. The Policy also aims to restrict any overall loss of leisure and recreation facilities. This will help to curb the threat to leisure uses from more profitable development, ensuring that adequate replacement facilities are provided.



**L2**

The demand created for small scale leisure and recreation facilities by new development should be provided within or close to that development.

9.33 New development, particularly residential, creates a demand for new services and facilities. In the past, some of these facilities, but not usually recreation and leisure facilities, have been provided within or close to that development. This policy tries to ensure that in future new development is provided with adequate recreation and leisure facilities, close to where they are needed.

**L3**

When considering leisure developments which require large areas of open land, preference will be given to the use of derelict land, to sites in green wedges and on the edge of the built-up area. In particular, the Tees Forest should provide opportunities for sport and recreation.

9.34 Open spaces, parks and urban greenspaces contribute enormously to the quality of life in urban areas. They provide valuable amenity space where demand is most concentrated. The urban fringe and green wedges are a largely under-developed recreational resource, yet they offer significant opportunities for passive and active enjoyment of the landscape. They can also make a significant contribution to reducing leisure based car journeys as they provide recreational opportunities in accessible locations close to the main centres of population.

9.35 The Tees Forest is part of a national programme which seeks to improve the quality of the urban fringe, promote afforestation and wildlife, encourage economic regeneration and diversification, and enable more people to enjoy the countryside close to home.

9.36 Community forests cover large areas on the edge of towns and cities, places where major environmental improvements will create well wooded landscapes for wildlife, work, recreation and education. They are part of a wide range of

policies and programmes developed to promote positive change towards a more diverse and attractive environment for the future.

9.37 The Tees Forest provides an opportunity for improved responsible access to the countryside. Woodland provides a good environment for recreation and can absorb large numbers of visitors without loss of visual amenity or damage to habitat. A number of sport and recreation activities are applicable to the Tees Forest including rambling, cycling, orienteering, horse riding, angling, water-sports and golf.

9.38 There are certain activities dependent on the natural resources of the countryside, extensive users of land, or with specific locational requirements which may need to be located outside built-up areas. These include:

- i) Facilities such as country parks or picnic areas which by their nature are dependent on countryside locations and which involve little or no new built development.
- ii) Proposals for a variety of countryside sport and recreation activities including riding schools, stables and water sports.

**L4**

Access to the countryside and coast will be improved by developing a network of greenways, footpaths, cycleways and bridleways, providing links between the towns, the villages, the countryside and the open spaces within the towns.

9.39 The existing public footpaths, bridleways and cycleways in the Tees Valley provide the most important means of getting into, enjoying and understanding the countryside and coast. The provision of attractive and continuous recreation paths can help to reduce problems of trespass and damage to agriculture and wildlife.

**L5**

A series of gateway sites, providing a range of facilities and usually located on greenways will be developed to provide links between the urban area and the Tees Forest.

**9.40** The network of footpaths, cycleways and bridleways is an important asset for local residents and tourists. The Borough Councils have a duty to maintain all the public rights of way, but priority will be given to those routes which have some particular attraction for recreation.



Photograph 9.2: Bridleway

**9.41** Greenways form part of the national programme of the Countryside Agency and have a key role to play in affording sustainable transport, health, recreation and sports opportunities. The Countryside Agency define Greenways as a network of largely car-free off-road

routes which connect people to facilities and open spaces in and around towns, cities and the countryside. Greenways are for shared use by people of all abilities on foot, cycle or horseback, for car-free commuting, play or leisure. Gateways provide access points to these Greenways and to the Tees Forest, where facilities, depending on location can range from built provision or parking to basic signs and information.

#### L6

Within the North Yorkshire and Cleveland Heritage Coast, permission will only be given for recreation developments which are compatible with the need to preserve the landscape and environment.

**9.42** The Heritage Coast attracts large numbers of tourists and it is a popular destination for day trips by the residents of the Tees Valley area. The spectacular scenery between Saltburn and Scalby Ness forms the 36 mile long North Yorkshire and Cleveland Heritage Coast. A great deal has been achieved in relation to conservation and recreation. Conservation projects have been encouraged and footpaths and bridleways have been improved. Work has also been undertaken with farmers to improve wildlife habitats, and information and facilities for visitors have been provided.

**9.43** Heritage Coasts are there to be enjoyed in ways that depend upon the character of the coast and do not damage it. Some areas are suitable for intensive sport and recreation, while others are best left remote for those who enjoy such areas.

#### L7

The Cleveland Way and Teesdale Way will be improved, maintained and protected from development which may prejudice their use as long distance footpaths. Where development is acceptable and would involve a break in the existing route, the Tees Valley authorities will, as part of any planning permission, ensure the diversion and reinstatement of the path to maintain a continuous and convenient route.

**9.44** The Cleveland Way is a nationally recognised long distance footpath following a broad horse shoe around the North York Moors National Park, taking in the full length of the North Yorkshire and Cleveland Heritage Coast. The Teesdale Way follows the River Tees from its source at upper Teesdale to the estuary at Teesmouth.

**9.45** It is important that these long distance routes are safeguarded from development as they increase opportunities for informal recreation, are an asset for tourism in the area, and provide extensive wildlife corridors and areas of conservation value for visitors and local residents to enjoy. These routes will be maintained as enjoyable recreational facilities whilst protecting the nature conservation, landscape and land management interests of the paths and their immediate surroundings.

#### L8

The potential for recreational development adjacent to the River Tees should be realised by:

- i) improving access;
- ii) providing vantage points and information for visitors;
- iii) creating new footpaths and cycleways;
- iv) developing suitable recreational activities; and
- v) developing the recreational use of the river and improving the mooring facilities at Yarm and Stockton, and landing facilities along the river.

**9.46** There is considerable potential for improving the appearance of the River Tees. The Tees Barrage has improved the environment of the river upstream, creating opportunities for informal recreation development.

**9.47** Greater use of the river environment can be encouraged through the improvement and development of the rights of way network for walking, cycling and horse riding. All appropriate water based recreational activities are to be encouraged in suitable locations along the river. It is particularly suitable for angling, canoeing, boating and rowing. The creation of moorings, landing points and slipways must be carefully controlled and restricted to locations where adequate access is available and the amenity of the surrounding area can be preserved. The creation of moorings, landing points and slipways must be carefully controlled and restricted to locations where adequate access is available, the amenity of the area can be preserved and where there will be no adverse affect on river margins/bank habitats.



Photograph 9.3: Watersports, Tees Barrage

### Making Maximum Use of Existing Resources

**9.48** There is already considerable use of education facilities such as playing fields, gymnasias, the assembly halls and classrooms by members of the local community outside of school hours. There is further scope for the use of education facilities though not all schools are suitable. When new schools are built, this provides an opportunity to include additional facilities which can be used by schoolchildren and the public.

#### L9

Measures designed to make maximum use of existing facilities will be supported with particular emphasis on the joint provision and dual use of education facilities for leisure purposes.

**9.49** At a time when resources are limited, it is essential to resist the loss of existing facilities and ensure that they are used as much as possible. More use should be made of the present facilities by adopting a flexible pricing policy and attracting particular groups of people at certain times of the day or week.

### Protection of Playing Fields

#### L10

Existing playing fields will be protected from development. Development will only be permitted if:

- i) alternative provision of equivalent community benefit is provided;
- ii) sport and recreation facilities can best be retained and enhanced through redevelopment of a small part of the site; and
- iii) there is an excess of sports pitch provision and public open space in the area, taking account of the recreation and amenity value of such provision.

**9.50** All playing fields, whether school playing fields or those owned by other public, private or voluntary organisations, are of special significance for their recreation and amenity value, and in towns and cities, for their contribution to the green space of an urban environment. Policy L10 therefore seeks to protect the existing playing fields in the Tees Valley. They have a value to the community and must therefore be replaced with something of equivalent community value if any development should occur. This could mean a hard versatile surface, an all weather surface or replacement grass pitches of suitable quality.

## Tourism in the Tees Valley

### L11

To help further stimulate the growth of tourism, the Tees Valley authorities will make provision for appropriate development which would increase the range and choice of tourist facilities and encourage the use of public transport.

**9.51** Tourism is linked with leisure and recreation and will continue to play an increasing role in the Tees Valley economy up to and beyond the turn of the century. Tourism is based on attractions such as the inherent quality of the countryside, the coast, the built environment, and urban and rural facilities and activities, all of which contribute to the diversity and distinctive character of the area.

## Tourism and the Economy

**9.52** Tourism makes a contribution to the economy and prosperity of the Tees Valley. Its continuing growth generates a range of economic activity and new job opportunities. Because it often depends on a high quality environment, it can act as a positive force for environmental protection and enhancement. Many areas have important natural, historical or architectural features which serve to attract tourists. It is important to identify and consider ways of protecting these, as well as to consider ways in which new development can help the industry grow.

**9.53** Nationally, tourism is a growth industry. The number of tourists has increased and the industry employs over a million people and is the most widespread of the rural growth industries. In the Tees Valley, tourism expenditure is estimated to be worth around £185m (1996 figure). Around two-fifths of this expenditure is estimated to be within the accommodation and catering sectors, although retail is the largest single sector in terms of spend (30%). It is estimated that around 7,900 jobs are supported by tourism spending in the Tees Valley based on 1996 expenditure. Around three-quarters of these jobs are directly supported by visitor expenditure with the remainder being the result of spending on tourism businesses, on local goods and services, and multiplier expenditure.

**9.54** There are additional benefits to be gained from tourism beyond just creating employment and wealth. Most of the services and facilities used by tourists are also used by local residents, so the additional trade can make a marginal service viable, or enable better facilities to be provided. Improvements to the appearance of towns, villages and countryside to attract tourists also benefit local people. The active promotion of an area can improve its general image, and this, together with the better facilities make the area more attractive to industrialists, so there can be wider employment benefits.

## Opportunities for Further Tourism Development

**9.55** Opportunities for new and additional tourist developments will occur throughout the Tees Valley. Some facilities, particularly new accommodation, should be located mainly within towns and villages to minimise impact on the countryside. Some types of development must be situated in the countryside, but their locations must be carefully chosen to ensure that the impact on the surrounding area is acceptable. In particular, some old farm buildings may be suitable for tourist accommodation and the additional income may contribute to the vitality of the farm.



Photograph 9.4: Darlington Town Centre

**9.56** According to the Strategy for Tourism in Northumbria (Northumbria Tourist Board, 1998), priorities regarding tourism in the Tees Valley are:

- Enhancing business, hotel and conference facilities;
- Developing an enhanced area-wide approach to the celebration of arts, crafts and entertainment in ways which are different from other areas;

- More leisure routes and countryside facilities in the Tees Valley, with a focus on water-based activity;
- Improvement and development of a range of accommodation; and
- further development and promotion of maritime, industrial and railway heritage themes.

### Sustainable Tourism

#### L12

The relationship between tourism and the environment must be sustainable. Tourism must not be allowed to damage the resource, prejudice its future enjoyment or bring unacceptable impacts.

**9.57** The environment has an intrinsic value which outweighs its value as a tourism asset. Its enjoyment by future generations and its long term survival must not be prejudiced by short term considerations.

**9.58** Following the publication of "Tomorrow's Tourism" in 1999, the English Tourism Council (ETC) have published their strategy for development of sustainable tourism entitled "Time for Action – A Strategy for Sustainable Tourism in England" (ETC, 2000). Its key aim is to develop tourism that manages its impact on the environment, local communities and the economy so that in each case it adds value rather than detracts. The approach adopted by the strategy is one that can be used in all areas of tourism, be they rural, seaside or city-based.

**9.59** Tourism is a vital part of the national and local economy, bringing in extra money and creating many jobs. It can also benefit local communities by helping to maintain local facilities and services, such as public transport and shops, and can help to regenerate areas through improvements such as the use of derelict land, restoration of buildings, and conservation and repair of the countryside. But there are also concerns that growth in tourism may cause congestion, inconvenience to local people and environmental damage.

**9.60** There can sometimes be problems associated with more tourism such as increased traffic and the effect on the environment in sensitive areas. These local problems are more likely to arise in popular tourist areas such as the National Park, so it is important that tourism developments must be appropriately managed to minimise any potential conflict between recreation and environmental protection.

**9.61** This plan therefore aims to build upon the environmental strengths of the area and the sustainable use of its products. In this way, it will assist in the development of a tourism industry that is in keeping with the local environment and its community, social and economic context. Tourism activities and developments should respect the scale, nature and character of the place in which they are sited. There must also be a balance between the needs of the visitor, the place and the host community.



Photograph 9.5: Saltburn Pier

## chapter ten Energy

### Introduction

**10.1** There are two principal aspects to energy and its relevance to strategic planning. The first concerns the location of major energy generators, and the second is the need to conserve energy to meet environmental objectives such as reducing greenhouse gases.

**10.2** The major consumers of energy in the Tees Valley are the steel and chemical industries, with coal and natural gas being the dominant fuels.

**10.3** Major electricity generation occurs in the Tees Valley at Hartlepool Nuclear Power Station and at a gas-fired power station at Wilton. Hartlepool Nuclear Power Station consists of a 1320 megawatt (MW) advanced gas cooled reactor. The station is likely to cease production in the longer term, although land is identified in the adopted Hartlepool Local Plan for future operational uses.

**10.4** Gas is piped from the North Sea to the Central Area Transmission System (CATS) terminal at Seal Sands where it is processed before being sent to the gas-fired Enron Power Station at Wilton. The station is capable of generating up to 1750 MW of electricity, most of which is sold or distributed through the national network.

**10.5** In addition an energy from waste incinerator plant has been developed at Billingham. This generates 20 MW of electricity which feeds directly into the local distribution system.

**10.6** There is much interest in renewable energy resources. These can range from wind farms and coastal wind power to wave energy and bio fuels such as wood waste and coppice, and includes municipal waste incineration. They offer the potential for increasing diversity of energy supply and reducing harmful emissions to the environment. The potential for renewable energy sources in the Tees Valley area however, is likely to be on a modest scale.

### Strategic Aim and Objectives

**10.7** Many policies and proposals in the Structure Plan can contribute towards saving energy and energy efficient ways of planning land uses and development. The plan's strategic aim in respect of energy is:

“to contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gases and to develop more energy efficient patterns of land use and development”.

More specifically the policies in the Plan seek to:

- i) make provision for strategic energy development in appropriate locations;
- ii) support appropriate opportunities for the use of renewable energy sources; and
- iii) minimise the demand for energy arising from new developments.

### Context

#### National Guidance

**10.8** The government has indicated that energy should be specifically addressed in development plans. Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) Note 12 in particular identifies the conservation of energy as a key issue and makes clear how the planning system is able to influence global warming. The link between traffic growth, energy use and greenhouse gas emissions is recognised in PPG13 on Transport. Specifically the Government wishes to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide, CO<sub>2</sub>, and other greenhouse gases by at least 20%.

**10.9** The government has a commitment to a strong drive to develop renewable sources of energy. It intends to work towards the aim of achieving 5% of the UK's electricity supply from renewables by 2003, with 10% to be achieved by 2010. Achieving that aim could lead to a reduction of 5 million tonnes in UK carbon emissions, making a valuable contribution to the overall climate change strategy. PPG22 on Renewable Energy encourages its development and recognises the key contribution the planning system can make in meeting targets and safeguarding the environment. A monitoring manual, and baseline and annual monitoring reports will be in place before the adoption of the structure plan so that progress towards these targets can be measured in the sub-region. Similarly, the government also has a target to double the capacity of combined heat and power by 2010.

### Regional Guidance

**10.10** Regional Planning Guidance for the North East stresses the need to put emphasis on local energy conversion and power generation to protect the environment and achieve greater CO<sub>2</sub> savings. On renewable energy the Guidance suggests that 'areas of search' could be identified where positive consideration will be given to renewable energy developments such as wind and hydro. Also general encouragement should be given to renewable technology, energy from waste and the application of combined heat and power (CHP) technology. Development Plans should also consider the relationship between planning, energy and the environment and include overall strategies and policies which give effect to targets for CO<sub>2</sub> reduction for renewables and CHP development, and for energy saving.

### Sustainable Development

**10.11** Energy is perhaps one of the easier subjects to relate to sustainable development. The need to conserve scarce and valuable natural resources means that energy use should not be squandered. Visible damage to the environment through, for example, acid rain, can be traced back partly to emissions from energy generating plants. The effects of increased energy consumption on global warming have been well documented. However the need to conserve energy use must be balanced against the need for businesses and industry to meet their energy requirements and for households to have adequate heating and lighting.

**10.12** The structure plan has a limited but valuable role in encouraging efficient use of energy resources. It can direct energy generating developments to the most appropriate locations and it can give positive guidance on proposals such as renewable energy schemes. However many policies throughout the Plan will have a role to play in energy conservation. These include for example, encouraging opportunities for better public transport, and locating new developments in locations which can help reduce journeys by private car.

### Policies for Energy

#### EN1

**Major non-renewable energy developments and associated plants (including waste to energy technology) should be located on land identified for potentially polluting or hazardous industry. Proposals will be assessed against the following criteria:**

- i) impact on the landscape, visual amenity and areas of ecological or historic importance;
- ii) effect on existing and proposed developments, and on local communities;
- iii) anticipated traffic generation – road and rail;
- iv) impact of emissions and noise;
- v) implications for waste disposal facilities; and
- vi) effect on the best and most versatile agricultural land.

**The implications of associated energy transmission, distribution and supply systems should be considered at the same time as proposals for major energy developments.**

**10.13** Due to its location and past industrial history the Tees Valley is likely to remain a potential location for major energy generation developments. Major energy developments are those of more than just local significance and they are unlikely to have an output of less than 50 megawatts (MW). They should be located on land identified for potentially polluting or hazardous industry so that they do not adversely affect residential areas and undeveloped open countryside or coast.

**10.14** Schemes involving waste to energy technology should also be considered under this policy, as the processes involved and resulting emissions are often similar to fossil fuel generation systems.

**10.15** Major energy proposals will normally require the developer to submit an Environmental Impact Statement. There is a need to protect and enhance the existing character of the countryside,

in particular special or sensitive areas, and also to safeguard the interests of established communities. This in turn must be weighed against the national demand for energy and the regional/local need for job creation or retention. New non-renewable energy projects may provide some environmental benefits if they replace older, less efficient plants.

**10.16** Under the Electricity Act 1989, consent for a 'generating station' and an 'electric line' are given separately under different sections of the Act. In practice this means that a new power station may be built and operated well in advance of the transmission line reinforcements which may be necessary. Wherever possible these related developments should be considered at the same time.

#### EN2

Renewable energy projects will generally be supported provided the implications of the following criteria are taken fully into account:

- i) impact on the landscape, visual amenity and areas of ecological or historic importance;
- ii) impact on local communities and existing and proposed developments;
- iii) traffic implications, and proximity to roads, railways and airports;
- iv) noise implications;
- v) effect on the best and most versatile agricultural land;
- vi) the extent to which the proposal helps to achieve wider environmental benefits such as reducing harmful emissions in the atmosphere;
- vii) the way in which the proposal assists in achieving national targets of new electricity generating capacity from renewable energy sources; and
- viii) the environmental impact of any additional transmission requirements.

**10.17** While forms of energy generated from renewable sources are generally to be welcomed because of their role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, some projects can also raise environmental concerns of their own, particularly their effect on landscape, conservation and amenity. The sort of renewable energy technologies which are likely to be of strategic importance, in terms of physical structures, are wind energy and biomass (for example wood burning power stations). Whilst cash crops may be considered an agricultural operation outside the scope of the planning system, their contribution towards renewable energy, rural diversification and possible landscape enhancement is duly recognised. Major renewable energy projects (which are likely to be those capable of being connected to the National Grid) will be considered in a similar way to other major developments. In particular any local environmental impact will need to be weighed against national and local environmental, economic and social benefits. Although there has been some limited interest in the past for renewable energy projects there is little evidence to suggest that the Tees Valley area has significant potential for major schemes. However a study is currently underway which will examine the potential of land within the Tees Corridor for windfarm schemes.



Photograph 10.1: Wind Turbines, Hartlepool



**10.18** A detailed feasibility study under the European ALTENER programme is underway looking at the potential for creating a major urban wind farm on a brownfield site located on the south bank of the River Tees. The 'Tees Wind' project, which is within Redcar & Cleveland, is being progressed by a partnership involving the Borough Council, AMEC Wind, Northern Electric, CORUS, Renew North and the Northern Energy Initiative, Regional Development Agency One North East and the Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit. The proposal could create up to 30 wind turbines and would be subject to a detailed environmental impact assessment. Enough electricity could be generated to power the annual energy requirements of 45,000 homes.

**10.19** An offshore wind licence exists with the prospect of a possible wind farm being located just off the North sea coast. As part of a national programme examining a number of potential areas for offshore wind turbines, the 'Tees Offshore' wind farm could be built off the coast of Hartlepool and Redcar. Although plans are at a very early stage and offshore planning is outside the remit of the structure plan, careful consideration of the onshore transmission requirements of such a scheme will be necessary.

#### **EN2A**

**Borough Councils will take a proactive approach to encouraging small scale renewable energy generation and domestic energy saving through their local plans, supplementary planning guidance and other activities.**

**10.20** Local planning authorities should take a proactive approach towards encouraging small scale renewable energy generation and domestic energy saving. This might, for example, include guidance and information on energy efficient building design, passive solar gain, solar heating and small scale district heating systems. There may also be some potential for small scale renewable energy projects such as those serving individual farms or minor settlements. Such schemes could provide considerable benefits to local communities, and will generally be approved provided the impact on the local environment is acceptable.

#### **EN3**

**In preparing local plans and considering development proposals, local planning authorities will seek, as a prime consideration, a relationship of land uses and transportation which minimises the demand for energy.**

**10.21** Planning land use and development in an energy efficient way is one of the principles of sustainable development which underpins the whole strategy of the structure plan. Therefore policies which seek to achieve forms of development which reduce energy demand and consumption are central to many aspects of the Plan.

**10.22** More detailed policies will be contained in local plans where the development process can be used to influence the existing built environment through redevelopment, refurbishment and changes of use.

#### **EN4**

**Proposals for combined heat and power (CHP) schemes which serve local communities will generally be supported.**

**10.23** Combined Heat and Power (CHP) schemes can play a valuable role in developing energy from waste schemes, particularly in urban areas where a large heat demand is located nearby and is readily accessible. CHP schemes offer larger energy benefits than schemes which generate electricity alone. Incinerators with electricity generation only are about 22% energy efficient, but CHP can increase this to up to 75%. CHP schemes will generally be welcomed, provided the impact on the local amenity of residents is acceptable.

## chapter eleven

### Waste

#### Introduction

**11.1** The planning system has an important role to play in achieving sustainable waste management. It is able to make provision for the development of new facilities to treat and dispose of waste and can ensure that incompatible land uses do not occur in close proximity. Most waste-related development will be located away from residential and recreational areas. In some circumstances landfilling can be used to improve derelict or degraded landscapes following appropriate restoration.

**11.2** This plan aims to set out the broad planning policy, against which the land use implications of waste-related development proposals can be assessed. More detailed waste planning policies will be provided in the Borough's Local Plans, when the time comes for them to be reviewed. The policies included in the waste chapter apply to all 'waste' as defined by article 1(a) of the amended EC Framework Directive on waste.

#### Strategic Aim and Objectives

**11.3** The Tees Valley is showing positive signs of a movement towards a more sustainable waste management regime, but there is still room for much improvement.

**11.4** It is unlikely that any one method outlined in the government's waste strategy will become a preferred option of waste treatment for the Tees Valley. The structure plan seeks to adopt a sustainable approach, based on a flexible and integrated waste management system, to minimise the environmental impact of waste. This will be achieved by:

- i) seeking to reduce the amount of waste produced;
- ii) encouraging the reuse and recycling of waste;
- iii) ensuring that sufficient waste facilities are available and,
- iv) ensuring the appropriate restoration and after-use of land used for waste disposal.

**11.5** The policies in this chapter address the aims and objectives identified above and provide a framework of advice for the Tees Valley authorities to review their local plan policies.

#### Context

##### National Guidance

**11.6** Planning Policy Guidance Note 23, Planning and Pollution Control, (1994) provides advice on the relationship between controls over development under planning law and pollution control legislation. PPG 23 outlines the key principles introduced in the Environmental Protection Act 1990, including Integrated Pollution Control (IPC), Best Available Techniques Not Entailing Excessive Cost (BATNEEC), and Best Practicable Environmental Option (BPEO). Waste aspects are now covered in PPG10 'Waste'. The BPEO is defined as; 'for a given set of objectives, the option that provides the most benefit or least damage to the environment, as a whole, at acceptable cost in the long term as well as the short term'.

**11.7** The Waste Strategy 2000 for England and Wales spells out the government's response to the EC Waste Framework Directive and the EC Landfill Directive. The Strategy re-affirms the importance of the Waste Hierarchy (see below) and stresses the need to keep the production of waste to a minimum, where this is consistent with economic sustainability.

#### THE WASTE HIERARCHY

- Reduction
- Re-use
- Recovery (*material recycling, composting and energy recovery*)
- Disposal

**11.8** The position of each waste management option within the hierarchy gives a broad indication of its relative environmental benefits and dis-benefits. The most appropriate management option will vary according to the waste stream and local considerations. In general, the greater the percentage of waste that can be dealt with nearer the top end of the hierarchy, the more sustainable waste management in the Tees Valley will become. The integration of techniques is considered paramount. Although disposal is the

least sustainable option, it will be required for the foreseeable future as most techniques produce a residue that needs final disposal. Nevertheless, the government considers that there is a need for a substantial increase in recycling and recovery.

**11.9** The Waste Strategy 2000 sets out the government's strategy for sustainable waste management, describing the actions and targets necessary to promote sustainable development. The strategy reinforces the government's vision based upon the principle of BPEO, supported by the Waste Hierarchy and the Proximity Principle. The Proximity Principle encourages the treatment and disposal of waste close to the point at which it is generated, to foster more responsible practices and limit the pollution that occurs from its transportation.

**11.10** Most recently, the government published PPG 10 'Planning and Waste Management' (September 1999) that again endorses the BPEO, Waste Hierarchy and Proximity Principle. PPG 10 suggests that the planning system should ensure that opportunities for incorporating re-use/recycling facilities in new developments are properly considered and that the adverse environmental impacts resulting from the handling, processing, transport and disposal of waste are minimised. The Northern Region Technical Advisory Body on Waste (NERTAB) has been set up as a result of PPG10. The group, which contains waste management and planning officers, meets regularly to discuss waste issues and has published a technical report listing facilities and planning permissions which will feed into RPG. Also inputting at regional level, consultants are preparing a Regional Waste Strategy.

### Regional Guidance

**11.11** The Regional context for waste management planning is contained in the Regional Planning Guidance for the North East (November 2002).

**11.12** Regional Planning Guidance closely follows the advice given in Making Waste Work. In highlighting the Teesside area as the largest producer and exporter of special waste in the Region, the Guidance promotes the development of waste management techniques which will enable the Tees Valley to develop a more sustainable approach.

## Sustainable Development

**11.13** National and regional planning guidance for waste is greatly influenced by the concept of sustainable development, outlined in Chapter 3. The disposal of non-renewable resources clearly goes against the central theme of sustainable development, whilst, a reduction in the quantity of waste being produced or an improvement in recovery and recycling rates will lead to a more sustainable use of resources.

**11.14** The key principles for waste planning that flow from sustainable development are the Proximity Principle, Regional Self Sufficiency, the Waste Hierarchy and Best Practicable Environmental Option. The policies included in this chapter have incorporated these main elements where appropriate.

## Waste in the Tees Valley

**11.15** There are numerous factors which will heavily influence the development of waste policy in the Tees Valley. These include;

- i) **The Physical Dimension:** The Tees Valley is one of the most densely populated areas in the UK outside the metropolitan centres. This enhances the potential for implementing efficient waste management options since large quantities of waste are generated in a confined area.
- ii) **The Existing Waste Strategy:** There are commitments, which by default, form the basis of a strategy. Stockton, Middlesbrough, Hartlepool and Redcar and Cleveland are all contracted to dispose of their household waste at a new incinerator, (Haverton Hill) until 2020, and Darlington is in contract with Durham County Waste Management Ltd for the disposal of domestic waste, via landfill, until 2008. This arrangement is being updated by a joint municipal waste management strategy being prepared for the former Cleveland authorities and Darlington is also preparing its own municipal waste strategy. The strategy for clinical waste was determined by the letting of a contract for its collection and disposal by the North Clinical Waste Consortium in 1995, which covered the majority of hospital premises in the Tees Valley. The strategy for the disposal of special waste was established in the Cleveland County Council Draft Waste Disposal Plan (Special Waste Section) in 1990.

iii) **The Economic Base:** The local economy is still dominated by chemicals and steel, with the result that comparatively large quantities of industrial waste are produced. These wastes often require disposal at specialist facilities and the economics are such that there is only sufficient demand for a limited number of facilities in the country.

## The Waste Hierarchy

### W1

The Tees Valley authorities will encourage development proposals which minimise the levels of waste produced and will approve proposals for waste management facilities which:

- i) reduce the levels of waste production as a first priority;
- ii) increase the re-use of waste;
- iii) increase recycling and recovery of resources, including materials and energy from waste;
- iv) involve landfill only after other methods of treatment have been fully explored,

where compatible with the protection of the environment and community interests.

### Reduction

**11.16** The aim of reduction or waste minimisation is to reduce the quantity of waste being generated. It can be achieved in many ways, through the design of processes and selection of suitable raw materials which produce less initial waste, to the redesign of packaging. The responsibility for waste minimisation lies mainly with producers but can also be influenced by consumers through selective purchasing and changes in lifestyle. In line with Policy W1, applicants for major development proposals will be encouraged to submit a 'Waste Minimisation Plan' (WMP) along side the application.

**11.17** The primary benefits of waste minimisation are the reduced environmental and economic costs usually associated with the recovery and disposal of waste.

### Re-Use

**11.18** Re-use is similar to waste minimisation in that it aims to reduce the amount of material requiring final disposal.

**11.19** The re-use of many every day items is often taken for granted without any real understanding of the issues involved. The re-use of milk bottles for example necessitates using more resources to produce a stronger milk bottle and large quantities of industrial cleaners to sterilise the returned bottles. In most instances the drawbacks associated with re-use are outweighed by the benefits to the environment and a reduction in overall waste arising.

### Recovery

**11.20** This broad category covers a range of waste management options, which incorporates materials recycling, composting and the recovery of energy from waste. The term "recovery" is used because each option provides some product or material which is of benefit to society.

### Recycling

**11.21** Recycling involves the reprocessing of waste materials to produce a useable product. There are two main schemes in operation, differentiated by the method of material collection.

### Bring Schemes

**11.22** This process relies on facilities being provided at locations visited regularly by householders, for example supermarket car parks, in which they may deposit recyclable wastes. The waste is then transported in bulk to a suitable recycling plant.

### Collect Schemes

**11.23** This process requires householders to segregate their waste materials into various categories for collection from doorstep or kerbside. The waste is then collected utilising bulk haulage systems, and transported to recycling markets. Collect schemes are usually only viable in large urban areas or where there are sufficient waste arisings in a confined locality.

**11.24** Industry and government estimates indicate that up to 30% of household waste can potentially be recovered by kerbside recycling. Collect schemes can also apply to business, and higher proportions exist for some types of commercial waste.

### Composting

**11.25** Composting is a biological process in which organic material is broken down by the action of micro-organisms in the presence of air. This process has been undertaken by farmers and gardeners for many years but it is only more recently that its potential for managing a significant part of the waste stream has been recognised. The composting process is already widely used for the treatment of agricultural wastes and sewage sludge and offers a suitable process for dealing with the putrescible fraction of household waste. Composting reduces the amount of potentially polluting waste being sent to landfill and can also remove the organic fraction responsible for poor combustion in household incineration plants.

### Anaerobic Digestion

**11.26** This technique is similar to composting except that the process takes place under strict anaerobic conditions, within an engineered vessel. It can be utilised for a range of wastes including household waste, sewage sludge and food processing industry wastes.

**11.27** The process potentially offers substantial benefits over other waste disposal options as pollution is easily contained and several useful products in the form of heat, fuel and fertiliser can be produced.

### Energy Recovery

**11.28** Energy can be produced from waste through combustion in a waste-to-energy plant. This technology is being used at the Haverton Hill incinerator, to supply electricity from the combustion of waste. The technique does not preclude either recycling or recovery of materials, nor removal of the organic fraction of waste for composting before incineration.

### Self Sufficiency and the Proximity Principle

**11.29** Within the Tees Valley a network of waste management facilities to reflect both local needs and regional priorities needs to be maintained. The combined effluent and sewage treatment works at Bran Sands, near the River Tees estuary, provides a regional facility for the treatment of industrial and sewage wastes. This facility has helped to end the disposal of sewage sludge at sea by producing

pelletised material from waste received, which is suitable for fertiliser or fuel. The development has taken place on formerly derelict industrial land, which supports sustainable development principles.

#### W2

The best practicable environmental option (BPEO) is the overarching principle that is to be established when considering proposals for waste management facilities. A suitable range of facilities should be maintained in the Tees Valley for the effective handling, treatment and disposal of waste. The proximity principle will be applied to discourage the movement of waste over long distances unless movement by rail or water can be shown to be the BPEO.

**11.30** The Teesside Energy from Waste Plant at Haverton Hill provides a strategic facility which will accept waste from throughout the Tees Valley for the next 20-25 years. The facility has an annual waste input of 250,000 tonnes and a generating capacity of 20MW. If the extant planning permission for the third line is implemented, capacity would rise to around 370,000 tonnes and 30MW.



Photograph 11.1: Haverton Hill Energy from Waste Plant

**11.31** The Teesside conurbation produces about 250,000 tonnes of special waste annually. Approximately half of this is dealt with by producers using their own in-house facilities, and an outstanding planning permission exists for a toxic incinerator at Seal Sands. Slightly more than 100,000 tonnes of special waste is transported elsewhere in the UK for disposal.

**11.32** The Tees Valley authorities accept that, ideally, waste should be disposed of or treated close to the point of generation (the proximity principle) but this will not always be appropriate in every case. The Best Practicable Environmental Option (BPEO) needs to be established in each case. Future proposals for waste management facilities, including waste water and sewage treatment, will be considered against policies W1 and W2 to ensure the application of sustainable development principles.

### Material Recovery Facilities and Waste Transfer Stations

#### W3

Material recovery facilities and waste transfer stations will be located away from residential areas and screened from major transport routes.

Facilities to enable the re-use and recycling of waste will be approved at waste transfer stations where the impact on surrounding land uses is acceptable.

**11.33** Material Recovery Facilities (MRFs) perform a wide range of functions, centred around the objective of recovering materials for subsequent sale or processing. MRFs add value to waste by sorting, washing and bulking-up materials until a marketable quantity is achieved. They also reduce the quantity of waste for final disposal.

**11.34** Waste transfer stations can play an important role in securing the efficient treatment and disposal of waste. Facilities at waste transfer stations will allow the waste to be bulked up prior to transportation to a treatment or disposal site. MRFs and waste transfer stations reduce the environmental impacts associated with the transportation of waste.

**11.35** The locations of MRFs and waste transfer stations are very important. A balance needs to be struck between locating them close enough to where the waste is generated but far enough away from residential areas, so as not to affect the amenity of residents.

**11.36** Generally, the Tees Valley authorities will encourage the expansion of functions at waste transfer stations to convert them into MRFs, provided that the impact on surrounding land uses is acceptable.

### Civic Amenity Sites

#### W4

Civic amenity sites will be provided in locations accessible to the main centres of population. Facilities for the re-use and recycling of household waste will be made available at these sites.

**11.37** The locational requirements for civic amenity sites are similar to those for waste transfer stations. However, they should be more accessible and closer to the main centres of population. Again a balance needs to be struck, to protect the amenity of residents and to consider the impact of noise, litter, dust, smell and traffic on surrounding land uses.

### New Landfill Facilities

#### W5

New landfill facilities should only be developed in locations which minimise the environmental impact of the operation. In assessing proposals, the Tees Valley authorities will have regard to the:

- i) proximity of the site to the waste material to be deposited;
- ii) need to restore degraded landscapes;
- iii) quality of the existing environment;
- iv) proximity to residential areas; and
- v) potential for receiving waste by rail, water or pipeline.

**11.38** Landfill sites will be required for the foreseeable future as there will always be a residue of processed waste that requires disposal. Landfill sites often occupy former mineral excavations, or where these are in short supply, areas of land that are suitable for raising through the deposit of waste.

**11.39** The Tees Valley authorities accept that waste should be deposited close to where it is generated. However, waste disposal on land can have a detrimental impact on the environment which can continue long after operations have ceased. For those reasons new landfill sites should be located away from residential areas.

**11.40** Although operational landfill sites are not usually attractive land uses, the sites can be landscaped and restored to produce an attractive appearance. It is possible, therefore, to use waste disposal to eventually improve derelict or degraded land. However, land which is planned for built development should normally be avoided. Derelict or degraded land which is designated for open space uses is likely to be suitable for improvement through landfill. On the other hand, good quality environments, such as Special Landscape Areas, should be avoided. Where a landfill site is proposed on agricultural land, it should not result in the permanent loss of any best and most versatile land.

**11.41** Sustainable development is the foundation upon which the structure plan is based. An important element of sustainable development is the movement of goods and people by more sustainable modes of transport. The Tees Valley authorities will, therefore, encourage the movement of waste by rail, water or pipeline, where this is the Best Practical Environmental Option (BPEO).

### Landfill Restoration

**11.42** Operational landfill sites can present an uncaring and neglected image which is why they should be restored and landscaped progressively. However, once restoration and landscaping is complete, these sites can make a positive contribution to the visual appearance of an area. Where a new landfill facility is to be located on agricultural land with an eventual return to agriculture, the restoration scheme should ensure that the site is restored to at least its existing agricultural quality. In particular, the scheme should address the soil resources, soil handling and storage, gradients, drainage, and aftercare management. Local Biodiversity Action Plans should be used to help shape restoration plans.

#### W6

Landfill sites should be restored and landscaped progressively, and have a positive after-use sympathetic to the surroundings.

**11.43** Where landfill sites have been restored, there remains a possibility that gases and other contaminants may be emitted for a number of years. Redevelopment of these sites and proposals in the surrounding areas will need to be carefully considered to take the implications of gas and contaminant emissions fully into account.



Photograph 11.2: Waste Recycling Centre, Haverton Hill

## chapter twelve

### Minerals

#### Introduction

**12.1** Many rock types exist in the Tees Valley area and many mineral reserves have been identified. Only a small number of extractive operations exist mainly because many of the resources lie deep below the surface or occur in small pockets of deposits which make them uneconomical to work. As a result there are only a small number of operational sites.

**12.2** Minerals are important resources which make an essential contribution to the nation's prosperity and quality of life: Although mineral resources make an essential contribution to the economy there can be conflicts between the exploitation of resources and environmental aims. The plan will look at what can be done to minimise environmental impacts of extraction, how to promote high quality restoration of sites, the potential for more efficient use of aggregates and the increased use of recycled materials. Under the principle of sustainable development, the Plan will seek to conserve minerals, as far as possible, while securing necessary supplies, and to safeguard mineral resources from sterilisation by other forms of development.

**12.3** Following local government reorganisation, the five unitary authorities of the Tees Valley are now the Mineral Planning Authorities. This plan includes strategic policies for mineral development. There is no Minerals Local Plan for the Tees Valley area as a whole. The Tees Valley authorities, in their next round of local plans will have detailed mineral policies based on the strategic framework set out in the Tees Valley Structure Plan.

#### Strategic Aim and Objectives

**12.4** A strategic aim and a number of objectives have been devised, and it is around these that the strategic policies in the structure plan have been formulated. The structure plan will provide a strategic approach to mineral development in the Tees Valley. These policies will be developed further through the Borough local plans which will deal with local issues and contain detailed policies to control the effects of mineral working. The structure plan aims to reduce the demand for

primary minerals and encourage the use of secondary and recycled materials. From this aim, the objectives are:

- i) to conserve primary minerals as far as possible whilst enabling the provision of a suitable contribution to the Region's mineral needs;
- ii) to ensure that land taken for mineral operations is reclaimed at the earliest opportunity and is capable of an acceptable and beneficial after-use; and
- iii) to prevent unnecessary sterilisation of mineral resources.

#### Context

##### National and Regional Guidance

**12.5** Government policy for mineral development is set out in Mineral Planning Guidance Notes and Regional Planning Guidance. Specific government guidance for the Northern Region is contained in Regional Planning Guidance (RPG1), which was published November 2002.

**12.6** Government guidance promotes the importance of sustainable mineral development and recognises that it is essential to conserve minerals as far as possible while preserving or enhancing the quality of the environment, thus, ensuring that the quality of the environment for future generations is not compromised. The need to balance economic and environmental considerations and to maintain an adequate supply of mineral reserves is encouraged and emphasis is placed on the importance of regional provision to meet the region's share of the national demand for aggregates. Government guidance also encourages the use of alternative sources of supply such as secondary and recycled aggregates which will, in time, reduce reliance on non-renewable and natural resources.

#### Sustainable Development

**12.7** The government is committed to the principle of sustainable development, which should ensure that the environment is not adversely affected by mineral extraction. It is necessary to recognise that in providing for a supply of minerals, a balance must be struck between the economic and environmental requirements of the community.



**12.8** Mineral resources are finite and it is important to make the best use of them so that current needs can be met without jeopardising the ability of future generations to meet theirs. This involves not only reducing the need for newly won minerals, but ensuring that mineral working takes place as efficiently as possible and that scarce resources are not used when alternatives exist.

### Future Minerals Development in the Tees Valley

**12.9** The Tees Valley Structure Plan expresses in general terms the strategy for mineral working and related development, taking into account national and regional policies. When devising mineral policies for the Tees Valley Structure Plan, consideration was given to the policies contained in the County Durham Structure Plan in relation to Darlington, and the Cleveland Structure Plan. The Durham Structure Plan places an emphasis on meeting needs by extending existing operations before permitting new reserves. The Cleveland Structure Plan promoted a basic minerals policy of contributing to the supply of minerals, albeit at a relatively low level. The latter approach shall continue and attempts made to balance mineral extraction with environmental protection.

**12.10** With regard to minerals, the Tees Valley Structure Plan seeks to ensure that the needs of society for minerals are satisfied consistent with the protection of the environment. The development plan system will attempt to reduce reliance on minerals by encouraging the use of secondary materials, but also be flexible enough to contribute to the regional supply of minerals.

### Criteria for Assessing Applications

**12.11** Policy MIN1 lists the criteria which will be assessed when considering applications for any type of mineral extraction. Mineral working can have considerable impacts on the environment and amenity of local communities. It can help to maintain services and facilities in rural areas and provide local employment. These aspects are major factors when considering the acceptability of proposals. Conditions will be attached to planning approvals to minimise noise, vibration, dust, subsidence, pollution of water courses, the environmental effect of the disposal of mineral waste, traffic problems and visual impact. The policy also ensures that there is minimum impact on the biodiversity. Biodiversity represents the

richness and variety of plants, birds, animals and insects that exist throughout the world. It concerns the whole variety of living things, including the habitats that support them. The land should be restored to a positive use as soon as possible.

#### MIN1

Proposals for mineral extraction will be permitted when it has been shown that:

- i) there are economic and social benefits, including job creation;
- ii) the impacts on amenity and environment of the site and the surrounding area are acceptable;
- iii) the proposal does not involve the permanent loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land;
- iv) the road network is able to cope with any additional traffic generated by the proposal;
- v) water supply, drainage and river management interests will be protected; and
- vi) there is no adverse impact on the biodiversity of the site and the surrounding area.

### Preventing the Unnecessary Sterilisation of Mineral Resources

**12.12** Government guidance advises that development plans should provide for development in such a way as to avoid unnecessary sterilisation of significant mineral resources or, where sterilisation is unavoidable, to allow for the prior extraction of the minerals. The Tees Valley authorities do not intend to sterilise mineral resources and would therefore favourably consider applications for mineral extraction as part of any major development such as road construction or residential development.

#### MIN2

Mineral resources will be safeguarded and will, wherever possible, be extracted prior to surface development so as to ensure resources are not sterilised.

**12.13** Mineral consultation areas were identified in order to ensure consultation between the relevant district planning authority, the minerals industry and the County Council before certain non-mineral planning applications made within these areas were determined, and were a way in which non-energy mineral resources could be safeguarded. Mineral consultation areas are no longer required in the Tees Valley as mineral planning functions now rest with the Borough Councils as the unitary authorities. Mineral consultation areas are therefore not necessary. Their definition was intended as a means of protecting finite resources to meet long term needs.

**12.14** Mineral consultation areas shall be renamed as mineral protection zones. These zones will indicate that mineral resources exist in these areas and should ensure that inadvertent sterilisation by building over the resource will not take place. The mineral protection zones will be identified on the relevant Borough local plan proposals map. In the Tees Valley, mineral consultation areas exist for sand and gravel, brickclay, magnesian limestone and dolerite as identified by the former Cleveland County Council and by Durham County Council. It may be appropriate to review these areas before renaming them mineral protection zones.

### Provision of a Suitable Contribution to the Regions Minerals Needs

#### MIN3

The Tees Valley will contribute to the regional supply of minerals to meet the needs of society by endeavouring to maintain an adequate supply of economically workable reserves if a proposal is environmentally acceptable. Priority should be given to the use of waste and other secondary materials as alternatives.

**12.15** There is little surface mineral extraction in the Tees Valley, but the areas possesses extensive sub-surface resources of salt and potash which support economically important mineral operations. The government advises that, with regard to aggregates, the Northern Region should make provision in their development plans for 50 million tonnes of sand and gravel and 195 million tonnes of crushed rock over the period 1992 to

2006 (DoE, MPG6, 1994). The Tees Valley has relatively few mineral reserves and few operators. Therefore due to issues of confidentiality, policy MIN3 does not state actual amounts which will be provided by the Tees Valley authorities. For the calculation on a regional basis, the Tees Valley figures are combined with those from the Durham County Council area to preserve the confidentiality. The Tees Valley authorities will continue to contribute to the regional supply of aggregates in accordance with government guidance and will continue to do so as availability and accessibility of resources allow.



Photograph 12.1: Stockton Quarry

**12.16** The government also advises that development plans should include policies which provide for the maintenance of landbanks. Landbanks are a stock of mineral reserves with planning permission for their winning and working. It is inappropriate to maintain a landbank in the Tees Valley because of the limited resources in the area. However, the Tees Valley will contribute to the Durham and Tees Valley landbank. Figures for each of these areas cannot be separated because of confidentiality issues.

**12.17** Only proposals which can be proven to be environmentally acceptable will be considered favourably, such as proposals which minimise the impact of operations on local communities and the natural and built environment. Minerals development can have a considerable impact upon the environment, such as visual intrusion of a site, permanent changes to the landscape, noise, vibration and dust from the workings, and associated heavy lorry traffic. These can give rise to objections by local residents.

## Reducing the Demand for Minerals in the Long Term

**12.18** The Tees Valley authorities will actively work to reduce the demand for minerals in the long term. In accordance with government guidance alternatives to extraction shall be encouraged through the development plan system.

**12.19** Government guidance encourages the inclusion of policies in development plans to promote the recycling of materials and waste and encourage the more efficient use of minerals. Borough local plans will suggest suitable sites for recycling or provide criteria against which planning applications for these uses can be considered. The Borough local plans will encourage all built development (such as houses and road improvements) to be constructed in secondary and recycled materials. Reducing the demand for primary mineral resources, will ensure that they will only be used where no alternative can be found and will prolong the life of mineral resources for future generations.

**12.20** MPG 1 suggests that in many cases extensions to existing sites are more favourable than permitting new sites. If appropriate, sites where extensions would be favoured will be identified in the local plans. In cases where mineral extraction is the only option each proposal shall be assessed against criteria specified in the relevant local plan. The local plans will highlight where resources exist and where applications may be favourably considered.

### MIN4

Mineral development will not be permitted in Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) unless there are sufficient material considerations to override the nature conservation interest. Development in Special Landscape Areas will be permitted where there are sufficient material considerations to outweigh the need to safeguard the intrinsic landscape value of the site.

**12.21** Applications in areas such as SSSIs should be subject to examination in line with sustainable development principles which state that areas of designated landscape or nature conservation value should be protected from development, other than in exceptional circumstances and where it has been demonstrated that development is in the public interest. Greater weight will be afforded to the protection of nationally and internationally important designations than that given to non-statutory local designations.

### MIN5

The concurrent working of additional minerals from the same site will be encouraged.

**12.22** If two minerals exist in the same site then they should be extracted simultaneously rather than one mineral being extracted, the site restored and then, at a later date, the site worked again. For example fireclay is often found alongside coal measures.

### MIN6

Alternatives to extraction must be investigated and considered when an application for a new site or extension to an existing site is submitted.

**12.23** The Tees Valley authorities are committed to minimising the use of minerals where possible and promoting the use of secondary or recycled materials as an alternative to extraction. Policy MIN6 is not to be considered a presumption against mineral extraction but rather a presumption very much in favour of sustainable development.

## Conditions, Restoration and After-use

### MIN7

High quality after-use schemes which bring about a benefit to the site and to the Tees Valley as whole, such as better quality landscape, habitat creation, open space or recreation, are encouraged as part of every minerals application. Sites should be restored and landscaped progressively, and have a positive after-use sympathetic to the surroundings.

**12.24** In order to encourage sensitive working practices during extraction and to minimise the impacts of the development, comprehensive conditions will be attached to every planning permission. Conditions will cover the working life of a site from site preparation to restoration and after-care. Sites will be monitored to ensure compliance with conditions. Regular monitoring will ensure progress is reported and any delays recognised in advance.

**12.25** A comprehensive progressive restoration and suitable after-care programme should be a major part of any application. High quality after-use schemes which bring about a benefit to the site and to the Tees Valley as whole, such as better quality landscape, open space or recreation, are encouraged. Land taken for mineral operations should be restored to the highest standard at the earliest opportunity. Sensitive restoration and aftercare practices so as to preserve or enhance the overall quality of the environment will be encouraged.



Photograph 12.2: Stockton Quarry

## Oil and Gas

### MIN9

Where permission is given for any mineral working, including the exploration or appraisal of oil and gas resources, there is no presumption in favour of the subsequent use of the site for production purposes.

**12.26** There are no operational oil or gas sites in the Tees Valley. Geological surveys have been undertaken and an exploratory well sunk at Gerrick, in the North York Moors National Park, but no applications have been submitted. It is thought that oil and gas reserves stretch into Redcar and Cleveland, outside of the National Park, and it is therefore appropriate to include relevant policies in the structure plan.

### MIN10

The exploration, processing and distribution of oil and / or gas from established reserves will only be permitted where it can be shown that the advantages outweigh the impact of the development and that appropriate measures will be taken to minimise the effect on the local environment.

**12.27** If reserves are proven following exploration, any application will be subject to the relevant policies relating to mineral development contained in the structure and relevant local plan. Should an application be approved appropriate measures must be taken to minimise the impact of the development on the environment. Special attention should be paid to the impact of the proposed processing and distribution facilities and methods of transportation. Appropriate measures will be taken to minimise the impact on the environment.

## chapter thirteen

### From plan to action

#### Implementation

**13.1** All the unitary authorities in the Tees Valley area are committed to joint working on strategic planning and transportation issues. The structure plan provides a framework to guide decisions on the way the Tees Valley should develop over the next 15 to 20 years. However, these decisions will be taken by many different people and organisations, and the success of the Plan will depend on co-ordinated action by all involved.

**13.2** The structure plan sets out key strategic policies and provides the framework for the unitary authorities in their local plans to develop detailed policies and proposals, and to prepare planning briefs and strategies. Implementation will also involve local authority functions which are outside planning. These include transport and communications, housing, environmental management, social services, education, economic development, leisure and tourism. Initiatives such as the Local Agenda 21 Programme and town centre management strategies also have an important role to play.

**13.3** The policies of central government can have a significant impact on the Tees Valley. Public utilities, many of whom now operate in the private sector, will need to be informed about the long-term requirements and opportunities of the area for investment and infrastructure. This reflects a promotional role for the structure plan. The plan also provides a framework for economic development agencies such as the Tees Valley Development Company who generate and respond to inquiries for inward investment, and English Partnerships who facilitate development and urban regeneration.

**13.4** Following a White Paper and Bill in 1997 the Government established a number of Regional Development Agencies (RDAs). The RDA for the region – One NorthEast – was established in April 1999 and is an important economic partner in implementing the strategy of the Plan. The RDAs functions include furthering economic development and regeneration; promoting investment and competitiveness; enhancing skill development, and contributing to UK sustainable

development objectives. It has taken over the local roles of both English Partnerships and the Rural Development Commission.

**13.5** Implementation of most planning policies will however, rely on investment by the private sector. This includes most house building, industrial premises, offices, shops, leisure and public transport operations. Rates of development will be influenced by market conditions and the structure plan policies will give guidance to the market on future directions for development.

#### Resources

**13.6** Funding restrictions have meant that both central and local government expenditure on housing, transport, environmental and other projects has been limited in the recent past. Some sources of funding, such as Single Regeneration Budget, have provided invaluable help to certain areas, but this can be at the expense of other budgets and projects.

**13.7** Changes are in the pipeline in central government funding policies for local government, housing, urban regeneration and infrastructure. The recently published White Paper on Integrated Transport Strategy has reviewed funding for public transport and highway schemes. This is all against a background of the government's stated policy to maintain tight controls on public spending.

**13.8** European Union funding is important. In particular, finance from funds such as the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF – Objective 2), European Social Fund (ESF – objectives 2, 3 and 4) and RESIDER II (aid for areas adversely affected by steel closures) will continue to play an important role in resourcing projects and schemes in the Tees Valley area. Changes are due to the European Union Structural Fund Programmes and several new reforms are expected to affect the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).

**13.9** One of the key principles of the Plan is to make best use of existing facilities, infrastructure and resources, and encourage re-use and re-cycling. The re-use of previously-used land and land within the existing urban areas will help to reduce the need for development on greenfield sites. New development should be well-related to existing facilities such as shops, employment, leisure and transport routes, and should not incur the provision of extensive new infrastructure.

## Monitoring and Review

**13.10** It is inevitable that, over the period of the Plan, circumstances will change. Decisions will be taken which will affect certain aspects of the Plan, although it is hoped that the basic strategy and direction set by the Plan will be flexible enough to cope with most unforeseen changes.

**13.11** There has been a general increase in the emphasis placed on monitoring planning and development in recent years. This stems from a number of sources, all of which fit within or relate to the government's "Modernising Planning" agenda, including new planning policy guidance, Best Value and the drive to underpin the planning system with the goal of sustainable development. The importance attached to monitoring also needs to be placed within the context of the Plan-led system, set out by the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Under the Plan-led system it is essential that development plans are kept up-to-date and relevant, since the context which informs their preparation will change over time and will impact upon their effectiveness.

**13.12** The JSU has produced a monitoring manual, which sets out a framework for monitoring the structure plan and common policy areas of the five Borough Council local plans. There are several key objectives of the monitoring framework, which are as follows:

- To provide a framework for monitoring the effectiveness of Tees Valley Structure Plan policy in achieving its aims and objectives;
- To provide a consistent framework for monitoring common policy areas within Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland and Stockton-on-Tees Local Plans; and
- Assist with the monitoring of Regional Planning Guidance in terms of the sub-regional contribution which the development plan makes towards meeting the targets and objectives of RPG.

The manual sets out how the monitoring process will be undertaken from the start by identification of the policy context, in which monitoring will occur, setting an appraisal framework for identifying appropriate targets and indicators, setting out targets and indicators, collecting, processing and analysing monitoring information, and the production of annual monitoring reports.

**13.13** The monitoring process should:

- measure the achievement of structure plan policies;
- assess whether the policies are helping to achieve the principles of sustainable development; and
- assess whether the policies are still valid in the light of outside events, and to what degree changes are necessary.

**13.14** Information for monitoring is available from many sources including government statistics, planning applications, surveys and analysis, newspaper articles and reports from firms and organisations. Population, employment and household forecasts are reviewed regularly in the light of new information and data. The monitoring manual helps to identify what information is likely to be required to monitor the Plan and who collects it and the frequency of collection.

**13.15** A set of targets and indicators related to the aims of the structure plan, as well as to national and regional targets and objectives has been identified following consultation with major stakeholders.

**13.16** Following the monitoring process in the manual, the JSU will produce annual monitoring reports. The main purpose of these reports is to measure the effectiveness of the structure plan's policies in achieving the Plan objectives. The first report will be a baseline monitoring report, which will provide a description of changes and trends from 1996 to 2001. The information in this report will provide the base against which progress towards meeting the structure plan targets can be measured. Each of the subsequent annual monitoring reports will show previous trends, which in turn will allow predictions to be made and will identify where changes are required to policy. Where changes to structure plan policies are required, these will be incorporated into subsequent reviews of the Tees Valley Structure Plan.