Northumberland Minerals and Waste Development Framework

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL FRAMEWORK

DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT

PREFERRED OPTIONS

SEPTEMBER 2006

This document can be provided in an alternative format or font size if required.

For more information contact:

Frances Wilkinson
Senior Minerals and Waste Policy Officer

Telephone: 01670 534064
Email: planning@northumberland.gov.uk

NORTHUMBERLAND
COUNTY COUNCIL

Development Control Framework
Development Plan Document

Contents

		Page
Chapter 1	**Introduction**	**1**
Chapter 2	**Context**	**5**
Chapter 3	**Community and Environmental Protection**	**7**
Chapter 4	**Natural Environment**	**11**
Chapter 5	**Historic Environment**	**21**
Chapter 6	**Natural Resources**	**24**
Chapter 7	**Transport**	**27**
Appendix A	**Sustainability Appraisal Summary**	**29**
Appendix B	**Glossary**	**34**

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS THE MINERALS AND WASTE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK?

1.1 Northumberland County Council is preparing a new type of Development Plan called the Northumberland Minerals and Waste Development Framework. The Minerals and Waste Development Framework is a folder of documents that will be the main guide for making decisions on planning applications for minerals and waste developments. It will include policies and proposals to guide minerals extraction sites and waste management facilities to the most appropriate locations. It will also have policies to secure the protection of people and the environment for the period to 2021. When adopted, it will replace both the Northumberland Minerals Local Plan and the Northumberland Waste Local Plan.

1.2 The Northumberland Minerals and Waste Development Framework will be part of the statutory development plan for Northumberland together with the Regional Spatial Strategy for the North East and the Local Development Frameworks being prepared by the District Councils and the Northumberland National Park Authority.

1.3 The Minerals and Waste Development Framework will not include the Northumberland National Park. Policies on minerals and waste within the Northumberland National Park will be contained in the Northumberland National Park Local Development Framework, which is the responsibility of the Northumberland National Park Authority to prepare as the Planning Authority for that area.

WHAT IS THE DEVELOPMENT CONTROL FRAMEWORK?

1.4 The Development Control Framework Development Plan Document sets out the County Council's policies against which planning applications for minerals and waste developments will be considered. This document sets out the County Council's preferred options for the Development Control Framework. The policies are based on the long standing principle adopted in Northumberland of seeking to ensure that the benefits of development outweigh any adverse environmental impacts. The policies in the Development Control Framework will help to implement the vision, objectives and the core strategic policies set out in the Core Strategy Development Plan Document. The Core Strategy Development Plan Document has been published for consultation alongside this document.

HOW HAVE WE GOT HERE?

1.5 Stakeholder and community involvement from the earliest stages of preparing development frameworks is a fundamental requirement of the new planning system. Details of how the County Council intends to involve stakeholders and local communities in the preparation of the Minerals and Waste Development Framework are given in a document called the Statement of Community Involvement, which was adopted by the County Council in December 2005.

1.6 The consultation that has been undertaken in the early stages of preparing the Minerals and Waste Development Framework to help inform the approach taken in the Preferred Options document is set out in Table 1.1. The comments received during the early stages of preparing the Minerals and Waste Development Framework have been used to help develop the preferred options set out in this document.

Table 1.1: Early Community and Stakeholder Involvement in the preparing of the Minerals and Waste Development Framework

Method of Involvement	Date
Establishment of Website	2004
Public Forums	February/March 2005
Stakeholder Workshop	March 2005
Issues and Options Report	June 2005
Peoples Panel Questionnaire	July 2005
Public Focus Group	February 2006
Waste Industry Focus Group	February 2006
Options for Site Specific Allocations	February 2006

1.7 This document sets out the preferred options that the County Council is considering for the Development Control Framework Development Plan Document. It seeks views on the preferred options identified before decisions are made about the content of the final document, which will to be submitted to the Secretary of State in June 2007.

STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL

1.8 To ensure that the Minerals and Waste Development Framework is contributing towards sustainable development, each of its documents must comply with the requirements of the European Union Directive on

Strategic Environmental Assessment[1] and must be subject to a Sustainability Appraisal. The Sustainability Appraisal provides a measure for the appraisal of the Northumberland Minerals and Waste Development Framework objectives and policies to ensure that they contribute to the aims of sustainable development. The Sustainability Report which accompanies this document fulfils these requirements. A summary of the Sustainability Report is provided in Appendix A.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED?

1.9 The County Council would welcome your views on the preferred options for the Development Control Framework Development Plan Document, including the polices which have been put forward.

Comments should be made by:

- Email (planning@northumberland.gov.uk) ; or by
- Completing the electronic form on the Minerals and Waste Development Framework page of the County Council's website (www.northumberland.gov.uk).

If you do not have access to Email or the County Council's website you can write to us at the following address:

Minerals, Waste and Development Control
Northumberland County Council
County Hall, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 2EF.

You can comment on the accompanying Sustainability Report by the same methods.

Comments must be received by <u>10 November 2006</u> to be taken into account.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

1.13 All comments received during the consultation period will be carefully considered by the County Council. The comments will then be taken into account when preparing the final version of the Development Control Framework Development Plan Document to be submitted to the Secretary of State in June 2007.

[1] Directive 2001/42/EC on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment

1.14 Difficult choices will have to be made about the strategy and the policies and it will not always be possible to meet the wishes of everyone. The County Council will publish a report of the consultation on the preferred options for the Development Control Framework Development Plan Document setting out how the comments received have been taken into account.

1.15 If, when the Development Control Framework is submitted to the Secretary of State, you feel that your views have not been taken into account, there will be an opportunity to make further, formal representations. These will be considered by an independent planning inspector at a public examination.

1.16 Details of the timetable for preparing the Minerals and Waste Development Framework are set out in the Local Development Scheme. The Local Development Scheme can be viewed on the Minerals and Waste Development Framework page of Northumberland County Council's website (www.northumberland.gov.uk).

CHAPTER 2: CONTEXT

BACKGROUND

2.1 The Minerals and Waste Development Framework vision, shown below, identifies that the need to achieve sustainable development is paramount.

Our vision for Northumberland is a pattern of sustainable production and consumption of resources, achieved through the careful management of resources and the minimisation of waste generation.

Where waste is generated the emphasis will be on recovering some value from the waste. The amount of waste going to landfill will be limited. Northumberland will contribute to achieving regional, and where appropriate sub regional self sufficiency in waste management.

Minerals and waste developments will be located sensitively so that they meet the needs of communities and businesses whilst contributing positively to Northumberland's environment, economy and quality of life.

Site reclamation will be of the highest quality and after-uses will contribute positively to the local area.

2.2 This vision will be implemented through a number of Core Objectives. These objectives are listed within Chapter 3 of the Core Strategy Development Plan Document. The following objectives are particularly relevant to this document:

A. To protect and enhance the natural and cultural assets of Northumberland;

B. To protect communities from the adverse impacts of minerals and waste developments; and

C. To minimise the adverse impacts of transporting minerals and waste.

Sustainable Development

2.3 'Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development', published in 2005, identifies that sustainable development is the core principle underpinning planning. The goal of sustainable development is to enable all people throughout the world to satisfy their basic needs and

enjoy a better quality of life, without compromising the quality of life for future generations.

2.4 The UK Government Sustainable Development Strategy, 'Securing the Future', which was published in March 2005 identifies five guiding principles for ensuring sustainable development all with explicit focus on environmental limits. From these key principles, the document establishes four priority areas for immediate action:

- sustainable consumption and production
- climate change and energy;
- natural resource protection and environmental enhancement; and
- sustainable communities.

2.5 The emerging Regional Spatial Strategy for the North East embraces the sustainable development principle. Policy 2 on Sustainable Development in the Submission Draft Regional Spatial Strategy states that Development Frameworks should support sustainable construction and development. Three environmental objectives which contribute to delivering this are:

- to protect and enhance the region's biodiversity and geodiversity;
- to make better use of our resources; and
- to protect and enhance the quality and diversity of the region's rural and urban land and landscapes.

2.6 The Northumberland County and National Park Joint Structure Plan (First Alteration, February 2005) identifies that in assessing major developments, benefits will be balanced against disadvantages. In order for the development to be favourable, the benefits must outweigh any potential environmental damage in order to minimise any detrimental impacts on the environment.

CHAPTER 3: COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

LOCAL COMMUNITIES

3.1 The working of minerals and treatment and disposal of waste inevitably gives rise to some disturbance. Where mineral workings or waste management facilities exist, local communities can be affected by visual intrusion, loss of mature landscapes, noise, dust, vibration, odour and other features which contribute to the amenity and quality of life of the area. The transport of minerals and waste by road can also cause disturbance many miles from the site. The development should not be permitted if these effects would have direct impacts on local communities and could not be ameliorated to an acceptable degree through the use of planning conditions.

3.2 Even if a site is acceptable in principle it can be made unacceptable by poor operating standards. Careful planning and good site management are important to ensure that adverse effects of working of minerals and treatment and disposal of waste are minimised. Each operational and restored site is a company's shop window allowing the County Council to assess whether future proposals are likely to be operated and restored to an acceptable standard.

POLICY DC1

MINERALS AND WASTE DEVELOPMENTS WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE SURROUNDING LAND-USES CAN BE ADEQUATELY SAFEGUARDED FROM UNACCEPTABLE NOISE, DUST, ODOUR, VISUAL IMPACT, TRAFFIC OR OTHER LOSS OF AMENITY.

THE ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSALS WILL TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE OPERATOR'S ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE AND PROPOSALS FOR THE MANAGEMENT, OPERATION, RESTORATION AND AFTER-CARE OF THE SITE.

LOCAL ECONOMY

3.3 Minerals are an important national resource and their exploitation makes a contribution to the economic growth of the country. There is a need for waste management facilities to deal with the waste produced. The impact of minerals and waste developments on the local economy, however, may be felt in a number of different ways. The minerals and waste industry is an important source of employment in the County. Approximately 1,400 people are employed directly in the minerals and

waste industry with additional jobs in related employment. The significance of these jobs can be high, particularly in the more remote rural areas of Northumberland with few alternative job opportunities. The creation or maintenance of jobs will therefore be a factor to be taken into account when assessing proposals. Operators will be encouraged to recruit local people wherever practicable.

3.4 It is also necessary to take into account the impact of mineral working and waste management on other areas of the economy; the effects on efforts to promote the County as a business location and tourist destination and the effect on existing employment centres. For example, it would be inappropriate to locate minerals and waste developments in locations where they would have an adverse effect on sensitive users.

POLICY DC2

PROPOSALS FOR MINERALS AND WASTE DEVELOPMENTS WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED IF THEY DO NOT HAVE A DETRIMENTAL IMPACT ON:

- **THE LOCAL ECONOMY, INCLUDING JOBS CREATED OR MAINTAINED;**
- **OTHER LOCAL BUSINESSES AND INWARD INVESTMENT;**
- **TOURISM AND RECREATION.**

CUMULATIVE IMPACT

3.5 The impact of a concentration of working close to a community can be particularly damaging to the general quality of life of that community and to the environment of the area. Unacceptable cumulative impact can result from either a succession of developments one after another (new sites or extensions to sites) or from two or more sites operating or being restored in the same locality. In addition, proposals for minerals and waste developments can result in various environmental impacts which may be individually acceptable, but which, collectively, are judged to create unacceptable environmental damage.

POLICY DC3

THE ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSALS FOR MINERALS AND WASTE DEVELOPMENTS WILL TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE CUMULATIVE IMPACT ON LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT, IN PARTICULAR:

- **THE COMBINED IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT OF A NUMBER OF SEPARATE EFFECTS DUE TO TRAFFIC, NOISE,**

DUST OR VISUAL INTRUSION FROM A SINGLE OPERATIONAL SITE

- **THE CUMULATIVE DIRECT EFFECTS FROM TWO OR MORE OPERATIONAL SITES**
- **THE COMBINED EFFECT ON THE LANDSCAPE ARISING FROM THE RESTORATION OF A NUMBER OF SITES OVER TIME**
- **THE CUMULATIVE IMPACT ON THE QUALITY OF LIFE FROM AN UNBROKEN SEQUENCE OF OPERATION AND RESTORATION**

COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

3.6 Even after the inclusion of mitigation measures and the appropriate use of planning conditions, negative impacts are frequently experienced by the local community from minerals and waste developments. The County Council may therefore seek to negotiate community or environmental benefits in respect of such applications, for example to offset the loss of, or impact on any amenity or environmental resource present on the site prior to the development. Benefits will be sought only where they are necessary to the grant of planning permission, where they have a direct relationship to the development and are required to meet the needs arising from the development itself. Benefits may be sought either in the form of payment or by the direct provision of facilities and will be secured through an agreement under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 between the developer and the County Council. Discussions on the extent of the benefits will be integral with discussions on the technical planning aspect of applications.

3.7 Members of the local community may identify the effects of a proposed development on their community through the consultation process and, where relevant, these effects will be considered as part of the technical assessment of the proposal. Any negotiations on planning obligations will include the identification of any related community or environmental benefits to remedy or compensate for the residual harm resulting from the scheme.

POLICY DC4

WHERE APPROPRIATE AND NECESSARY TO THE GRANT OF PLANNING PERMISSION, THE COUNTY COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO NEGOTIATE WITH MINERALS AND WASTE OPERATORS, COMMUNITY OR ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS WHICH ARE BOTH FAIRLY AND REASONABLY RELATED TO THE PROPOSALS AND COMMENSURATE WITH THE LIKELY IMPACT AND SCALE OF DEVELOPMENT.

3.8 In other circumstances, developers may bring forward offers of associated community benefits , such as the funding of new community facilities or community trust funds which do not meet the tests set out in national policy. In these circumstances the associated benefits will not be treated as material considerations in the determination of planning applications but would be reported to Committee in the interests of transparency.

CHAPTER 4: NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

LANDSCAPE

4.1 Some of the most attractive landscapes in Northumberland have been nationally designated and, therefore, afforded statutory protection. This includes the Northumberland National Park as well as the Northumberland Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. There are also landscapes outside these nationally designated areas which are highly valued locally.

NATIONAL PARK

4.2 The Northumberland National Park covers an area of 1,030 square kilometres, which is about 21% of the land area within Northumberland. The area of Northumberland covered by the National Park is excluded from the Northumberland Minerals and Waste Development Framework as the Northumberland National Park Authority is the Local Planning Authority for the National Park. Policies for minerals and waste development within the National Park are included within the 'Northumberland National Park Local Development Framework'

AREAS OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY

4.3 Two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty are located within Northumberland and, together, they cover about 12% of the land area within the County. Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty are statutory designations, comprising of areas where the landscape and natural beauty is considered to be of national importance. The primary purpose of the designation is to conserve and enhance natural beauty.

4.4 The North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty lies within the boundaries of Cumbria, Durham and Northumberland. Around 457 square kilometres of the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is located within Northumberland. The Northumberland Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty covers an area of 138 square kilometres along a 64 kilometre stretch of the North Northumberland coastline (see Proposals Map). It includes part of the North Northumberland Heritage Coast; a non-statutory designation aimed at conserving the natural beauty of the coastline and where appropriate improving accessibility for visitors.

4.5 'Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas' sets out national planning policy regarding development in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. This advises that:

- major developments, including those that raise issues of national significance, should not take place in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty except in exceptional circumstances;
- major development proposals should be demonstrated to be in the public interest; and
- developments in these areas should be carried out to the highest environmental standards, which will be controlled by planning conditions, where appropriate.

4.6 Minerals developments are considered to be major development as are the majority of waste developments with the exception of smaller-scale sewage treatment works and waste management facilities. However, even relatively small-scale developments could potentially have a damaging effect on the special character of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

4.7 When considering applications within the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the applicant should include an assessment of:

- the need for the development, including any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy;
- the cost of, and scope for, developing elsewhere outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way; and
- any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated.

POLICY DC5

PROPOSALS FOR MINERALS AND WASTE DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN THE NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND COAST AND NORTH PENNINES AREAS OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY WILL BE SUBJECT TO THE MOST RIGOROUS EXAMINATION.

PROPOSALS FOR MINERALS AND WASTE DEVELOPMENTS WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED IN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES WHERE IT CAN BE DEMONSTRATED THAT:

- **THERE IS AN OVERRIDING NATIONAL NEED FOR THE DEVELOPMENT WHICH CANNOT BE MET FROM AN ALTERNATIVE SITE, OR THERE IS AN ESSENTIAL LOCAL NEED FOR SMALL SCALE WASTE MANAGEMENT FACILITIES**

- **THE SCALE, SITING AND DESIGN OF THE PROPOSAL IS APPROPRIATE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CHARACTER AND DISTINCTIVENESS OF THE LANDSCAPE;**
- **THE NATURAL BEAUTY, WILDLIFE AND CULTURAL HERITAGE AND QUIET ENJOYMENT OF THE AREA WOULD NOT BE ADVERSELY AFFECTED; AND**
- **IN THE CASE OF EXTENSIONS TO EXISTING MINERAL WORKINGS, THE LOCAL LANDSCAPE WOULD BE ENHANCED AS A RESULT OF THE PROPOSALS.**

AREAS OUTSIDE NATIONALLY DESIGNATED LANDSCAPES

4.8 There are many landscapes within Northumberland, particularly in the uplands and upland fringe, which are not nationally designated but are considered to be of high quality and importance within the County. Northumberland currently has a number of landscapes that have been defined in existing development plans as Areas of High Landscape Value. These designations provide an extra degree of protection to locally important landscapes.

4.9 'Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas' advocates the use of tools such as landscape character assessment to identify Countryside Character Areas (rather than Areas of High Landscape Value) and those features which make up the distinctive character of the area in future Local Development Frameworks. Proposals for minerals and waste developments should be sympathetic to the landscape character of the area in which they are sited.

4.10 The areas on the fringes of the Northumberland National Park and the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty are important for the protection of the settings of these designated areas. Special consideration will be given to protecting the setting of these areas from insensitively located minerals and waste developments which could harm the natural beauty or character of these areas.

4.11 In South East Northumberland, where 50% of Northumberland's population of live, County Council policy seeks to upgrade the environment and protect the areas of unspoilt open countryside.

POLICY DC6

PROPOSALS FOR MINERALS AND WASTE DEVELOPMENTS SHOULD BE SYMPATHETIC TO THE LANDSCAPE AREA IN WHICH THEY ARE SITED.

THE ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSALS FOR MINERALS AND WASTE DEVELOPMENTS WILL TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE POTENTIAL

IMPACTS OR ENHANCEMENT OF THE LANDSCAPE, BOTH DURING AND AFTER WORKING.

THE ASSESSMENT WILL INCLUDE:

- **THE CHARACTER AND LOCAL DISTINCTIVENESS OF THE LANDSCAPE;**
- **THE VISUAL PROMINENCE OF THE DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE LANDSCAPE;**
- **ANY IMPACT UPON THE SETTING OF THE NORTHUMBERLAND NATIONAL PARK AND THE NORTH PENNINES AND NORTHUMBERLAND COAST AREAS OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY; AND**
- **THE MAINTENANCE OF OPEN COUNTRYSIDE AND VIABLE COUNTRYSIDE USES BETWEEN THE SETTLEMENTS IN SOUTH EAST NORTHUMBERLAND.**

GREEN BELT

4.12 'Planning Policy Guidance 2: Green Belts' explains that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. Green Belts also have a positive role to play in providing access to the open countryside for the urban population and in retaining attractive landscapes near to where people live. There is a general presumption against inappropriate development within the Green Belt.

4.13 The Northumberland Green Belt extends from; the coast inland, south of Blyth and the A1061 road (South Newsham Road), east and South of Cramlington, around Newcastle International Airport, Ponteland and Darras Hall, south of the B6318, east of Haydon Bridge, South of Hexham to the boundary of the North Pennies Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and along the Tyne Valley to the County Boundary will be maintained. Precise boundaries, including those around settlements are defined in Local Plans.

4.14 An extension to the Green Belt is proposed from the existing boundary northwards to lie to the west of Netherwitton, Hartburn and Belsay; north of Longhorsley and west Widdrington Station, excluding the Stobswood Open site; east of Pegswood; west of Ashington, Guide Post, Bedlington and the A1068; and east of Bothal, Hepscott, Nedderton and Hartford Bridge.

4.15 The designation of land as Green Belt is a material consideration when assessing minerals and landfill applications. Mineral extraction and landfill need not be inappropriate development nor conflict with the purposes of designating Green Belts provided that high environmental standards are maintained and the site is well restored. Account will be

taken of the contribution which any reclamation proposals will make to the objectives for the use of land within Green Belts. The County Council would not wish to see mineral workings or landfill developments which would harm the open and rural character of the Green Belt for a significant period whilst the site is being worked or result in the loss of attractive landscapes or areas for informal recreation close to settlements.

4.16 In terms of waste facilities involving built development, Planning Policy Guidance Note 2 starts from the premise that new buildings associated with this use in Green Belts are inappropriate development. However, a specific proposal may be classed as appropriate if it maintains openness and does not conflict with the purposes of including land in Green Belts. Existing waste developments in the Green Belt such as water and sewage treatment works may require additional development to improve the quality of treatment in line with current legislative requirements. Such development may be appropriate provided it can be achieved by infilling, would maintain openness and would not conflict with the purposes of including land in the Green Belt. If the proposal does not meet these criteria, very special circumstances will be required to justify it. These may include an overriding need to carry out development to meet other legislative requirements; an overriding need to site the facility in that location to satisfy the proximity principle and lack of alternatives.

4.17 Some waste facilities, in particular composting, can make use of existing buildings. This would be acceptable provided that the openness of the landscape is maintained and the visual amenities of the Green Belt are not compromised. In assessing this, account will be taken of the general scale of the proposals, any reconstruction or extensions required and the use of surrounding land in terms of storage areas, hardstanding, and boundary walls.

POLICY DC7

PROPOSALS FOR MINERALS AND LANDFILL DEVELOPMENTS IN THE GREEN BELT WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED IF IT CAN BE DEMONSTRATED THAT THE OPENNESS OF THE LANDSCAPE AND HIGH ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS CAN BE MAINTAINED AND RECLAMATION OF THE SITE WILL CONTRIBUTE TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF OBJECTIVES FOR THE USE OF LAND WITHIN GREEN BELTS.

POLICY DC8

PROPOSALS FOR WASTE DEVELOPMENTS INVOLVING THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW BUILT DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE GREEN BELT WILL NOT BE PERMITTED UNLESS:

- **THEY WOULD MAINTAIN THE OPENNESS OF THE LANDSCAPE AND WOULD NOT CONFLICT WITH THE PURPOSES OF INCLUDING LAND IN GREEN BELTS; OR**
- **VERY SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES EXIST TO JUSTIFY THEM PROCEEDING.**

POLICY DC9

PROPOSALS FOR WASTE DEVELOPMENTS INVOLVING THE REUSE OF BUILDINGS WITHIN THE GREEN BELT WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE:

- **THE BUILDINGS ARE OF PERMANENT AND SUBSTANTIAL CONSTRUCTION;**
- **THE BUILDINGS ARE CAPABLE OF CONVERSION WITHOUT MAJOR OR COMPLETE RECONSTRUCTION;**
- **THE FORM, BULK AND GENERAL DESIGN OF THE PROPOSALS ARE NOT DETRIMENTAL TO THE VISUAL AMENITIES OF THE GREEN BELT;**
- **THEY DO NOT HAVE A SIGNIFICANTLY GREATER IMPACT THAN THE PRESENT USE ON THE OPENNESS OF THE LANDSCAPE OR ON THE PURPOSES OF INCLUDING LAND IN GREEN BELTS.**

NATURE CONSERVATION

4.18 Northumberland contains a wide range of important biodiversity and geological conservation features, which is highlighted by an abundance of designated sites within the County.

4.19 There are three tiers of protected areas for biodiversity and geological conservation in the United Kingdom. There are sites that are considered to be of international importance, sites of national importance and sites that are of regional or local importance. Outside of these designated areas are habitats which have their own intrinsic value in terms of biodiversity and geodiversity. National planning policy in relation biodiversity and geological conservation is set out in 'Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation' and is explained in detail in the accompanying ODPM Circular 06/2005 'Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – Statutory Obligations and their Impact within the Planning System'.

INTERNATIONALLY IMPORTANT SITES

4.20 The most important sites for biodiversity are those identified through international conventions and European Directives and are Special Areas of Conservation (SACs); Special Protection Areas (SPAs); and Ramsar sites. As these sites enjoy statutory protection, PPS9 states that specific policies should not be included in development frameworks in respect of these sites.

4.21 When considering a development proposal that could have a significant effect on an internationally important site, a planning authority is required to undertake an appropriate assessment of the implications of the proposal for the conservation objectives of the site. Unless the planning authority can ascertain that the proposal will definitely not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the site, permission can only be granted if there is no alternative solution and there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest for undertaking the proposal. Although in law these procedures only apply to designated Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas, the Government has chosen as a matter of policy to apply them to Ramsar sites and potential Special Protection Areas as well. These procedures are explained in detail in Part I of ODPM Circular 06/2005.

SITES OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE

4.22 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) are the most important nationally designated nature conservation and geological sites. Many Sites of Special Scientific Interest are of international importance and are, therefore also designated as Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas or Ramsar sites and will be protected accordingly. The Sites of Special Scientific Interest designation is used to underpin national and international nature conservation designations. Some Sites of Special Scientific Interest are also National Nature Reserves (NNRs). The Sites of Special Scientific Interest that are not covered by an international designation will be afforded a high degree of protection.

POLICY DC10

MINERALS AND WASTE DEVELOPMENTS WHICH WOULD ADVERSELY AFFECT THE BIOLOGICAL OR GEOLOGICAL VALUE OF A SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST, EITHER ALONE OR IN COMBINATION WITH OTHER DEVELOPMENTS, WILL NOT BE PERMITTED UNLESS, AFTER RIGOROUS EXAMINATION, IT CAN BE DEMONSTRATED THAT THE NEED FOR THE DEVELOPMENT CLEARLY OUTWEIGHS THE HARM TO THE SPECIAL BIOLOGICAL AND/OR GEOLOGICAL VALUE OF THE SITE AND NO SUITABLE ALTERNATIVE IS AVAILABLE.

BIODIVERSITY

Protected Species and Important Habitats and Species

4.23 The extensive range of habitats in Northumberland is home to species which are given statutory protection under a number of pieces of legislation. It is important that these habitats are protected from development to ensure these species are safeguarded. Other habitats and species have been identified (through Section 74 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000) as requiring conservation action as species and habitats of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity (Section 74 habitats and species). These habitats and the habitats of these species should be conserved and, where appropriate, enhanced.

4.24 Protected species found in Northumberland include all species of bat, badger, red squirrel, otter, water vole, freshwater pearl mussel, great crested newt, white-clawed crayfish and Young's helleborine. All birds, their eggs and nests are protected, with rarer species receiving additional protection from deliberate or reckless disturbance during the breeding season. The presence of protected species is a material consideration in determining any planning application, and Section 74 habitats and species, habitats and species included in 'Working for Wildlife: the Northumberland Biodiversity Action Plan' and policies in the England Biodiversity Strategy can also be material considerations. The granting of planning permission does not override the protection provided to protected species and the provisions of the legislation must still be met.

Sites of Regional and Local Importance

4.25 Sites of regional and local biodiversity and geological interest, which include Regionally Important Geological Sites, Local Nature Reserves and Sites of Nature Conservation Importance have a fundamental role to play in meeting overall national biodiversity targets; contributing to the quality of life and the well-being of the community, and in supporting research and education.

Ancient Woodland

4.26 Ancient Woodland is a valuable biodiversity resource for its diversity of species and for its longevity as woodland. Once lost, an area of ancient woodland cannot be recreated and no amount of replanting will compensate for its disappearance.

4.27 Mature and veteran trees found outside ancient woodland are also particularly valuable for biodiversity. The loss of these trees should be

avoided wherever possible with their conservation encouraged as part of proposals for minerals and waste developments.

POLICY DC11

PROPOSALS FOR MINERALS AND WASTE DEVELOPMENTS WHICH WOULD ADVERSELY AFFECT THE INTEGRITY OF SITES OF REGIONAL AND LOCAL BIODIVERSITY/GEOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE OR WOULD RESULT IN THE LOSS OR DETERIORATION OF ANCIENT WOODLAND WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE OTHER MATERIAL PLANNING BENEFITS OR THE NEED FOR THE DEVELOPMENT CLEARLY OUTWEIGHS THE HARM TO THE NATURE CONSERVATION VALUE OF THE SITE AND NO ALTERNATIVE SITE IS AVAILABLE.

Networks of Natural Habitats and Features of Importance in the Wider Countryside

4.28 It is important that sites protected for their biodiversity and geological interest do not become isolated. Networks of natural habitats, or wildlife corridors, and features in the wider landscape have a role to play in migration, dispersal and genetic exchange. Therefore, these features should be maintained, protected from development and, where possible, enhanced. Minerals and waste developments can provide opportunities for incorporating biodiversity or geological features and this should be maximised in and around developments, using planning obligations where appropriate. A list of key habitats and species which make a significant contribution to the maintenance of biodiversity in Northumberland is provided in ‘Working for Wildlife: The Northumberland Biodiversity Action Plan’.

4.29 Previously developed land can also have a significant biodiversity or geological interest. This interest should be retained or incorporated into any new development that could take place on the site.

POLICY DC12

PROPOSALS FOR MINERALS AND WASTE DEVELOPMENTS WHICH WOULD ADVERSELY AFFECT THE INTEGRITY OR CONTINUITY OF THE FEATURES, HABITATS OR POPULATIONS OF SPECIES LISTED BELOW, DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY, WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE OTHER MATERIAL PLANNING BENEFITS OR THE NEED FOR THE DEVELOPMENT CLEARLY OUTWEIGHS THE NEED TO RETAIN THE FEATURE AND NO ALTERNATIVE SITE IS AVAILABLE:

- **HABITATS AND SPECIES OF PRINCIPAL IMPORTANCE IN ENGLAND**

- **HABITATS AND SPECIES INCLUDED IN WORKING FOR WILDLIFE: THE NORTHUMBERLAND BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN**
- **LANDSCAPE FEATURES OF IMPORTANCE FOR MIGRATION, DISPERSAL OR GENETIC EXCHANGE, INCLUDING WATERCOURSES AND THEIR BANKS, FIELD BOUNDARIES, PONDS, SEMI-NATURAL GRASSLANDS AND WOODLANDS**

Mitigation and Enhancement

4.30 Where planning permission for minerals or waste development is granted, planning conditions and/or planning obligations will, where appropriate, be used to secure appropriate operation, restoration and after-care of sites, to limit any damage to nature conservation interests to an acceptable level and to enhance features of biodiversity or geological importance, where feasible. Where damage is unavoidable, the developer will be required to provide replacement habitats and features. The County Council will liaise closely with English Nature and appropriate nature conservation organisations.

POLICY DC13

WHERE PLANNING PERMISSION IS GRANTED FOR MINERALS AND WASTE DEVELOPMENTS HARM TO BIODIVERSITY AND GEOLOGICAL CONSERVATION INTERESTS MUST BE AVOIDED WHERE POSSIBLE AND OTHERWISE MINIMISED. CONDITIONS, PLANNING OBLIGATIONS AND MANAGEMENT AGREEMENTS WILL BE USED IN ORDER TO PROTECT AND ENHANCE THE SITE'S NATURE CONSERVATION INTEREST AND TO PROVIDE COMPENSATORY MEASURES AND SITE MANAGEMENT

CHAPTER 5: HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

5.1 Northumberland contains a rich heritage of features of architectural, historic or archaeological interest, including Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings, Historic Parks and Gardens, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Battlefield Sites, other archaeological sites and historic landscapes. Currently, there are 19,500 archaeological sites and historic features registered on the County Historic Environment Record (formerly known as the Sites and Monuments Record).

5.2 It is essential that sites and buildings of importance should be protected from mineral workings and waste developments which would irreparably damage or destroy them or their settings. 'Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development' states that those sites with a national and/or an international designation should receive the highest levels of protection.

HADRIAN'S WALL

5.3 The Hadrian's Wall Military Zone is a World Heritage Site as designated by UNESCO. UNESCO requires buffer zones to be defined around World Heritage Sites to cushion them from unsuitable development. This has been done for the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site. The Management plan for Hadrian's Wall (September 2005), prepared by English Heritage in consultation with other bodies, defines the World Heritage Site and its setting.

POLICY DC14

THERE IS A PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR OF THE PRESERVATION OF HADRIAN'S WALL. MINERALS AND WASTE DEVELOPMENTS WHICH WOULD ADVERSELY AFFECT HADRIAN'S WALL WORLD HERITAGE SITE AND ITS SETTING WILL NOT BE PERMITTED.

SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENTS

5.4 There are approximately 1,000 Scheduled Ancient Monuments in Northumberland. This number is likely to increase over time as new sites of national importance are designated.

POLICY DC15

THERE IS A PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR OF THE PRESERVATION OF SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENTS AND NATIONALLY IMPORTANT ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES. MINERALS AND WASTE DEVELOPMENTS WHICH WOULD ADVERSELY AFFECT THESE SITES OR THEIR SETTINGS WILL NOT BE PERMITTED.

OTHER FEATURES OF HISTORIC IMPORTANCE

5.5 Sites and buildings of local, regional and national archaeological and historic importance must be protected wherever possible. Where such areas are affected by proposals for mineral working or waste developments, a judgement will be made concerning the relative importance of the historical feature and the need for the mineral or waste development. This will take into account the availability of alternative sites and the degree to which a mineral operation or waste development can be designed to minimise damage to such areas.

POLICY DC16

PROPOSALS FOR MINERALS AND WASTE DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD ADVERSELY AFFECT:

- **REGIONALLY OR LOCALLY IMPORTANT ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES;**
- **LISTED BUILDINGS AND THEIR SETTINGS;**
- **CONSERVATION AREAS;**
- **HISTORIC BATTLEFIELDS;**
- **HISTORIC PARKS AND GARDENS;**

WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE OTHER MATERIAL PLANNING BENEFITS OR THE NEED FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OUTWEIGHS THE IMPORTANCE OF RETAINING THE SITE OR AREA UNALTERED AND NO ALTERNATIVE SITE IS AVAILABLE.

5.6 Where proposals for minerals working or a waste development would affect an area containing sites of known or potential archaeological importance, the operator will be required to provide information in the form of an archaeological assessment. If this assessment indicates that important archaeological remains may exist, a field evaluation may be necessary. The general presumption will be in favour of *in situ* preservation of archaeological remains but, where this is not possible, the emphasis will be on making adequate provision for sites to be appropriately recorded and published.

5.7 In order to minimise future conflict and unnecessary expense, it is important that applicants discuss their preliminary plans with the minerals and waste planning authority at an early stage to establish the likely archaeological sensitivity of their proposed area.

POLICY DC17

WHERE PROPOSALS FOR MINERALS AND WASTE DEVELOPMENTS AFFECT SITES OF KNOWN OR POTENTIAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE OR WHERE THE RELATIVE IMPORTANCE AND/OR EXTENT OF SUCH A SITE IS UNCLEAR, THE DEVELOPER WILL BE REQUIRED TO PROVIDE FURTHER INFORMATION IN THE FORM OF AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT AND WHERE APPROPRIATE AN EVALUATION BEFORE ANY PLANNING PERMISSION IS GRANTED.

WHERE THE COUNTY COUNCIL DECIDES TO GRANT PERMISSION FOR MINERAL/ WASTE DEVELOPMENT WHICH WILL AFFECT SITES KNOWN TO CONTAIN ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS, AND PRESERVATION IN SITU IS NOT APPROPRIATE, SUCH PERMISSION WILL BE SUBJECT TO A CONDITION AND, WHERE APPROPRIATE, A PLANNING OBLIGATION MAY BE SOUGHT, TO ENSURE THE DEVELOPER MAKES PROVISION FOR THE EXCAVATION AND RECORDING OF THE REMAINS AND PUBLICATION OF THE FINDINGS.

CHAPTER 6: NATURAL RESOURCES

AGRICULTURE

6.1 Agriculture represents the dominant land use in Northumberland, accounting for over 80% of the total land area in the County. The best and most versatile agricultural land (Grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Defra's System of Agricultural Land Classification) is scarce in Northumberland. Government Policy on development on agricultural land is set out in 'Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas',

6.2 The best and most versatile agricultural land should not be degraded by minerals and waste developments in the longer-term. Minerals can only be worked where they occur, which means there is not the same flexibility or choice of location as is the case for other types of development. Much of the best agricultural land in Northumberland is underlain by high quality sand and gravel reserves. The potential exists to restore minerals workings back to agriculture. However, it is generally understood that it is difficult to restore the higher quality agricultural land to its original quality. The restoration of poorer quality agricultural land tends to be more successful. Where sites are low lying, the land may be lost to agriculture altogether if they are worked wet and restored to water areas. While restoration to agriculture is most commonly proposed for the best and most versatile agricultural land, forestry or some other forms of amenity after-use may also be acceptable. However, the methods used in reclamation should enable the land to retain its longer-term potential as a high quality agricultural resource.

6.3 Built waste developments have different locational constraints to minerals sites and landfill operations and would be rarely located in areas of open countryside. Proposals for built waste developments affecting higher quality agricultural land will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that there is an overriding need that cannot be met from an alternative site on poorer quality land.

6.4 Consideration will also be given to the impact of the loss of agricultural land on the viability of a farm unit.

POLICY DC18

THE ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSALS FOR MINERALS AND WASTE DEVELOPMENTS WILL TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THEIR IMPACT ON AGRICULTURAL LAND QUALITY AND THE VIABILITY OF THE FARM UNIT.

WHERE THE DEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURAL LAND IS UNAVOIDABLE, THE DEVELOPMENT OF AREAS WITH POORER QUALITY LAND (GRADE 3B, 4 AND 5) WILL BE PREFERRED TO

HIGHER QUALITY LAND, EXCEPT WHERE OTHER SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS INDICATE OTHERWISE.

PROPOSALS FOR MINERALS AND WASTE DEVELOPMENTS WHICH AFFECT THE BEST AND MOST VERSATILE AGRICULTURAL LAND (GRADE 1, 2 AND 3A) WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE IT CAN BE DEMONSTRATED THAT THE LAND CAN BE RECLAIMED WITHOUT LOSS OF QUALITY OR IF THIS IS NOT POSSIBLE THAT THERE ARE MATERIAL PLANNING BENEFITS OR THERE IS AN OVERRIDING NEED FOR THE DEVELOPMENT WHICH COULD NOT BE MET FROM AN ALTERNATIVE SITE.

WATER RESOURCES

6.5 The Environment Agency is concerned with the possible impact of minerals and waste developments on water resources, flood defence, conservation interests and the potential problem of surface and groundwater pollution.

6.6 In terms of minerals, extraction may reduce ground water levels in the area surrounding a site and for a significant distance away. This may, for example, have a detrimental effect on archaeological remains or nature conservation interests. One of the main concerns with waste disposal through landfill is the potential for the leachate generated to pollute groundwater and surface waters. Other waste facilities which involve the storage of waste can also have implications for water pollution.

6.7 The Environment Agency's position statement on the location of landfills with respect to groundwater protection in light of the Landfill Directive and the subsequent Landfill Regulations is provided in Regulatory Guidance Note 3 (RGN3). The approach of RGN3 is to minimise the risk to groundwater, particularly in relation to that used for public water supply (mainly major aquifers). It is based on Source Protection Zones, which are focussed on abstraction boreholes licensed by the Environment Agency. This will impact on the availability of potential new landfill sites.

6.8 Runoff from sites can cause pollution if allowed to drain into the river systems. In addition, the reclamation of minerals/ waste disposal may result in the raising of ground levels. If this is done within a floodplain it may increase the risk of flooding elsewhere. Developments in areas which are at risk from flooding must be carefully considered because of the potential for pollution that this can cause.

6.9 Emerging national planning policy (Draft Planning Policy Statement 25: 'Development and Flood Risk') states that 'the avoidance and management of flood risk can make a positive contribution to the

development of sustainable communities'. The sequential approach must be applied to all mineral working and waste development proposals in areas of river and sea flooding to demonstrate that there are no alternative sites available with a lower probability of flooding that would be appropriate for the development.

POLICY DC19

THE ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSALS FOR MINERALS AND WASTE DEVELOPMENTS WILL TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THEIR EFFECT ON EXISTING GROUND WATER LEVELS, WATER ABSTRACTION, FLOOD RISK, AND GROUND AND SURFACE WATER QUALITY.

PLANNING PERMISSION WILL ONLY BE GRANTED IF THE DEVELOPMENT PRESENTS NO UNACCEPTABLE RISK TO THE SURFACE OR GROUND WATER ENVIRONMENT AND THERE WOULD BE NO UNACCEPTABLE RISK OF FLOODING TO THE DEVELOPMENT OR ELSEWHERE.

PROPOSALS FOR MINERALS AND WASTE DEVELOPMENTS MUST CONSIDER THE CRITERIA SET OUT BELOW:

- **THE SEQUENTIAL APPROACH MUST BE APPLIED TO ALL MINERAL WORKING AND WASTE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS IN AREAS OF RIVER AND SEA FLOODING TO DEMONSTRATE THAT THERE ARE NO ALTERNATIVE SITES AVAILABLE WITH A LOWER PROBABILITY OF FLOODING THAT WOULD BE APPROPRIATE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT (SEE TABLE D.1, ANNEX D OF DRAFT PLANNING POLICY STATEMENT 25);**
- **DEPARTURES FROM THE SEQUENTIAL APPROACH WILL ONLY BE JUSTIFIED IN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES WHERE IT IS NECESSARY TO MEET THE WIDER AIMS OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT; AND**
- **ALL NEW DEVELOPMENT IN FLOOD RISK AREAS MUST BE APPROPRIATELY FLOOD RESILIENT AND RESISTANT.**

FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENTS SHOULD BE A CARRIED OUT TO THE APPROPRIATE DEGREE AT ALL LEVELS OF THE PLANNING PROCESS TO ASSESS THE RISKS OF ALL FORMS OF FLOODING TO AND FROM DEVELOPMENT AND INFORM THE APPLICATION OF THE SEQUENTIAL APPROACH.

PROPOSALS FOR LANDFILL IN AREAS OF CONSTRAINT WILL NOT BE PERMITTED, UNLESS THEY ARE JUSTIFIED BY A QUANTITATIVE RISK ASSESSMENT.

CHAPTER 7: TRANSPORT

TRAFFIC

7.1 A major concern with many minerals and waste developments is the transport of materials by road. As well as the wider effects of atmospheric pollution, the use of heavy goods vehicles for the transport of minerals and waste causes serious disruption and danger to affected communities and damage to the road network. Other means of transport such as rail, ship, conveyor or pipeline can be less damaging but not always practicable, may involve considerable investment in infrastructure and do not offer the flexibility of road transport.

7.2 County Council policies seek to ensure that heavy freight traffic will be handled by rail wherever possible. Proposals for mineral and waste development should explore the feasibility of transporting minerals by means other than the public road networks, such as ship, rail, conveyor, pipeline or private haul road. Where they are practicable such proposals will be regarded as a positive factor in the assessment of applications and suitable conditions will be imposed. However, it should be borne in mind that the construction of new rail loading facilities can bring problems of noise, dust and visual intrusion, both of the facilities themselves and stockpiles of minerals and may result in the transport of waste over longer distances, contrary to the proximity principle. Therefore a judgement will have to be made as to whether there would be an overall environmental benefit.

7.3 Where new proposals involve movement of material by road, the suitability of the local road network will be assessed. In order to reduce the environmental impact of heavy traffic, proposals for new minerals and waste developments should not transport material along minor roads which would cause unacceptable disturbance to local communities and the environment.

7.4 The County Council will seek to secure agreements with applicants, in line with current guidance, to ensure the use of approved lorry routes and will require operators to carry out highway strengthening and improvements before granting planning permission, where these are considered to be necessary as a result of the minerals or waste development.

POLICY DC20

PROPOSALS TO USE ALTERNATIVE MEANS OF TRANSPORT TO ROAD WILL BE REGARDED AS A POSITIVE FACTOR IN DETERMINING APPLICATIONS FOR MINERALS AND WASTE DEVELOPMENTS PROVIDED THAT THIS WILL RESULT IN AN OVERALL ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFIT.

WHERE ALTERNATIVE METHODS ARE NOT POSSIBLE THE ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSALS FOR MINERALS AND WASTE DEVELOPMENTS WILL TAKE INTO ACCOUNT TRANSPORT CONSIDERATIONS INCLUDING THE SUITABILITY OF THE ROAD NETWORK TO ACCOMMODATE TRAFFIC; THE ROUTEING OF TRAFFIC TO AVOID SETTLEMENTS; AND THE EFFECT ON HIGHWAY SAFETY, HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE AND THE ENVIRONMENT.

PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

7.5 Where existing rights of way cannot be retained, a suitable alternative route will be required either by temporary diversion or dedication by the developer.

POLICY DC21

WHERE PROPOSALS FOR MINERALS AND WASTE DEVELOPMENTS ARE PERMITTED, EXISTING PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY MUST BE SAFEGUARDED WHEREVER PRACTICABLE FOR MINERALS AND WASTE DEVELOPMENTS, OTHERWISE, A SUITABLE ALTERNATIVE ROUTE MUST BE PROVIDED EITHER BY TEMPORARY DIVERSION OR DEDICATION BY THE DEVELOPER PRIOR TO DEVELOPMENT COMMENCING.

APPENDIX A: SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL SUMMARY

Sustainability Appraisal

A1 Sustainability Appraisal is a statutory process for assessing and mitigating the effects of particular plans and programmes. The Sustainability Appraisal process assesses how the key principles of sustainable development (environmental, social and economic) are incorporated in the plan making process. The Sustainability Appraisal process also incorporates the requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive.

A2 The Sustainability Appraisal has been completed by the Strategic Policy and Initiatives Team within Northumberland County Council and has informed the development of the Minerals and Waste Development Framework in parallel to the Minerals and Waste Development Framework drafting process since February 2005. The process has involved a number of stages and has resulted in the production of a Scoping Report, an initial Sustainability Appraisal report on emerging Issues and Options and production of the Sustainability Appraisal Report.

A3 The full Sustainability Appraisal Report includes description and analysis of the following stages:

- Identification of other plans and programmes that need to be considered in relation to the Sustainability Appraisal of the Minerals and Waste Development Framework
- Collection of baseline information on environmental, social and economic parameters and trends in Northumberland
- Identification of key sustainability issues and challenges in Northumberland
- Preparation of a sustainability framework including a series of 17 Sustainability Objectives, with supporting objectives and indicators
- Full appraisal of alternative options and draft Minerals and Waste Development Framework policies

A4 As the preparation of the Development Control Framework progresses following the current Preferred Options consultation, some policies may be amended. If this happens, the amended policies will be re-examined to assess any changes in their overall effects on sustainability. The aim is that any amendments will help overcome any identified negative effects on Sustainability Appraisal objectives and improve the effects of the Development Plan Document on sustainable development.

A5 The Sustainability Appraisal Report forms part of the public consultation on the draft Minerals and Waste Development Framework Preferred Options.

Assessment of Preferred Options

A6 Summarised below is the assessment of the potential impact of the preferred options, and the extent to which the preferred policy options achieves, supports or contradicts the sustainability objectives.

DC1 Community Protection	The policy aims to protect local communities from the negative impacts caused by development such as dust, noise and odour. In doing so there is also a positive impact on the environment especially in terms of air quality. There are also positive impacts on the environment through consideration of operator's environmental performances.
DC2 Protecting the Local Economy	There are clear economic impacts through this policy as this is the main steer. However, there are also resulting environmental benefits associated by protecting tourism and recreation as Northumberland's countryside and cultural heritage are an important aspect of this industry. Potential conflict could arise between protecting local jobs and tourism and recreation.
DC3 Assessing Cumulative Impact	This policy generally re-enforces the emphasis placed on thorough site planning and assessment as highlighted in other policies.
DC4 Community and Environmental Benefits	More uncertain impacts were recorded for this policy due to a potential conflict in interest between 'environmental' and 'community' benefits. Monetary incentives may increase a community's 'willingness to accept' a development.
DC5 Areas within Nationally Designated Landscapes	The policy affords a high level of protection within the Northumberland Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty but does concede that need may override other concerns where no alternatives exist. This provides a positive impact on environment and where development does cause short term negative impacts, there is potential for long term benefit through restoration. The policy ensures need is also met.

DC6 Areas outside Nationally Designated Landscapes	The policy assessment criteria ensure that thorough assessment takes place thus providing environmental protection. Amenity is protected and where development takes, place there is long term positive potential through restoration.
DC7 Development within the Green Belt	The policy fulfils many sustainability objectives particularly ensuring society's need is met and that landscape, amenity and soil are protected.
DC8 New Built Development within Green Belt	Policy is similar to DC7 in that the impacts on environmental concerns such as landscape and openness are positive and amenity is protected. It is accepted that need may override other concerns and this ensures society's need is met.
DC9 Re-use of buildings within Green Belt	The policy has potentially positive impacts on the landscape and environment as well as encouraging the appropriate use of materials and recycling of buildings. It may prove beneficial to add traffic into the criteria in order to ensure the impacts of traffic are minimised.
DC10 Sites of National Importance	Protection of Sites of Special Scientific Interest will ensure positive environmental impacts. However, society's need is also met through the concession that where no alternatives exist, need may override other concerns.
DC11 Sites of Regional and Local Importance	The policy yields similar results to Policy DC10 with a very high level of protection ensuring positive environmental impacts whilst at the same time ensuring that society's needs are met by allowing need to override other concerns where there is no alternative.
DC12 Natural Habitats and Features of Importance	The policy yields similar results to Policy DC10 and DC11 with a very high level of protection ensuring positive environmental impacts whilst at the same time ensuring that society's needs are met by allowing need to override other concerns where there is no alternative.
DC13 Mitigation and Enhancement	Again, similar impacts to the previous policies especially in terms of biodiversity and geodiversity. Use of conditions and management agreements will ensure minimal damage and maximum benefit not only during operation but in after-use as well.

DC14 Hadrian's Wall	The policy is area specific but will very positive impacts due to the absolute protection offered. In this area, need cannot override other concerns. Other positive impacts are in terms of amenity, tourism and recreation and local jobs. There is a small potentially negative impact in terms of meeting needs however, given the area covered, this is unlikely to be a major issue.
DC15 Scheduled Ancient Monuments	Appraisal of this policy is very similar to that of Policy DC14 in that the policy is site specific and the impacts in the areas where there are ancient scheduled monuments are likely to be positive. Again a very small potentially negative impact is identified in terms of meeting demand for minerals and waste facilities.
DC16 Other Features of Historic Importance 1	The main positive impact of the policy will be upon the protection of cultural heritage. Protection of cultural heritage will also have positive impacts upon tourism and recreation and amenity. Need may override and therefore there is also a positive impact in terms of ensuring need is met.
DC17 Other Features of Historic Importance 2	Assessment is very similar to DC16. Positive impacts are recorded against cultural heritage.
DC18 Agriculture	Protecting the highest quality land ensures good geodiversity. Other benefits are in terms of landscape protection and enhancement. Need may override other concerns.
DC19 Water Resources	The policy is very specific. It has a major positive impact upon avoidance and reduction of flood risk as a result of development.
DC20 Traffic	Positive environmental impacts associated with reducing the amount of traffic on the road were identified and ensures that where road is the only option, thorough assessment is undertaken to ensure mitigation measures are put in place.
DC21 Public Rights of Way	The main impact of the policy will be on recreation and local amenity. Needs of the public are always to be considered so where loss occurs, substitutes must be identified.

Influence of the Sustainability Appraisal on the emerging Minerals and Waste Development Framework

A7 The Development Control Framework of the Minerals and Waste Development Framework has been appraised against the Sustainability Appraisal objectives and this Sustainability Appraisal Report demonstrates how the process has operated and reports on the outcomes. The overall conclusion of the Sustainability Appraisal of the draft Minerals and Waste Development Framework is that that it should make a positive contribution in implementing the objectives and core strategic policies set out in the Core Strategy Development Plan Document.

A8 The appraisal also suggests that the strategies will have more positive and less negative impacts than that of current practice, and will therefore be more effective in facilitating the achievement of sustainable development outcomes.

A9 The Sustainability Appraisal has highlighted areas that will need further investigation as site specific proposals come forward through application and approval processes. In practice, most if not all minerals applications are likely to require the submission of a detailed Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) that would address many of these matters, including proposals for mitigation of any unavoidable adverse impacts. Waste related applications may also require a formal Environmental Impact Assessment – but even if they do not, detailed information on the impact of any unavoidable adverse impact and mitigation proposals would be required by the planning authority as part of the decision making process.

APPENDIX B: GLOSSARY

Amenity - A positive element or elements that contribute to the overall character of an area, for example open land, trees, historic buildings and how they relate to each other.

Ancient Woodland - Woodland that is believed to have existed from at least medieval times without use other than timber production.

Archaeological Assessment / Evaluation - Rapid and inexpensive operation involving ground survey and small-scale trial trenching carried out by professionally qualified archaeologist(s) looking for historical remains.

Biodiversity The whole variety of life encompassing all genetics, species and ecosystem variations, including plans and animals.

Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) - A strategy prepared for a local area aimed at conserving biological diversity.

Conservation Area - Areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character, appearance or setting of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

Core strategy - A Development Plan Development setting out the spatial vision and objectives of the planning framework for an area, having regard to the Community Strategy (see also Development Plan Documents).

Development Plan Documents (DPDs) - Development Plan Documents are Local Development Documents that have development plan status. Once adopted, development control decisions must be made in accordance with them unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan Documents which local planning authorities must prepare, include the core strategy, site-specific allocations of land and, where needed, area action plans. There will also be a proposals map, which illustrates the spatial extent of policies that must be prepared and maintained to accompany all Development Plan Documents. All Development Plan Documents must be subject to rigorous procedures of community involvement, consultation and independent examination, and adopted after receipt of the inspector's binding report.

Groundwater - An important part of the natural water cycle present underground, within strata known as aquifers.

Historic Battlefield - Areas of historic interest where important battles are sufficiently documented to be located on the ground. Designated by English Heritage.

Historic Parks and Gardens - A park or garden of special historic interest. Graded I (highest quality), II* or II. Designated by English Heritage.

Issues, Options and Preferred Options - The “pre-submission” consultation stages on Development Plan Documents with the objective of gaining public consensus over proposals ahead of submission to Government for independent examination.

Landscaper Character - The distinct and recognisable pattern of elements that occur consistently in a particular type of landscape. It reflects particular combinations of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use and human settlement

Listed Building - A building of special architectural or historic interest. Graded I (highest quality), II* or II.

Local Development Documents (LDDs) - These include Development Plan Documents, which will form part of the statutory development plan, and Supplementary Planning Documents, which do not form part of the statutory development plan. Local Development Documents collectively deliver the spatial planning strategy for the local planning authority's area, and they may be prepared jointly between local planning authorities.

Local Development Framework/Minerals and Waste Development Framework – This is a non-statutory term used to describe a folder of documents, which includes all the local planning authority's local development documents (comprised of development plan documents, which will form part of the statutory development plan, and supplementary planning documents). The local development framework will also comprise the statement of community involvement, the local development scheme and the annual monitoring report.

Local Development Scheme (LDS) - The local planning authority’s time-scaled programme for the preparation of Local Development Documents that must be agreed with Government and reviewed every year.

Mineral Planning Statement (MPS) - Minerals Planning Statement published by central government setting out government policy on minerals. Mineral Planning Statements will eventually replace **Minerals Planning Guidance Notes**.

Planning permission - Formal approval sought from a Council, often granted with conditions, allowing a proposed development to proceed.

Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) - Issued by central Government setting out its national land use policies for England on different areas of planning. These are being replaced by **Planning Policy Statements**.

Ramsar Sites - Sites designated under the European Ramsar Convention to protect wetlands that are of international importance, particularly as waterfowl habitats.

Regional Planning Body (RPB)/Regional Assembly - Each of the English regions outside of London has a Regional Chamber that the regions generally call "Regional Assemblies". They are responsible for developing and co-ordinating a strategic vision for improving the quality of life in a region. The Assembly is responsible for setting priorities and preparing certain regional strategies, including Regional Spatial Strategies. In the North East of England the Regional Planning Body is the North East Regional Assembly.

Regional Planning Guidance (RPG) - Regional planning policy and guidance issued for each region in England by the Secretary of State. Most Regional Planning Guidance becomes Regional Spatial Strategy until revised by the replacement Regional Spatial Strategy.

Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) - A strategy for how a region should look in 15 to 20 years time and possibly longer. The new Regional Spatial Strategies are being prepared by the Regional Planning Bodies.

Scheduled Ancient Monument - Nationally important monuments that enjoy greater protection against inappropriate development through the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979.

Setting - The place or way in which something is set, for example the position or surroundings of a listed building.

Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) - A site identified under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as incorporated in the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000) as an area of special interest by reason of any of its flora, fauna, geological or physiographical features (basically, plants, animals, and natural features relating to the Earth's structure).

Special Area Of Conservation (SAC) - A site designated under the European Community Habitats Directive, to protect internationally important natural habitats and species.

Special Protection Areas (SPA) - Sites classified under the European Community Directive on Wild Birds to protect internationally important bird species.

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) - The Statement of Community Involvement sets out standards to be achieved by the local authority in involving the community in the preparation, alteration and continuing review of all local development documents and development control decisions.

Statutory Required by law (statute), usually through an Act of Parliament.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) - An environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes, including those in the field of planning and land use, which complies with the EU Directive 2001/42/EC. The environmental assessment involves the:

- preparation of an environmental report;

- carrying out of consultations;
- taking into account of the environmental report and the results of the consultations in decision making;
- provision of information when the plan or programme is adopted; and
- showing that the results of the environment assessment have been taken into account.

Structure Plan – A plan which sets out strategic planning policies and forms the basis for detailed policies in local plans and Development Plan Documents. These plans will be replaced with Regional Spatial Strategy over time.

Submission Document - A Development Plan Document submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination before a Government appointed Planning Inspector.

Sustainability Appraisal (including Environmental Appraisal) - The process of weighing and assessing all the policies in a development plan, Local Development Document, or Regional Spatial Strategy, for their global, national and local implications. (See also Strategic Environmental Assessment).

Sustainable Development - A widely used definition drawn up by the World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987: "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".

World Heritage Site - A cultural or natural site of outstanding universal value designated by the “International Council on Monuments and Sites” (ICOMOS), for example Hadrian’s Wall.