Northumberland Minerals and Waste Development Framework

CORE STRATEGY

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

Core Strategy
Development Plan Document

Contents

		Page
Chapter 1	**Introduction**	**1**
Chapter 2	**Context**	**5**
Chapter 3	**Vision and Objectives**	**10**
Chapter 4	**Conserving and Enhancing the Environment and Quality of Life**	**13**
Chapter 5	**Resource Management**	**15**
Chapter 6	**Efficiency of Use and Sustainable Waste Management**	**40**
Chapter 7	**Social and Economic Development**	**58**
Chapter 8	**Securing Effective and Imaginative Restoration of Sites**	**61**
Chapter 9	**Monitoring and Implementation Framework**	**63**
Appendix A	**Sustainability Appraisal Summary**	**65**
Appendix B	**Glossary**	**71**

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 CORE STRATEGY?

1.4 The Core Strategy Development Plan Document will be the key strategic planning document in the Minerals and Waste Development Framework. It will set out the spatial vision, define a number of objectives and include a spatial development strategy as well as strategic policies to implement the vision and objectives.

1.5 The Core Strategy Development Plan Document will not include details of land allocations or detailed development control policies. These will be contained in separate, but complementary, Development Plan Documents.

HOW HAVE WE GOT HERE?

1.6 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.

1.7 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

1.8 This document sets out the preferred options that the County Council is considering for the Core Strategy 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.

STRUCTURE OF THE PREFERRED OPTIONS FOR THE CORE STRATEGY DOCUMENT

1.9 The following chapters provide a summary of the local and policy context within which the preferred options for the Core Strategy Development Plan Document have been developed. It then sets out the vision and objectives for the Minerals and Waste Development Framework and establishes a number of key policy principles. It also

contains a number of strategic policies in relation to minerals and waste and for the protection of local communities and the environment.

1.10 Where appropriate, a short summary of the comments received during the early consultation is given to help demonstrate why a particular option has been chosen. Where there are considered to be no reasonable alternatives to the approach favoured by the County Council, the term **'preferred approach'** has been used. Where there is a choice of option, the document sets out the option favoured by the County Council as the **'preferred option'**, with the alternative options that have been rejected referred to as **'rejected option'**.

STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL

1.11 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?

1.12 The County Council would welcome your views on the preferred options for the Core Strategy Development Plan Document, including the vision, objectives and development strategy as well as the strategic 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:

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

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

You can comment on the accompanying Sustainability Report in the same ways.

To be taken into account all comments must be received by 10 November 2006.

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 Core Strategy Development Plan Document to be submitted to the Secretary of State in June 2007.

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 Core Strategy Development Plan Document setting out how the comments received have been taken into account.

1.15 If, when the Core Strategy 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

POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 Preparation of the Minerals and Waste Development Framework will take place within the context provided by Government planning policy and guidance, sustainable development advice, the Regional Spatial Strategy, and the Community Strategies that have been prepared by the Local Strategic Partnerships within Northumberland. The Minerals and Waste Development Framework needs to take account of national planning policy, must be in general conformity with Regional Spatial Strategy and has to demonstrate clear links with the Community Strategies. In turn, the Minerals and Waste Development Framework will be an important means by which these higher level strategies and policies are implemented.

2.2 The Minerals and Waste Development Framework will, in addition, need to recognise the spatial aspects of other regional and local documents. These documents include the Regional Economic Strategy, the Northumberland Biodiversity Action Plan and the Northumberland Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy.

A SPATIAL PROFILE OF NORTHUMBERLAND

PLAN AREA

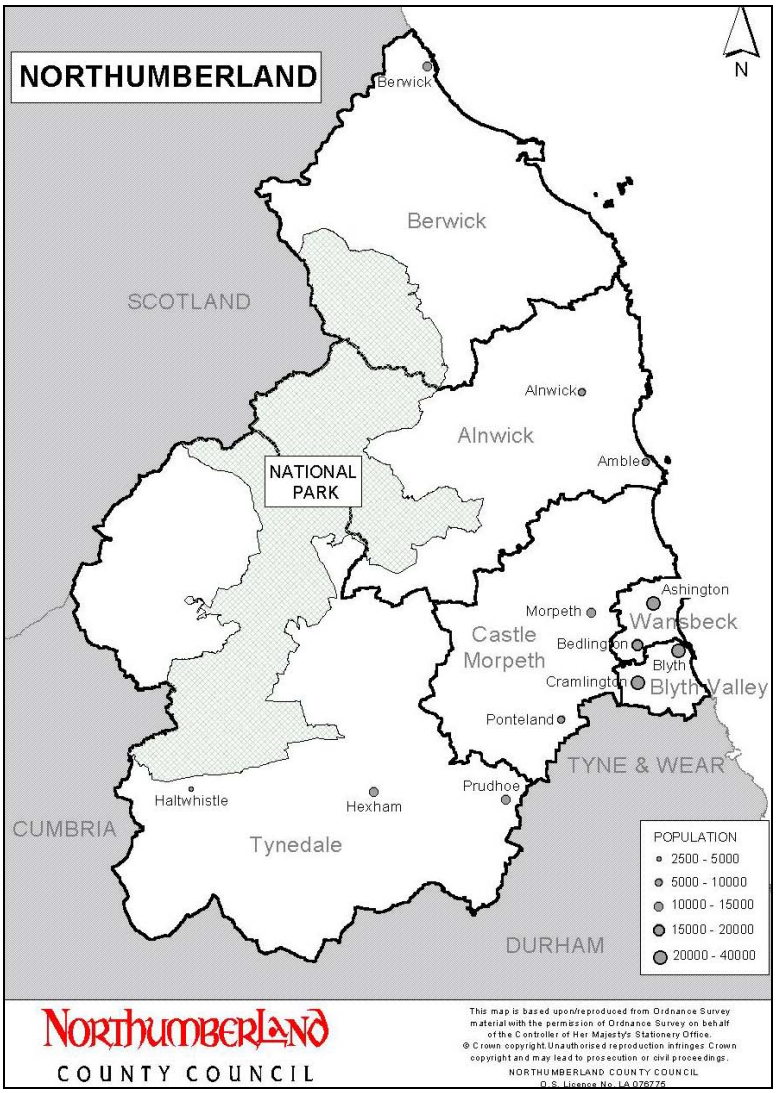
2.3 Northumberland is the most northerly county in England, lying between the Tyne and Wear conurbation and County Durham to the south, Cumbria to the west and Scotland to the north (Figure 2.1). Northumberland has six Districts, which are: Alnwick, Berwick-upon-Tweed, Blyth Valley, Castle Morpeth, Tynedale and Wansbeck.

2.4 Northumberland is the sixth largest county in England by size with a land area of 500,000 hectares, but has a population of just over 310,000 people, making it one of the smallest by population. Overall, the County has a very low population density of 62 people per square kilometre, which is the lowest in England and Wales. However, the geographical spread of the population varies greatly. Over 50% of the population lives in less than 5% of the area, giving an urban concentration in the south east corner of the County and a very low population density in the rural north and west.

2.5 South East Northumberland comprises the Districts of Blyth Valley, Wansbeck and the eastern fringes of Castle Morpeth. The Northumberland County and National Park Joint Structure Plan identifies the main settlements in this area as Ashington, Blyth, Bedlington and Cramlington, and requires that these towns are the focus for the majority of future development in Northumberland.

2.6 The rural north and west comprises the Districts of Alnwick, Berwick-upon-Tweed, Tynedale and the western edges of Castle Morpeth. The majority of the population in the north and west of the County lives in the market towns of Alnwick, Berwick-upon-Tweed, Haltwhistle, Hexham and Morpeth together with a number of small towns and villages. The North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the Northumberland Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty are also located within the rural west and north of the County. In addition, the Northumberland National Park, which is outside the area covered by the Northumberland Minerals and Waste Development, is located within this area.

Figure 2.1: The Northumberland Context



TRANSPORT

2.7 Northumberland has good north-south road links, with the A1 trunk road running the length of the County in the east. Other important

north-south links include the A68/A696 and the A697. However, none of these roads are of dual carriageway standard for most of their length. The A69 trunk road in the south of the County provides the main east-west link. The main rail links in the County are the East Coast Main Line and the Tyne Valley Line. The ports of Blyth and Berwick-upon-Tweed also play an important part in the County's overall transport network.

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

2.8 Northumberland has some of the North East Region's highest quality natural environment. This includes major areas of landscape importance such as the Northumberland Coast and North Pennines Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The wealth of biodiversity interests is reflected in the number of sites designated for nature conservation. Northumberland has more than 20 internationally important nature conservation sites and over 100 nationally important nature conservation sites. Parts of Southern Northumberland have been defined as Green Belt. This Green Belt area runs from the coast, south of Blyth, east and south of Cramlington, around Newcastle Airport and along the Tyne Valley to the east of Haydon Bridge.

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

2.9 Northumberland has an outstanding cultural and historic heritage. This is reflected in the number of designations of international and national importance. Northumberland contains Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site, around 1,000 Scheduled Ancient Monuments, over 5,000 listed buildings and 17 historic parks and gardens. However, there is much more to the County's historic environment. The County has a rich historic landscape that has evolved over thousands of years of human activity and which contributes to Northumberland's special qualities.

MINERALS

2.10 Northumberland is rich in mineral deposits. Northumberland produces a significant tonnage of opencast coal, but the last deep mine in the North East, Ellington Colliery, closed in 2005. It also produces hard rock and sand and gravel for aggregate use and quality building stone for use in prestigious building projects around the country. Clay is extracted with coal at the operational opencast coal sites in the County and also from a dedicated clay extraction which is adjacent to a brick works. In addition, peat is extracted from 2 sites in Northumberland. Exploration for oil and gas has taken place although it has not been exploited on a commercial basis. Northumberland also has reserves metalliferous metals (lead, fluorite, barytes), which are found in the south-west of the County, but these have not been extracted for many

years. Mineral extraction contributes to the economic wellbeing of Northumberland, providing employment both directly and indirectly through associated industries and services.

WASTE

2.11 Waste is any material or object which is no longer wanted and which requires management. Currently households in Northumberland produce around 180,000 tonnes of waste each year. However, waste is also produced by businesses, industrial processes and construction projects. It is estimated that approximately 1.4 million tonnes of commercial and industrial and construction and demolition waste is produced in Northumberland per annum. Northumberland also produces hazardous waste with over 24,000 tonnes generated in 2002. In addition, it is estimated that just under 1 million tonnes of agricultural waste is produced in the County per annum. Wastes are also produced from the County's mineral workings. In line with policy priorities for waste management, recycling and composting rates have significantly increased during recent years in Northumberland.

EARLY FEEDBACK

2.12 Engagement in developing a vision and spatial strategy for the Minerals and Waste Development Framework has taken place over the last 18 months through public forums, stakeholder workshops and consultation on an Issues and Options Report.

2.13 There is recognition of the need to ensure that minerals extraction and waste management are sustainable and that this should be achieved through the careful management of mineral resources, minimising the waste that is produced and considering waste as a resource to be used rather than just discarded. There is a high importance attached to increasing the re-use and recycling of waste and meeting the various targets for recycling and reducing the landfilling of waste.

2.14 There is general agreement on the importance of conserving and enhancing the environment of the County and protecting local communities from the impacts of minerals extraction and waste management operations. However, there is recognition of the tension between the need to protect local communities and the environment whilst meeting society's need for minerals and waste facilities. Balancing this will be a major challenge.

2.15 A sustainable minerals and waste industry, both in terms of good site management during operations and in sensitive reclamation to beneficial after-uses, is considered to contribute positively to the environmental, economic and social fabric of Northumberland.

2.16 There is a view that the social and economic benefits of the minerals and waste industry need to be recognised more.

2.17 The importance of keeping minerals and waste production and consumption local is highlighted. This is related to reducing the transport of material and engendering a feeling of ownership and therefore responsibility for the waste that is produced.

POLICY ISSUES

2.18 A number of policy issues arising from the policy context, spatial profile and early feedback have been identified and have guided the development of the vision, principles and objectives set out in the next chapter. The policy issues identified are:

- how to strike a balance between meeting the need for minerals and waste facilities and the need to protect the environment and local communities?
- how should environmental resources be addressed?
- how to address the issues arising from the transport of minerals and waste?
- what contribution can be made to mitigating the effects of climate change?
- what criteria should be used to assess potential minerals and waste developments?
- what can be done to ensure waste is seen as a resource to be used rather than discarded to landfill?
- how to contribute to the regional targets for waste recovery?
- how to encourage sustainable resource management in new development?
- what contribution should Northumberland make to achieving regional self sufficiency in waste management?
- how to maximise the social and economic benefits of the minerals and waste industry?
- how to maximise the benefits from restoration?

CHAPTER 3: VISION AND OBJECTIVES

THE VISION

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.

3.1 The need to achieve sustainable development has been placed at the heart of the Core Strategy for a number of reasons:

- the feedback received in the early stages of preparing the Minerals and Waste Development Framework;
- the priorities of the County's Community Strategies and emerging Local Development Frameworks;
- the issues facing the County: and
- national and regional policy requirements.

STRATEGIC POLICY PRINCIPLES

3.2 A number of strategic policy principles can be identified from the vision and will form the framework for the delivery of the vision. The strategic policy principles identified are:

- conserving and enhancing the environment and quality of life;
- securing the careful management of resources;
- ensuring efficiency of use and sustainable waste management;
- contributing to the social and economic development of the County; and
- securing effective and imaginative restoration of sites

THE OBJECTIVES

3.3 The Core Strategy and the other documents that will comprise the Minerals and Waste Development Framework will seek to achieve the vision through the implementation of a number of Core Objectives. The core objectives are as follows:

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.

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

D. To identify the requirement for, and ensure a supply of land to enable Northumberland to provide an appropriate contribution to local, regional and national needs for minerals.

E. To encourage the use of alternative materials where appropriate.

F. To protect resources from unnecessary sterilisation.

G. To help ensure that Northumberland has an integrated waste management infrastructure to manage its waste in a sustainable way.

H. To maximise opportunities for people and businesses to re-use, recycle and recover value from the waste that is produced and to dispose of unavoidable waste in the best way possible.

I. To protect and enhance the attractiveness of Northumberland as a location for investment.

J. To maximise the social and economic benefits of the minerals and waste industry.

K. To ensure that minerals and waste sites are reclaimed to a high standard.

L. To seek the implementation of positive after-uses.

Table 3.1: The Development Strategy

Policy Principle	Objective	Implementing Policies
Conserving and enhancing the environment and quality of life.	A, B, C	CS1
Securing the careful management of resources.	D, E, F	CS2 – CS16
Ensuring efficiency of use and sustainable waste management.	G, H	CS17 – CS25
Contributing to the social and economic development of the County.	I, J	CS26
Securing effective and imaginative restoration of sites.	K, L	CS27

CHAPTER 4: CONSERVING AND ENHANCING THE ENVIRONMENT AND QUALITY OF LIFE

4.1 The main objectives in relation to conserving and enhancing the environment and quality of life are:

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

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

4.2 These objectives embody the sustainable development principles of achieving economic growth and removing social inequities whilst conserving and enhancing the environment. In other words, improving people's quality of life. It is important to ensure that the location and scale of development follows sustainable development principles and secures environmental, social and economic benefits for current and future generations.

4.3 Whilst recognising that the provision of minerals and facilities for the management of waste are essential to meet society's needs, it is also recognised that mineral working and the larger scale waste facilities, in particular landfill, almost invariably cause disturbance or damage to other resources.

4.4 It is important that sites for mineral extraction and the management of waste are carefully chosen, designed and operated, given the importance of protecting the best of the County's natural resources and heritage and the need to protect local communities from the traffic, noise, dust and other problems which are often associated with such developments. In considering proposals, the County Council will need to be sure that the proposal performs well against a number of sustainability criteria.

4.5 The **preferred approach** to delivering these objectives is to include one key policy that addresses them. This is to ensure that the fundamental principles of sustainable development underpin all development proposals.

POLICY CS1

THE COUNTY COUNCIL WILL NOT GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR MINERALS OR WASTE DEVELOPMENTS WHERE THERE WOULD BE A SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE EFFECT ON LOCAL COMMUNITIES OR THE ENVIRONMENT. IN DETERMINING WHETHER DEVELOPMENTS HAVE A SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE EFFECT, THE IMPACT ON THE FOLLOWING WILL BE ASSESSED:

- **LOCAL COMMUNITIES;**
- **ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT;**
- **THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT INCLUDING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER, BIODIVERSITY AND NATURAL RESOURCES;**
- **THE ROAD NETWORK AND PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY; AND**
- **THE LOCAL ECONOMY**

TO MINIMISE POTENTIAL ADVERSE EFFECTS, NEW DEVELOPMENTS OR EXTENSIONS TO EXISTING DEVELOPMENTS SHOULD:

A. **PROTECT BUILDINGS, SITES AND PLACES OF HISTORIC, ARCHAEOLOGICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE;**

B. **CONSERVE AND ENHANCE BIODIVERSITY, WILDLIFE HABITATS AND SPECIES;**

C. **CONSERVE AND ENHANCE THE CHARACTER AND QUALITY OF LOCAL LANDSCAPES AND THE WIDER COUNTRYSIDE;**

D. **PROTECT THE QUALITY OF NATURAL RESOURCES INCLUDING WATER, AIR AND SOIL;**

E. **AVOID THE RISK OF FLOODING;**

F. **MINIMISE POLLUTION FROM NOISE, LIGHTING, VIBRATION, ODOUR OR DUST;**

G. **TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE POTENTIAL FOR CLIMATE CHANGE AND INCORPORATE MEASURES TO MINIMISE GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS;**

H. **BE DESIGNED TO A HIGH STANDARD AND INCLUDE APPROPRIATE LANDSCAPING; AND**

I. **ADOPT THE HIGHEST STANDARDS OF OPERATIONAL PRACTICE.**

No options have been considered as this Policy reflects fundamental planning principles and is required by national and regional policy, although the inclusion of several individual policies could have been considered.

CHAPTER 5: RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

5.1 The main objectives in relation to resource management are:

D. To identify the requirement for, and ensure a supply of land to enable Northumberland to provide an appropriate contribution to local, regional and national needs for minerals.

E. To encourage the use of alternative materials where appropriate.

F. To protect resources from unnecessary sterilisation.

SUPPLY OF MINERALS

5.2 Society has an essential requirement for minerals for use in construction, industrial processes and energy generation. The Government recognises that minerals are important natural resources and that their exploitation makes a significant contribution to the nation's prosperity and quality of life. Minerals can only be worked where they occur naturally and the materials produced must be of a suitable quality for the intended purpose.

5.3 Northumberland contains a wide variety of mineral resources. Some of these minerals are of national importance while others are of significance at a regional and local level. Northumberland is still one of the largest producers of opencast coal in England and Wales, is a net exporter of crushed rock and sand and gravel for aggregate use and it produces quality building stone for use in prestigious building projects around the country. The County also produces peat, which is sold throughout the country, and clay (including fireclay), which is extracted and used for the manufacture of bricks.

5.4 One of the Government's objectives for mineral planning is to secure supplies of the materials needed by society and the economy from environmentally acceptable sources. Government policy requires mineral planning authorities, such as Northumberland County Council, to balance environmental considerations against the need to maintain an adequate supply of minerals to meet the justifiable needs of society and the economy. These principles are reiterated in the Submission Draft Regional Spatial Strategy. The County Council recognises the need to provide an appropriate contribution to local, regional and national needs for minerals, whilst ensuring that all proposals for mineral extraction are environmentally acceptable.

5.5 The **preferred approach** to ensuring an appropriate supply of minerals is to include the following policy (Policy CS2).

POLICY CS2

LAND WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE FOR MINERAL WORKING THROUGH THE PLANNING PROCESS TO PROVIDE AN APPROPRIATE CONTRIBUTION TO LOCAL, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL NEEDS. THE COUNTY COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE GREATER EFFICIENCY IN THE SUPPLY AND USE OF PRIMARY MINERAL RESOURCES.

No options have been considered as this Policy reflects fundamental planning principles. It is also required by national and regional policy.

RE-USE OF RESOURCES

5.6 It is in the national interest that products manufactured from aggregate minerals should be recycled wherever possible. It is also important that secondary materials, such as mineral wastes, construction wastes and industrial by-products are used as a substitute for land won minerals where this is feasible and environmentally acceptable. This will have the effect of reducing the area used for mineral extraction, removing unsightly waste tips, reducing the amount of waste that needs to be managed and conserving high quality minerals which might otherwise be used for low grade purposes.

5.7 Whilst the use of secondary and recycled materials should be encouraged, the processing of such material may cause adverse environmental problems such as dust, noise and traffic problems. There will, therefore, be a need to ensure that such adverse effects are minimised and balanced against the benefits of a greater use of secondary and recycled materials.

5.8 The **preferred approach** to encourage the re-use of resources is to include the following policy.

POLICY CS3

THE USE OF MINERAL WASTES, POWER STATION ASH AND CONSTRUCTION WASTES AS SUBSTITUTES FOR PRIMARY MINERALS WILL BE ENCOURAGED PROVIDED THAT THERE WOULD NOT BE A SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE EFFECT ON LOCAL COMMUNITIES OR THE ENVIRONMENT.

No options have been considered as this Policy reflects fundamental planning principles. It is also required by national and regional policy.

PROTECTION OF RESOURCES

5.9 As mineral resources are finite their unavoidable and irretrievable loss should be limited. The sterilisation of valuable resources by surface development reduces the extent of workable reserves and limits the range of options for future extraction, possibly leading to increased pressure on sensitive areas. It is, therefore, important to safeguard valuable resources against sterilisation by other types of development in order to ensure their potential availability to meet future needs. The County Council will make appropriate representations to District Councils on this subject when they prepare their Local Development Frameworks and when determining planning applications that affect a valuable minerals resource.

5.10 Where there is an overriding need for development to take place on land containing a workable mineral resource, the mineral should, wherever possible, be extracted in advance of the development unless this would give rise to unacceptable impact. This is most likely to apply to opencast coal if operations can be completed relatively quickly and extraction and restoration is completed within a reasonable timescale.

5.11 The **preferred approach** to ensure resources are protected is to include the following policies.

POLICY CS4

LAND SHOULD NOT BE ALLOCATED AND PLANNING PERMISSION SHOULD NOT BE GRANTED FOR DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD STERILISE IMPORTANT ECONOMICALLY WORKABLE MINERAL RESOURCES UNLESS:

- **THERE IS AN OVERRIDING NEED FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND PRIOR EXTRACTION OF THE MINERAL CANNOT REASONABLY BE UNDERTAKEN; OR**
- **EXTRACTION OF THE MINERAL IS UNLIKELY TO BE PRACTICABLE OR ENVIRONMENTALLY ACCEPTABLE.**

No options have been considered as this Policy reflects fundamental planning principles and is required by national policy.

POLICY CS5

THE EXTRACTION OF PROVEN MINERAL RESOURCES IN ADVANCE OF OTHER PLANNED DEVELOPMENT WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT:

- **PRIOR EXTRACTION WOULD NOT UNDULY PREJUDICE THE TIMING AND VIABILITY OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT;**
- **A SIGNIFICANT PART OF THE EXTRACTION SITE WOULD BE STERILISED BY DEVELOPMENT; AND**
- **THERE WOULD NOT BE A SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE EFFECT ON LOCAL COMMUNITIES OR THE ENVIRONMENT.**

No options have been considered as this Policy reflects fundamental planning principles. It is also required by national policy.

AGGREGATE MINERALS

BACKGROUND

5.12 Aggregates are materials used in the construction industry for concreting, filling and surfacing works. The principal aggregate materials in Northumberland are sand and gravel and hard rock in the form of igneous rock and limestone.

5.13 Sand and gravel is found in five main locations in Northumberland:

- the Milfield and Breamish area;
- Coquetdale;
- Tyne and Derwent river valleys;
- the Alnwick-Morpeth-Ashington areas; and
- the County's beaches.

There are currently twelve sand and gravel sites with valid planning permissions in Northumberland, seven of which are operational (Table 5.1)

Table 5.1: Sand and Gravel Sites in Northumberland

Milfield/Breamish Area	Coquetdale	Tyne Catchment
Milfield/Woodbridge	Caistron	Broadoak/Hollings Hill
Wooperton *		Farnley Haugh
Low Hedgeley *		Houghton Strother
Branton *		Merryshields *
Lanton *		Plenmeller
		Thornbrough

** Currently non-operational*

5.14 Hard rock comes from two main sources in Northumberland, the Whin Sill and the Great Limestone. Whinstone (or Dolomite), which is a form of igneous rock, is quarried from the Whin Sill which runs across the County from the south-west to north-east. There are currently six quarries in Northumberland that extract igneous rock while a further two have valid permissions but are currently non-operational (Table 5.2). There are also three operational limestone quarries, one of which (Barrasford Quarry) also extracts igneous rock. In addition, there are a number of quarries which are classified as dormant. The dormant sites would need a scheme working and restoration to be approved before extraction could resume.

Table 5.2: Hard Rock Quarries in Northumberland

Operational Sites	Non-Operational Sites
Barrasford	Belford
Cragmill	Swinburne
Divethill	
Howick	
Keepershield	
Longhoughton	
Mootlaw	
Thorngreen	

5.15 In 2004 Northumberland produced 0.6 million tonnes of sand and gravel and 2.3 million tonnes of crushed rock (Figure 5.1). From previous experience it is expected that most of this will have been used within the North East Region. The last year that information was collected for the export of aggregate materials from Northumberland was in 2001, when 96% of sand and gravel and 97% of crushed rock was consumed within the North East Region.

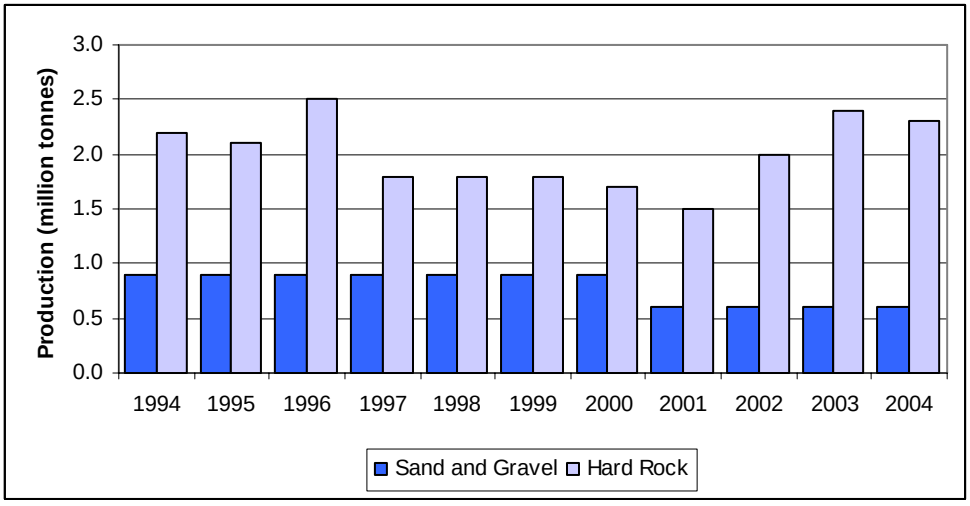
5.16 At 31 December 2004, Northumberland had 9.8 million tonnes of sand and gravel reserves and 80.3 million tonnes of rock reserves within existing planning permissions.

Barrasford Quarry

FUTURE PROVISION

5.17 Emerging national planning policy on the provision of aggregate minerals is set out in the 'Consultation Paper on Minerals Policy Statement 1: Planning and Minerals' published in November 2004 and the associated draft 'Annex 1: Aggregates Provision in England' published in July 2005. The consultation paper on Minerals Planning Statement 1 and its draft annex on aggregates provision stress the importance of an adequate and steady supply of aggregates to meet the needs of the construction industry, but that this should be achieved at an acceptable cost to society and the environment. Figure 5.1 summarises the production of sand and gravel and crushed rock for the period from 1994 to 2004.

Figure 5.1: Production of Primary Aggregates from Northumberland, 1994 to 2004



Source: North East Region Aggregates Working Party

5.18 In June 2003 the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (now the Department for Communities and Local Government) set out aggregates production figures that each of the regions in England should meet for the period from 2001 to 2016. These guideline figures are 19% below the previous ones (1992 to 2006) and are based on the assumption that recycled and other alternative materials will meet 23% of total demand. The North East Region is expected to produce 20 million tonnes of sand and gravel and 119 million tonnes of crushed rock over the 16 year period from 2001 to 2016. The regional guidelines assume that a further 9 million tonnes of sand and gravel will be provided from marine dredged sources and that 76 million tonnes will be met from alternative materials.

5.19 The North East Assembly, advised by the North East Region Aggregates Working Party, apportioned these figures on a sub-regional basis. This sub-regional apportionment is set out in the Submission Draft Regional Spatial Strategy. Northumberland is required to make provision for 11.1 million tonnes of sand and gravel and 36.4 million tonnes of crushed rock over the 16 year period 2001-2016.

5.20 Emerging national planning policy advises that the granting of planning permissions for the extraction of aggregate minerals should be phased to achieve an appropriate balance between:

- meeting the construction industry's demand for aggregates without avoidable delay and disruption to supply; and
- keeping the number of operations and permitted reserves to a minimum to reduce environmental damage.

5.21 The key indicator to be used to assess the appropriate balance between meeting demand and protecting the environment and for deciding when new permissions should be considered is the length of the landbank. The landbank is the sum of all permitted reserves with valid planning permissions at a specified time. Emerging national policy advises that the landbank should be sufficient for 7 years extraction. The length of the landbank should be calculated by dividing the permitted reserves by the sub-regional apportionment expressed on an annual basis.

5.22 Previous Government guidance advised that Development Plans should ensure an adequate landbank at the end of the Plan period. However, the draft annex to Minerals Planning Statement 1 on aggregates provision sees the length of the landbank as being used as a guide to the phasing of production, and not as a determinant of provision. The draft annex recognises that Development Frameworks will be continually monitored and states that, since this is a rolling process, the issue of maintaining a landbank beyond the end of the Plan period should not arise.

5.23 In Northumberland, the current approach to planning for aggregates is to consider the County as a whole when looking to meet the apportionment and landbank requirements for both sand and gravel and crushed rock. As a result of national and regional planning policy requirements, feedback from the consultees in the early stages of preparing the Minerals and Waste Development Framework and experience of the approach taken in the Minerals Local Plan, it is concluded that the current approach should be retained for both sand and gravel and crushed rock.

Sand and Gravel

5.24 Table 5.3 shows that Northumberland has sufficient reserves with planning permission to meet the apportionment requirements. However, it is recognised that some sites currently operating in the County may not contain the extent of workable reserves that was anticipated, may not yield their full potential and/or may not be worked fully during the Plan period. This has the potential to impact on the ability of Northumberland to meet its sub-regional apportionment. Therefore, a limited number of preferred areas are intended to be identified in order to provide a buffer of reserves in the County. This will be done through the Site Specific Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document.

Table 5.3: Sub-Regional Aggregate Apportionment Requirements for Sand and Gravel

Sub-Regional Apportionment (2001-2016)	11.1 million tonnes
Quantity Produced from 2001 to 2004	2.4 million tonnes
Required Provision from 2005 to 2016	8.7 million tonnes
Permitted Reserves at 31 December 2004	9.8 million tonnes *
Landbank at 31 December 2004	14.1 years

* Since the 31 December 2004, planning permission has been granted for a site with a reserve of 1.9 million tonnes.

5.25 Reserves of sand and gravel are more limited in the north-east of the County. The priority for identifying sites to meet apportionment requirements will, therefore, be in this area. The material in the north-east of the County is generally of a better quality than that found in the Tyne Valley area and is suitable for concrete production and would go some way towards addressing a potential shortfall of material suitable for concrete production.

Crushed Rock

5.26 On the basis of the apportionment requirements and the reserves remaining, Table 5.4 shows that there is no need to identify further reserves of crushed rock. However, this does not recognise a number of issues which should be taken account of when developing a strategic approach to future rock extraction for aggregate use.

Table 5.4: Sub-Regional Aggregate Apportionment Requirements for Crushed Rock

Sub-Regional Apportionment (2001-2016)	36.4 million tonnes
Quantity Produced from 2001 to 2004	8.2 million tonnes
Required Provision from 2005 to 2016	28.2 million tonnes
Permitted Reserves at 31 December 2004	80.3 million tonnes
Landbank at 31 December 2004	35.3 years

5.27 A large proportion of the rock reserve in Northumberland is contained within one site in the south-west of the County. Howick and Longhoughton, which are two of the quarries in the north-east of the County, have limited time remaining on their current planning permissions, with extraction required to cease by 2007 and 2008 respectively unless further permissions are obtained. The remaining quarries in the north-east of the County mainly comprise non-operational and dormant sites. If additional reserves of rock were not to be identified, production would become concentrated in the south-west of the County and would result in greater transport distances to certain markets.

5.28 There may be benefits to be gained by identifying further reserves, even though the reserves are not required solely to meet the sub-regional apportionment over the period 2001 to 2016. The potential benefits include:

- continuity of employment;
- improved restoration; and
- having a source of supply close to the markets, which would be in line with the proximity principle.

Thus, whilst there is no need to release additional reserves to meet the sub regional apportionment, other factors which would benefit the environment or local communities should be taken into account when assessing the need to identify further crushed rock reserves. This will be done through the Site Specific Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document.

5.29 The **preferred option** to planning for aggregates is to make provision for primary aggregates which is more than sufficient to deliver the sub-regional apportionment across the County, taking account of factors such as continuity of production, continuity of employment and local benefits.

POLICY CS6

LAND WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE TO ENABLE THE SUPPLY OF AT LEAST 11.1 MILLION TONNES OF SAND AND GRAVEL AND AT LEAST 36.4 MILLION TONNES OF CRUSHED ROCK IN THE PERIOD 2001 TO 2016 UNLESS EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES PREVAIL.

THE COUNTY COUNCIL WILL AIM TO MAINTAIN A LANDBANK OF RESERVES FOR SEVEN YEARS EXTRACTION OF SAND AND GRAVEL AND CRUSHED ROCK

Rejected options:

No options have been considered in terms of meeting the sub-regional apportionment as it is required by national and regional policy. It will also help deliver the Minerals and Waste Development Framework objectives and Policy CS2.

However, consideration was given to how to deliver the apportionment. Splitting the County into supply areas and considering the quality of the material in more detail were considered. The feedback received in the early stages of preparing the Minerals and Waste Development Framework and the Sustainability Appraisal showed a mixed response to how we should be meeting the apportionment requirements, with all approaches receiving some support. It would be difficult to monitor the implementation of the supply area approach and it was considered that there may be difficulties in identifying sites with the right quality of material.

Consideration was also given to how we should be planning for future aggregate production after 2016. Planning now for a landbank after 2016 now was rejected because of the feedback received from consultees, the advice in the draft annex to Minerals Policy Statement 1 on aggregates provision and the conclusions of the Sustainability Appraisal.

5.30 The sub-regional apportionment figures should not be viewed as inflexible. Local considerations, environmental acceptability of sites and social, economic and environmental benefits which may accrue from potential sites will also be taken into account. Nevertheless, it is

important to avoid an over-provision of aggregates by granting planning permission for more sites than are actually required. This would be contrary to the principles of sustainable development and might cause unnecessary environmental damage and waste of resources. However, at the same time the County Council recognises the need to maintain a continuous supply of materials. If the landbank falls below the required level it will be important to consider the need to maintain a continuous supply of aggregate minerals and how this can be balanced against any harmful effects to the environment and the community. Whilst it is not general for a developer to have to provide evidence of a need, the need for the mineral will be taken into account if put forward in support of an application or where an Environmental Statement is required. Any significant benefits to the environment or the local community will also be taken into account.

POLICY CS7

PLANNING PERMISSION WILL NOT BE GRANTED FOR THE EXTRACTION OF AGGREGATE MINERALS IF:

- **THERE ARE MATERIAL PLANNING OBJECTIONS WHICH ARE NOT OUTWEIGHED BY SIGNIFICANT BENEFITS TO THE ENVIRONMENT OR THE LOCAL COMMUNITY; AND**
- **THE EXISTING LANDBANK OF PERMITTED RESERVES IS ADEQUATE, UNLESS THERE IS A NEED FOR THE PARTICULAR NATURE AND QUALITY OF THE AGGREGATE WHICH CANNOT REASONABLY BE MET FROM OTHER AVAILABLE SOURCES.**

No options have been considered as this Policy reflects fundamental planning principles is required by national and regional policy and will help deliver the Minerals and Waste Development Framework objectives.

BORROW PITS

5.31 Borrow pits are temporary aggregate mineral workings used to serve major building or civil engineering projects such as road schemes. Borrow pits are used solely to supply minerals, usually low grade aggregates, for these projects and are sometimes used for the disposal of surplus materials from the site.

5.32 The advantages of borrow pits over established quarries include the ability to meet peaks in demand, lower costs and a reduction in heavy lorry movements. They may also help conserve resources of high quality aggregates by permitting the use of locally occurring materials of lower quality. Borrow pits also have disadvantages, which includes

the development of greenfield sites in areas where mineral working may not normally be acceptable.

5.33 Proposals for borrow pits will be examined in the same way as proposals for other mineral working and will only be permitted where the benefits associated with the development outweigh any adverse impacts on local communities and the environment. For proposals to be acceptable it will be important to demonstrate that developing a borrow pit is more sustainable than using an existing quarry or waste material, the development would not cause significant adverse impacts to local communities or the environment, the site would be operated in a satisfactory manner and would be properly reclaimed. Appropriate sites should be identified at an early stage prior to the commencement of the development to give sufficient opportunity for alternatives to be considered.

5.34 The **preferred option** for planning for borrow pits is to include a criteria-based policy.

POLICY CS8

PROPOSALS FOR BORROW PITS WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED IF IT CAN BE DEMONSTRATED THAT:

- **IT IS MORE SUSTAINABLE THAN AN EXISTING QUARRY OR AVAILABLE WASTE MATERIAL;**
- **THERE WOULD NOT BE A SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE EFFECT ON LOCAL COMMUNITIES OR THE ENVIRONMENT; AND**
- **THE SITE WOULD BE OPERATED AND RECLAIMED IN A SATISFACTORY MANNER.**

Rejected Option:

The identification of preferred locations was considered but rejected as there are currently no definite proposals to develop borrow pits in connection with major development proposals in the County.

COAL

BACKGROUND

5.35 Coal is an energy mineral used principally in the production of electricity. Coal can be extracted by either opencast methods or underground methods. Extraction by opencast methods involves removing the overlying materials to expose the coal seams to allow the

coal to be extracted and this method is commonly used where the coal seams are relatively close to the land surface. Extraction by underground methods takes place either by deep mining, which involves sinking a vertical shaft and creating lateral roadways, or drift mining, which involves driving a tunnel into a hillside where the coal outcrops. There are no longer any active deep mines in Northumberland or the North East Region.

5.36 Prior to the privatisation of the electricity supply and coal industries, the United Kingdom was not strongly influenced by the international coal market. However, since privatisation the electricity generators are free to purchase coal from sources that provide the best commercial value. This has had an impact on coal production in the United Kingdom. The deep mining sector has experienced a significant reduction in output and, whilst opencast production in the United Kingdom has remained more stable over this period, opencast coal production has significantly decreased in England.

5.37 During the late 1990s and early 2000s, the use of gas for electricity generation has increased. This resulted in a significant reduction in the use of coal to produce electricity over this period. However, the price of gas is linked to oil prices and it is forecast that oil prices will remain high in the future. The high price of gas and oil may explain the recent strong demand for coal nationally with the electricity generation, the main market for coal in the United Kingdom, consuming around 50 million tonnes of coal annually. Around half of this coal is imported, while the other half is from opencast sites and deep mines in the United Kingdom.

5.38 Opencast coal production in the North East Region has continued to fall in recent years. In 2005/06, just under 800,000 tonnes of coal were produced from four sites. This represented 66% of English coal production and 8% of total UK output.

5.39 Coal production in Northumberland reflects these general trends seen nationally and regionally. During the 1980s and early 1990s Northumberland consistently produced between 2 and 3 million tonnes from around six or seven opencast coal sites. Coal production has decreased over the last few years as the number of active opencast sites has declined. There are now only two sites, Maiden's Hall near Widdrington and Delhi near Blagdon, producing around 700,000 tonnes per annum up to the year 2007. An extension to the Stobswood site, which ceased coal extraction in 2005, has been granted permission and coal production will continue until 2009.

Stobswood Opencast Coal Site

FUTURE PROVISION

Opencast Coal

5.40 Government policy continues to support indigenous mined coal production to help maintain diversity and security of energy supplies. This is within an overall energy strategy giving greater emphasis to renewables, energy saving and environmental regulations aimed at reducing greenhouse gases

5.41 The 'Energy White Paper: our energy future - creating a low carbon economy', which was published in February 2003, sets out the United Kingdom's commitment to mitigating climate change by aiming to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by some 60% of 1990 levels by 2050, with real progress towards this target by 2020. The Energy White Paper recognises that the costs of generating electricity from coal will increase due to the European Union's Large Combustion Plant Directive which places limits on sulphur dioxide and other emissions arising from the combustion of coal, oil and gas.

5.42 The consultation on the review of the Energy White Paper ('The Energy Challenge', published in January 2006) considers that electricity generation by burning coal is projected to decline sharply in the United Kingdom from 32% in 2002 to approximately 16% of United Kingdom's electricity generating capacity by 2020. The conclusions of the Energy White Paper Review were published in July 2006. The priorities identified include saving energy, ensuring secure energy supplies and reducing carbon emissions. There is recognition that there has been investment in coal fired electricity generating capacity to comply with

the Large Combustion Plant Directive. Therefore, coal-fired electricity generation will therefore continue to play an important role in the United Kingdom's energy system provided that its environmental impact can be managed effectively.

5.43 There is no national guidance on the appropriate level of coal provision. 'Minerals Planning Guidance 3: Coal Mining and Colliery Spoil Disposal' makes it clear that the planning system should not set limits or targets for any particular source or level of energy supply. It also makes it clear that the planning system should not pre-determine appropriate levels of coal to be produced by underground or opencast mining. It is the role of individual operators to determine the level of output they want to aim for in light of the prevailing market conditions and it is the role of minerals planning authorities to determine the environmental acceptability of sites.

5.44 The major local market for coal in Northumberland is the Alcan Power Station at Lynemouth. The Alcan Power Station is a major local employer and in turn helps to sustain employment at Alcan Aluminium Smelter. Around 1.2 million tonnes of coal per annum are required by the Alcan Power Station. Prior to its closure in 2005, Ellington Colliery was supplying around half of Alcan Power Station's coal requirement. The coal supplied to Alcan from Ellington Colliery was supplemented with opencast coal from both within Northumberland and outside the County, with some coal imported from outside the United Kingdom. The other main market for the coal extracted in Northumberland is the Sembcorp works, located at Wilton on Teesside, which requires around 300,000 tonnes of coal per annum. The coal for Sembcorp is mainly sourced from the North East Region.

5.45 The County Council's previous strategy to planning for coal provision had, as its first priority, to ensure that locally based industrial and domestic markets were supplied over the long-term. This strategy was to be achieved through the continuation of coal extraction from Ellington deep mine together with extraction from a limited number (two to three) of large opencast coal sites. However, Ellington deep mine is no longer in operation and it is becoming increasingly difficult to find opencast coal sites that can be worked in an environmentally acceptable way.

5.46 Furthermore, much of the coalfield in Northumberland overlaps with priority areas for regeneration which are identified in the Northumberland County and National Park Joint Structure Plan and the Submission Draft Regional Spatial Strategy. Job creation and retention is a priority in these areas, together with environmental and social led regeneration initiatives to improve their image and business confidence. It is acknowledged that potential impacts on the image of the area and on investor and customer confidence are difficult to quantify and measure. However, the perception of potential environmental impacts can be as damaging to the local economy as

the actual impacts themselves, should this perception then influence future investment decisions.

5.47 It is increasingly difficult to find environmentally acceptable sites for opencast coal extraction and much of the coalfield lies within regeneration priority areas. Given these factors, together with the closure of Ellington Colliery, it is no longer considered possible to continue the current policy priority of ensuring continuity of supply of locally produced coal for local markets.

5.48 The **preferred option** for opencast coal is, therefore, to seek to facilitate the provision of part of the local coal requirement in the early part of the plan period through existing consents and the identification of a small number of preferred areas, together with criteria-based policies which balance the environmental impacts of coal extraction with its potential benefits. These potential benefits might include the supply of an indigenous resource, environmental improvements and/or beneficial effects on the local economy. The existing Minerals Local Plan identifies a number of opencast coal constraint areas where there is a presumption against granting planning permission for opencast coal extraction. The opencast coal constraint areas were identified to help regeneration initiatives and protect sensitive landscapes and environments. The opencast coal constraint areas defined in the Minerals Local Plan have been successful in directing opencast coal sites to less sensitive areas. Their identification is in line with national planning policy and they are considered to remain valid. The existing opencast coal constraint areas will therefore be retained and the detailed boundaries will be identified in the Site Specific Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document.

POLICY CS9

THERE WILL BE A PRESUMPTION AGAINST OPENCAST COAL EXTRACTION WITHIN THE IDENTIFIED OPENCAST COAL CONSTRAINT AREAS.

ELSEWHERE PROPOSALS FOR OPENCAST COAL EXTRACTION WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE THE PROPOSAL CAN BE CARRIED OUT IN AN ENVIRONMENTALLY ACCEPTABLE WAY, CONSISTENT WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, AND WHERE THE OVERALL BENEFITS TO THE LOCAL COMMUNITY OUTWEIGH THE DISTURBANCE OCCASIONED DURING DEVELOPMENT.

POLICY CS10

WHERE A PROPOSAL FOR OPENCAST COAL EXTRACTION RAISES SIGNIFICANT PLANNING OBJECTIONS WHICH ARE NOT OUTWEIGHED BY OTHER BENEFITS, THE COUNTY COUNCIL WILL TAKE INTO ACCOUNT ANY EVIDENCE THAT THE APPLICANT CAN PRODUCE THAT THE INTENDED MARKET CANNOT BE SUPPLIED FROM LESS DAMAGING ALTERNATIVE SITES OR SOURCES OF SUPPLY.

Rejected Options:

Consideration was given to whether the existing strategy of ensuring that local markets are supplied in the long-term should continue as a first priority, but was rejected due to the difficulty in identifying environmentally acceptable sites and the strategic priorities for development in the coalfield area. The feedback and the Sustainability Appraisal showed a mixed response to this issue, although the supply of coal to the local markets was seen as an important factor to take into account.

5.49 Where two or more minerals are found together within the same site, it can be beneficial, both in economic and environmental terms, for the minerals to be worked at the same time. There is a close geological association between coal and brick-making clays. The coal measures in parts of South East Northumberland are overlain by sands and gravels. Where these minerals are workable and viable their extraction as part of an opencast scheme can prevent unnecessary sterilisation of valuable mineral reserves and avoid the need to open new workings for these minerals elsewhere.

5.50 The **preferred approach** to dealing with other minerals found in association with coal seams is to ensure that, where opencast coal extraction is acceptable in principle, the viability of concurrent extraction of other minerals should be fully explored.

POLICY CS11

WHERE AN OPENCAST COAL SITE IS ACCEPTABLE, PROVISION SHOULD BE MADE FOR THE ASSOCIATED EXTRACTION OF FIRECLAY, PROVIDED THAT THIS DOES NOT:

- **SIGNIFICANTLY AFFECT THE LIFE OF THE OPERATION;**
- **SIGNIFICANTLY AFFECT THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF THE OPERATION OR THE TRAFFIC GENERATED BY THE SITE; AND**
- **RESULT IN UNACCEPTABLE ON-SITE STORAGE OF CLAY.**

No options have been considered as this Policy reflects fundamental planning principles is required by national and regional policy and will help deliver the Minerals and Waste Development Framework objectives.

Drift Mines

5.51 The operation of drift mines in Northumberland can contribute to the supply of coal supply as well as bringing some social and economic benefits, particularly in the more remote rural parts of the County. Nevertheless, the highest environmental standards will continue to be expected especially in the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

POLICY CS12

PROPOSALS FOR NEW MINES OR EXTENSIONS TO EXISTING MINES WILL BE PERMITTED WHERE THERE IS NO SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE EFFECT ON:

- **LAND OR PROPERTY DUE TO SUBSIDENCE;**
- **LOCAL COMMUNITIES; OR**
- **THE ENVIRONMENT.**

SANDSTONE

BACKGROUND

5.52 Sandstone is a natural building material that has been quarried in Northumberland for many years. Sandstone that is cut and dressed is used to produce lintels, sills, quoins, water tabling and roof slates. Undressed sandstone can be used for walling stone or paving. The use of this natural material for construction in Northumberland has contributed to the distinctive local character of areas within the county.

5.53 The use of sandstone as a building material declined during the twentieth century due to the increase in cost of labour and the availability of cheaper alternatives. However, more recently there has been an increased awareness of the contribution that the use of a locally found natural material, such as sandstone, contributes to the character of new buildings and reflects the character of the existing built development. There is also a demand for sandstone for use in the renovation of existing buildings, including important historic buildings. The planning and conservation policies of local authorities contribute to some extent to this demand.

5.54 There are currently twelve operational sandstone quarries in Northumberland. These quarries are all relatively small-scale operations. Due to the different characteristics exhibited by the sandstones, the quarries supply different market. Some of the sandstone quarries supply national markets, which include prestige building projects in Edinburgh and London, while others supply local markets and some are used for individual projects. The working of sandstone quarries is often long-term but the quarries are often worked intermittently in response to demand from specific projects.

Bearl Quarry

FUTURE PROVISION

5.55 Potential environmental problems associated with sandstone extraction include:

- the production of large quantities of waste stone;
- the transport of stone by large articulated lorries;
- disturbance to residents due to the use of explosives; and
- the long-term nature of these quarries.

Additionally, the re-opening of old quarries often conflicts with nature conservation interests. On the other hand, the quarries provide a specialist product, are generally of a smaller scale than aggregate quarries, and can provide a limited amount of employment in rural areas.

5.56 The **preferred option** to planning for sandstone is to include a criteria-based policy. This approach recognises the normally small-scale nature of these operations and the contribution that they make to a

supply of building material, whilst balancing this with the need to ensure some control to avoid a proliferation of sites.

POLICY CS13

PROPOSALS FOR SANDSTONE QUARRIES FOR THE SUPPLY OF BUILDING AND ROOFING STONE, INCLUDING THE REOPENING OF OLD QUARRIES AND EXTENSIONS TO EXISTING QUARRIES WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED IF:

- **THERE IS A NEED FOR THE MATERIAL WHICH CANNOT BE MET FROM EXISTING SITES;**
- **THE PROPOSAL WOULD NOT LEAD TO UNACCEPTABLE CUMULATIVE IMPACTS;**
- **THERE WOULD NOT BE A SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE EFFECT ON LOCAL COMMUNITIES OR THE ENVIRONMENT.**

THE RE-USE OF SANDSTONE WASTE WILL BE ENCOURAGED PROVIDED THAT THERE WOULD NOT BE A SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE EFFECT ON LOCAL COMMUNITIES, THE ENVIRONMENT OR THE FINAL RESTORATION OF THE SITE.

Rejected Option

The identification of preferred areas was considered but rejected as it has not been possible to establish accurately the current stock of permitted reserves or future demand for sandstone. There has also only been a very limited interest by mineral operators or landowners in coming forward with sites for inclusion.

A hierarchical approach based on the scale of workings was also considered but rejected because it could result in an unnecessary proliferation of sites and the Sustainability Appraisal did not support it as much as the preferred option.

PEAT

BACKGROUND

5.57 Peat is formed from the accumulated remains of plants in wet conditions. These waterlogged conditions inhibit the normal processes of decay and decomposition. As plants die the weight of their remains gradually compresses the lower layers. This accumulation of compressed, partially-rotted material is known as peat.

5.58 In the UK, the extraction and use of peat is almost entirely related to horticulture, either as a growing media or as a soil improver. The two

main markets for peat are amateur gardeners and the professional horticultural industry.

5.59 Although peat was traditionally cut by hand, it is now extracted mechanically. Peat is cut during the summer months as harvesting is possible only during dry weather. A number of different methods are employed but the two principal methods are:

- Rotavation - where peat is rotavated to a depth of about 15 millimetres and left to dry prior to harvesting;
- Difco Harvesting - where a slot approximately 8 millimetres wide is cut into the peat to a depth of about 900 millimetres. The contents of the slot are drawn up and extruded as a continuous sausage. These sausages are then left to dry prior to harvesting.

5.60 In Northumberland, peat is currently extracted from two sites at Kemping Moss near Lowick and Greymare Farm near Belford. Planning permissions at these sites expire in 2009 and 2011 respectively.

FUTURE PROVISION

5.61 Peatlands provide habitats that are particularly rich, distinctive and increasingly rare. The overall mixture of plants and animals makes raised bogs unique and valuable. Due to their ecological importance, the least damaged mires and peat bogs are designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest. There are nine such Sites of Special Scientific Interest in Northumberland, five of which are partially or wholly outside the National Park.

5.62 Peat bogs are often also valuable archaeologically. Organic materials which do not normally survive on dryland sites are often preserved in the wetlands and inorganic materials are better preserved.

5.63 Peat bogs are now recognised as vulnerable habitats. In particular, once a bog has been drained, the ecological and archaeological interest is likely to be damaged or destroyed. There has also been increasing concern to protect remaining peatlands of nature conservation importance.

5.64 ‘Minerals Planning Guidance 13: Guidelines on Peat Provision in England’ states that the Government’s intention for future extraction of peat in England should be restricted to areas which have already been significantly damaged by recent human activity and are of limited or no current nature conservation or archaeological value. The restoration of such sites should give priority to wetland rehabilitation and to the enhancement of the nature conservation resource wherever possible. Minerals Planning Guidance 13 also indicates also that the demands of

the horticultural markets should be met by a combination of home-produced compost, imported peat and alternative materials.

5.65 The **preferred option** for planning for peat extraction is to include a criteria-based policy which recognises the ecological and archaeological importance of peat bogs.

POLICY CS14

PROPOSALS FOR PEAT EXTRACTION WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE:

- **THE SITE HAS ALREADY BEEN IRREPARABLY DAMAGED BY RECENT HUMAN ACTIVITY AND IS OF LIMITED OR NO CONSERVATION INTEREST; AND**

- **THERE WOULD BE NO ADVERSE EFFECT ON THE LANDSCAPE, AND THE ECOLOGICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL VALUE OF THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS.**

WHERE PEAT EXTRACTION IS PERMITTED, EXTRACTION WILL BE SUBJECT TO AGREED HYDROLOGICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING SCHEMES AND, WHEREVER POSSIBLE, SUBSEQUENT RESTORATION OF THE SITE SHOULD GIVE PRIORITY TO PEATLAND OR WETLAND REHABILITATION AND TO THE ENHANCEMENT OF THE NATURE CONSERVATION RESOURCE.

Rejected Option:

The identification of preferred areas was considered but rejected because the environmental implications of extracting peat can be significant, and it is not possible to establish accurately the current stock of permitted reserves or future demand for peat. There has been no interest from mineral operators and landowners in putting forward potential with sites for inclusion in the Minerals and Waste Development Framework.

CLAY

BACKGROUND

5.66 Clay extracted in Northumberland is used mainly in the manufacture of bricks, pipes and tiles. Fireclay and Glacial Clay are currently extracted in Northumberland.

5.67 Fireclay occurs within the Coal Measure series as a layer beneath the coal seams. It is an important ingredient in the manufacture of bricks and is currently extracted as an ancillary mineral at the operational opencast coal sites in the County.

5.68 Brickshales make up the largest proportion of the raw material used to make traditional red bricks, whilst the fireclays from the North East produce the cream buff coloured facing. The brickworks at Throckley in Tyne and Wear are one of the main markets for the fireclay extracted from the opencast coal sites in Northumberland. The fireclays are, however, also sold further afield to improve local clays of inferior quality.

5.69 Clays of fluvio-glacial origin also occur widely in Northumberland. They are drift deposits overlying the solid geology and were laid down following the last Ice Age. Such clays are currently extracted at the Swarland Brickworks site at Thrunton where the clays are used in the adjacent brickworks. Clay is excavated from the site, which covers an area of 80 hectares, once a year for a period of about two months, during a dry spell. A scraper is used to extract the clay in layers, before it is stockpiled prior to being put a conveyor system which feeds the production plant. The bricks are, generally, sold to local markets within a 30 to 40 mile radius of the site.

FUTURE PROVISION

5.70 When proposals for new opencast coal sites are considered, the opportunity to extract associated fireclays will be encouraged to ensure that resources are not unnecessarily sterilised. In line with Government policy contained in the draft annex to Minerals Policy Statement 1 on brick clay. Proposals for the extraction of clay will be considered against Policy CS11.

5.71 It is acknowledged, however, that fireclay is an important mineral in its own right. If the number of opencast sites producing suitable fireclays declines, then it is possible that proposals may come forward to extract fireclay as the principal mineral. Should such proposals come forward they would need to demonstrate a need for the mineral and demonstrate that it could not be supplied from existing sites. In addition, they would be assessed in terms of their environmental acceptability.

5.72 Issues of particular concern for clay extraction would be any proposals for stockpiling the clay and the timescale of the operations. Brick manufacturers require clays with specific physical and chemical properties which can be supplied over a sufficient time period in order to produce consistent products. This may result in stockpiles of clays with different physical and chemical characteristics being used at

different rates for a lengthy period of time. Such operations could affect the environmental acceptability of a clay site.

5.73 There is no need to identify further land for clay extraction at the Swarland Brickworks site as the permitted area contains large reserves of clay. Should proposals for new clay workings elsewhere in Northumberland be received they will be assessed in terms of their environmental acceptability.

5.74 The **preferred option** for planning for clay extraction is to include a criteria-based policy which recognises the need to maintain a supply of the material whilst balancing this with its environmental impacts.

POLICY CS15

PROPOSALS FOR THE EXTRACTION OF CLAY WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED IF:

- **THERE IS A NEED FOR THE MATERIAL WHICH CANNOT BE MET FROM EXISTING SITES;**
- **THE PROPOSALS FOR THE SITE DURATION AND CLAY STORAGE ARE ACCEPTABLE; AND**
- **THERE WOULD NOT BE A SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE EFFECT ON LOCAL COMMUNITIES OR THE ENVIRONMENT.**

THE RE-USE OF CLAY WASTE WILL BE ENCOURAGED PROVIDED THAT THERE WOULD NOT BE A SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE EFFECT ON LOCAL COMMUNITIES, THE ENVIRONMENT OR THE FINAL RESTORATION

Rejected Option:

The identification of preferred areas for clay extraction was considered but rejected as the existing brickworks in Northumberland has sufficient reserves. There has also been no interest from mineral operators or landowners in coming forward with sites for inclusion. Additionally, fireclay continues to be extracted in association with opencast coal sites.

OIL AND GAS

BACKGROUND

5.75 There are four methods of oil and/or gas development:

- conventional onshore oil and gas development;
- extraction of coal bed methane, which involves drilling into un-mined coal seams to release methane;
- capture of methane from coal mines that has accumulated in mine voids and may be freely venting from them; and
- underground coal gasification, which involves drilling into and subsequent controlled underground gasification of pressurised coal seams and the recovery and use of the resulting gases for power generation.

5.76 Conventional oil and gas has been extracted in the United Kingdom since 1919. Northumberland has never experienced commercial oil and gas exploitation but there has been exploration carried out to determine the existence of viable reserves in parts of Castle Morpeth and Tynedale. The most recent exploration being was carried out at Bingfield. The extraction of coal bed methane has only occurred on a small scale in the United Kingdom, while methane capture is a new concept that has not yet been proven commercially viable in the United Kingdom. Underground coal gasification has been carried out in a number of countries but no trials have yet been the subject of planning proposals in the United Kingdom.

5.77 It is commonly agreed that United Kingdom offshore oil and gas production will decline significantly over the coming years with the country relying heavily on imports for its energy needs. The Government's aims are therefore to:

- maximise the potential of the United Kingdom's conventional oil and gas reserves in an environmentally acceptable manner;
- encourage the development of clean coal technologies; and
- encourage the capture of methane from coal mines where environmentally acceptable.

5.78 In the light of this, Government policy, contained in the draft annex to Minerals Planning Statement 1 on onshore oil and gas, advises that development frameworks should address the need to include policies on the four methods outlined in Paragraph 5.75. Policies should balance the potential environmental impacts with the benefits of obtaining energy from these sources. The draft annex to Minerals Planning Policy Statement 1 provides some background information on

the main environmental impacts and the benefits of these types of development.

FUTURE PROVISION

5.79 Conventional oil and gas developments comprise three main stages: exploration; appraisal; and production. The exploration and appraisal of oil and gas are not dissimilar from the exploration of other types of minerals. Therefore, such proposals for exploratory boreholes will be considered against the policies in the Development Control Framework Development Plan Document. Coal bed methane developments do not have the same discrete phases of exploration, appraisal and production.

5.80 Any proposals for commercial development of oil and gas should be presented as part of a comprehensive scheme to enable efficient exploitation and consideration of the environmental effects of the whole scheme.

5.81 The **preferred option** for planning for oil and gas extraction is to include a criteria-based policy which allows proposals to be assessed in terms of their environmental acceptability.

POLICY CS16

PROPOSALS FOR THE EXTRACTION OF OIL AND GAS, INCLUDING GAS FROM COAL SEAMS AND WORKINGS, WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED IF:

- **THE PROPOSAL IS PART OF A COMPREHENSIVE SCHEME FOR THE PRODUCTION FROM THE AREA;**
- **THERE WOULD NOT BE A SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE EFFECT ON LOCAL COMMUNITIES OR THE ENVIRONMENT; AND**
- **THE PROPOSAL WOULD NOT GIVE RISE TO UNACCEPTABLE RISK OR HAZARD.**

IN THE CASE OF COAL BED METHANE PROPOSALS, PARTICULAR REGARD WILL BE GIVEN TO THE IMPACTS ON GROUNDWATER.

Rejected Option:

The identification of preferred areas was considered but rejected as there has been no interest from mineral operators or landowners in coming forward with sites or areas for inclusion.

CHAPTER 6: EFFICIENCY OF USE AND SUSTAINABLE WASTE MANAGEMENT

6.1 The main objectives in relation to efficiency of use and sustainable waste management are:

G. To help ensure that Northumberland has an integrated waste management infrastructure to manage its waste in a sustainable way.

H. To maximise opportunities for people and businesses to re-use, recycle and recover value from the waste that is produced and to dispose of unavoidable waste in the best way possible.

BACKGROUND

6.2 Waste is any material or object which is no longer wanted and requires management. Where a material or object is re-usable, it is still classed as waste if it has first been discarded.

6.3 Responsibility for waste management in Northumberland is split between the two tiers of Local Government and the Environment Agency. Northumberland County Council is the Waste Planning Authority with responsibility for preparing waste planning policies for the County and for dealing with planning applications for waste developments. The County Council is also the Waste Disposal Authority for Northumberland, with responsibility for disposing of the waste collected by the six District Councils (Waste Collection Authorities) in the County. As Waste Disposal Authority, the County Council is responsible for the provision of household waste recovery centres, which are places that members of the public can deliver their own household waste for reuse, recycling, composting or disposal. The County Council provides its waste management services through contracts with private waste companies. The Environment Agency regulates waste management through a system of licences. This involves registering carriers of waste, monitoring the movement of special/hazardous waste, compiling statistics and investigating illegal activities involving waste.

6.4 Northumberland's residents and businesses produce a range of wastes. Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) includes household waste and any other waste collected by a Waste Collection Authority such as municipal parks and gardens waste, beach cleansing waste and waste resulting from the clearance of fly-tipped materials. Commercial and

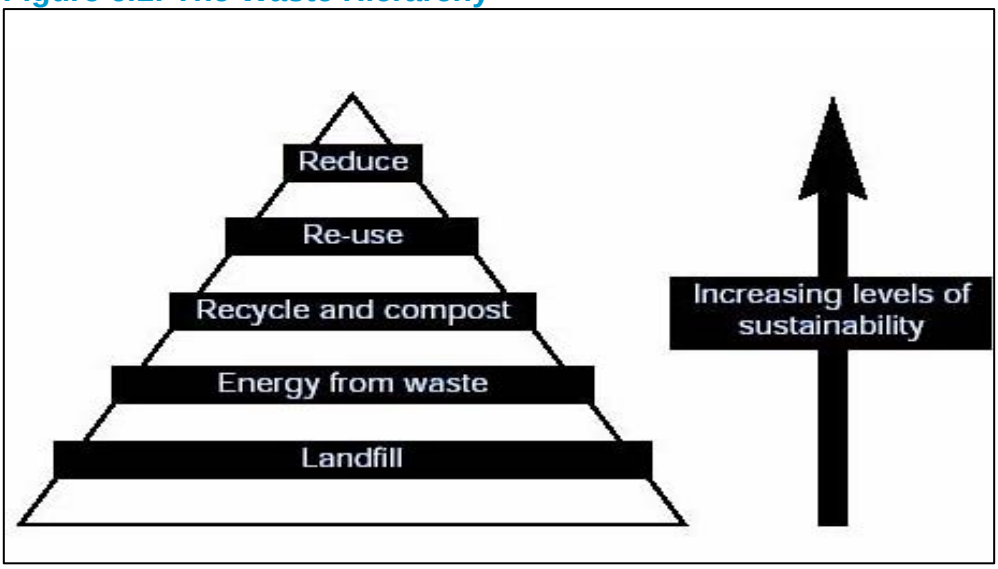
industrial wastes are produced by retailers, catering establishments, offices, sport, recreation or entertainment facilities and industrial plants. Construction and demolition waste arises from the construction repair, maintenance and demolition of buildings and structures. Hazardous wastes have the potential to cause harm to human health or the environment, for example contaminated soil.

6.5 Agricultural waste is also produced in Northumberland. It mainly comprises animal manure and vegetable/plant waste, farm plastics such as those used to wrap silage and agrichemicals such as sheep dips. There are also waste materials produced at the mineral sites in the County.

FUTURE PROVISION

6.6 Waste has traditionally been seen as something to be disposed of in the cheapest way possible, generally to landfill sites. However, with the drive towards more sustainable waste management coming from the European Union and national policy, this approach is no longer acceptable. It is important that greater emphasis is given to avoiding the production of waste in the first place, then managing the waste that is produced in the most sustainable way; looking at waste as a resource to be used positively rather than something to be discarded; and only disposing of the residue that has no value. This is known as the waste hierarchy.

Figure 6.1: The Waste Hierarchy



6.7 The Submission Draft Regional Spatial Strategy sets out a regional waste strategy for the North East. The preferred regional waste management option will mean not only meeting but **exceeding** the national targets for household waste recycling/composting and municipal solid waste recovery. The preferred regional waste management option allows for an increased recovery rate for commercial and industrial waste and construction and demolition

waste. The specific targets that have been set in the Submission Draft Regional Spatial Strategy are:

- maximising waste minimisation and re-use;
- meeting household waste recycling targets of 33% by 2015 through recycling and composting;
- meeting a recovery target for municipal solid waste of 72% and a recovery target for commercial and industrial waste of 73% through recycling, composting, digestion with a minimum disposal to landfill; and
- increasing the percentage of construction and demolition waste recycling to 80%.

6.8 The waste arisings which the Submission Draft Regional Spatial Strategy indicates Northumberland is expected to plan for up to 2020/21 are set out Table 6.1. These figures are based are projected future waste arisings in Northumberland.

Table 6.1: Projected Annual Waste Arisings the Submission Draft Regional Spatial Strategy indicates Northumberland should plan for

Year	Municipal Solid Waste (tonnes)	Commercial and Industrial Waste (tonnes)
2005/06	236,000	528,000
2006/07	248,000	536,000
2007/08	260,000	544,000
2008/09	270,000	552,000
2009/10	277,000	560,000
2010/11	283,000	569,000
2011/12	286,000	577,000
2012/13	288,000	586,000
2013/14	288,000	595,000
2014/15	288,000	604,000
2015/16	288,000	613,000
2016/17	288,000	622,000
2017/18	288,000	631,000
2018/19	288,000	641,000
2019/20	288,000	650,000
2020/21	288,000	660,000

Figures have been rounded

6.9 National waste planning policy requires the Northumberland Minerals and Waste Development Framework to demonstrate how capacity equivalent to at least ten years of the annual rate set out in Regional Spatial Strategy could be provided. Table 6.2 indicates how much of the waste projected to arise in the period up 2020/21, as shown in Table 6.1, would need to be recovered to enable Northumberland to meet the regional targets set out in Paragraph 6.7.

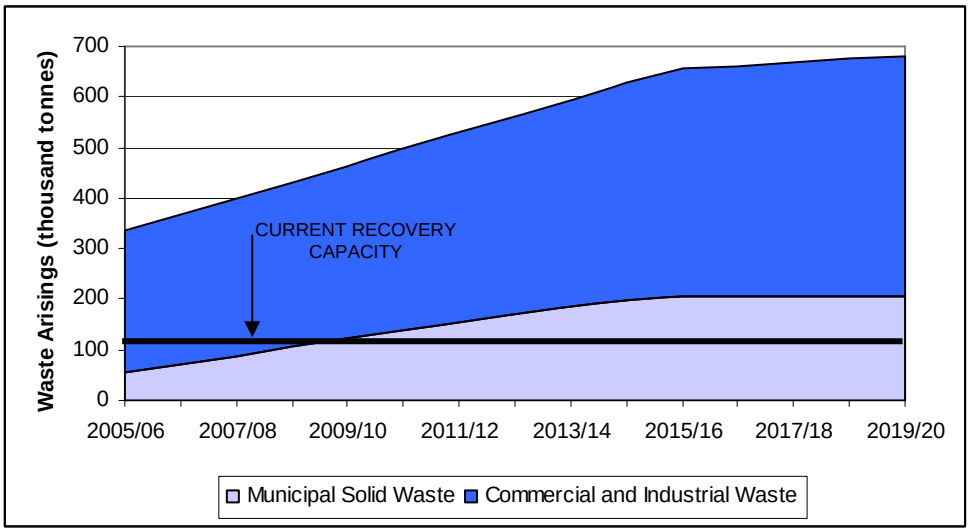
Table 6.2: Recovery Capacity Requirements (tonnes)

Year	Municipal Solid Waste (tonnes)	Commercial and Industrial Waste (tonnes)	Total Non-Hazardous Waste (tonnes)
2005/06	57,000	280,000	337,000
2006/07	72,000	295,000	367,000
2007/08	88,000	310,000	398,000
2008/09	105,000	326,000	431,000
2009/10	122,000	342,000	464,000
2010/11	139,000	358,000	497,000
2011/12	154,000	375,000	529,000
2012/13	170,000	393,000	563,000
2013/14	184,000	411,000	595,000
2014/15	199,000	429,000	628,000
2015/16	207,000	447,000	654,000
2016/17	207,000	454,000	661,000
2017/18	207,000	461,000	668,000
2018/19	207,000	468,000	675,000
2019/20	207,000	475,000	682,000
2020/21	207,000	482,000	689,000

Figures have been rounded

6.10 Figure 6.2 shows the current capacity for the recovery of waste in Northumberland is significantly below the annual requirements set out in Table 6.2.

Figure 6.2: Current Recovery Capacity and Projected Annual Waste Arisings Requiring Recovery (2005/06 to 2019/20)



6.11 Table 6.3 shows how much landfill would need to be provided in order to manage the projected arisings set out in Table 6.2 based on the assumption that Northumberland meets the regional recovery targets set out in Paragraph 6.7.

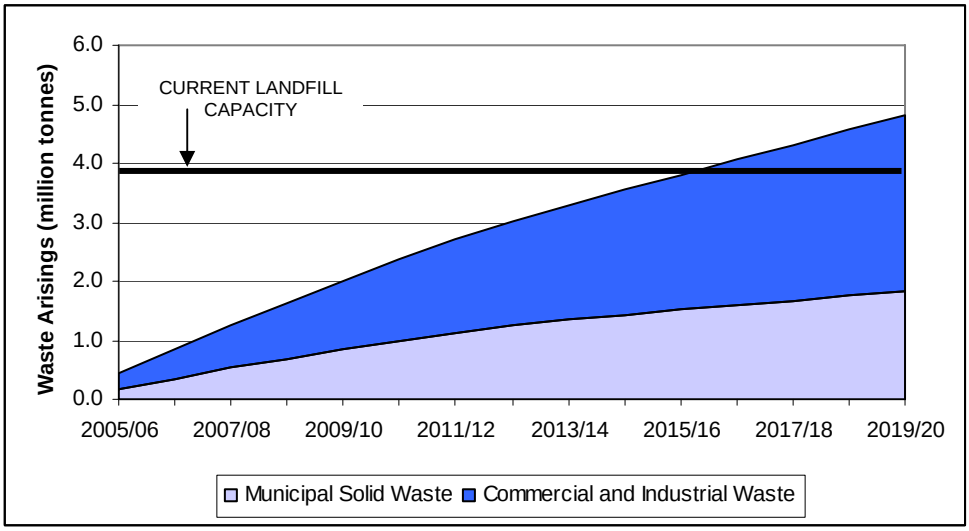
Table 6.3: Annual Landfill Capacity Requirements, assuming regional recovery targets are achieved

Year	Municipal Solid Waste (tonnes)	Commercial and Industrial Waste (tonnes)	Total Non-Hazardous Waste (tonnes)
2005/06	179,000	248,000	427,000
2006/07	176,000	241,000	417,000
2007/08	172,000	234,000	406,000
2008/09	165,000	226,000	391,000
2009/10	155,000	218,000	373,000
2010/11	144,000	211,000	355,000
2011/12	132,000	202,000	334,000
2012/13	118,000	193,000	311,000
2013/14	104,000	184,000	288,000
2014/15	89,000	175,000	264,000
2015/16	81,000	166,000	247,000
2016/17	81,000	168,000	249,000
2017/18	81,000	170,000	251,000
2018/19	81,000	173,000	254,000
2019/20	81,000	176,000	257,000
2020/21	81,000	178,000	259,000

Figures have been rounded

6.12 At the 31 March 2005, the landfill capacity for non-hazardous waste in Northumberland was just under 4 million cubic metres. Assuming the landfill sites in the County just take waste requiring disposal from Northumberland, the landfill capacity in the County will, as shown in Figure 6.3, be exhausted by 2015/16. However, it is likely that waste will continue to be imported into Northumberland for disposal by landfill and the capacity will, therefore, be exhausted before 2015/16.

Figure 6.3: Current Non-Hazardous Landfill Capacity and Projected Waste Arisings Requiring Disposal (2005/06 to 2019/20)



MAKING LAND AVAILABLE

6.11 To deliver a sustainable waste management strategy, a significant increase in the number of materials recycling facilities, composting sites and anaerobic digestion sites will be required. If the strategy objectives are to be fulfilled, planning restrictions must be placed on increasing landfill capacity beyond what is required for the disposal of residual waste.

6.12 This chapter sets out the strategic policies for the delivery of sustainable waste management. The Site Specific Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document will identify specific sites and/or areas which would be, in principle, suitable for the waste management infrastructure required to deliver these overarching policy principles.

6.13 The **preferred approach** for ensuring that land will be made available for waste management facilities is to include the following policy (Policy CS17).

POLICY CS17

THE COUNTY COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO IMPLEMENT THE WASTE HIERARCHY, WITH PRIORITY BEING GIVEN TO MINIMISATION, THEN RE-USE, RECYCLING AND COMPOSTING, WASTE TO ENERGY, WITH LANDFILL BEING RESTRICTED TO THE DISPOSAL OF RESIDUAL WASTE.

LAND WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE FOR WASTE MANAGEMENT FACILITIES THROUGH THE PLANNING PROCESS TO DEAL WITH THE WASTE ARISINGS SET OUT IN TABLE 6.1, BASED ON THE FOLLOWING KEY PRINCIPLES:

- **MOVING THE MANAGEMENT OF WASTE UP THE WASTE HIERARCHY**
- **MANAGING WASTE AS CLOSE AS POSSIBLE TO WHERE IT IS PRODUCED**
- **ACHIEVING THE REGIONAL TARGETS OF:**
  - **33% HOUSEHOLD WASTE RECYCLING BY 2015 THROUGH RECYCLING AND COMPOSTING**
  - **72% RECOVERY OF MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTE AND 73% RECOVERY OF COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL WASTE THROUGH RECYCLING, COMPOSTING, DIGESTION WITH A MINIMUM DISPOSAL TO LANDFILL, BY 2016; AND**
  - **80% CONSTRUCTION AND DEMOLITION WASTE RECYCLING BY 2016.**

- **ACHIEVING THE TARGETS OF THE NORTHUMBERLAND JOINT MUNICIPAL WASTE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**
- **ADOPTING A SEQUENTIAL APPROACH TO IDENTIFYING SITES, WITH PRIORITY BEING GIVEN TO THE ON-SITE MANAGEMENT OF WASTE WHERE POSSIBLE, THEN INDUSTRIAL SITES AND EXISTING WASTE FACILITIES, WITH PRIORITY BEING GIVEN TO THE RE-USE OF PREVIOUSLY DEVELOPED LAND OR BUILDINGS BEFORE GREENFIELD SITES**
- **MAXIMISING OPPORTUNITIES TO INTEGRATE WASTE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS**

No options have been considered as this Policy reflects fundamental planning principles and is required by national and regional policy.

ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSALS

6.14 The Site Specific Allocations Development Plan Document will identify sites/areas for future waste management, in accordance with the principles set out in Policy CS17. However, given the rapidly evolving waste policy context and management techniques, it is possible that proposals may come forward on other sites and it is appropriate to provide some broad locational guidance on where these should be located and to identify the factors that will be taken into account in making decisions on how best to manage waste.

6.15 The type of locations that may be suitable for particular waste management facilities are identified in Table 6.4. These types of location have been identified on the basis of guidance and advice provided at the national level and the experience from existing waste management facilities operating in Northumberland. More detailed information on the technologies and facilities is provided in Table 5 of the Minerals and Waste Development Framework Issues and Options Report, which was published in June 2005. Further detail is also provided in 'Planning for Waste Management Facilities: A Research Study', which was published by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in August 2004.

Table 6.4: Potential Locations for Waste Management Facilities

Type of Waste Facility	Description	Potential Locations
Bring Sites	Recycling schemes where the public deliver their recyclables to a central collection point.	Supermarkets, car parks and other locations that can be linked with other trips.
Household Waste Recovery Centre	A facility that is available to the public to deposit waste which cannot be collected by the normal household waste collection round.	Land identified for general industrial use; integrated with other waste management facilities; previously developed land in sustainable locations.
Open Windrow Composting	A biological process in which biodegradable waste (such as garden, kitchen waste) is converted into a stable product that can be used as compost. Takes place in the open.	Farms, building complexes in the open countryside; open countryside near to waste arisings, landfill sites
In Vessel Composting	As above but takes place in an enclosed building/container.	Land identified for general industrial use.
Materials Recycling Facility	A warehouse like facility designed to accept source separated dry recyclables for processing and bulking up prior to transport to specialist re-processors.	Land identified for general industrial use; previously developed land in sustainable locations; as part of an integrated waste management facility.
Anaerobic Digestion	A biological process in which biodegradable waste is converted into a stable product in an oxygen free vessel that can be used as a soil conditioner	Land identified for general industrial use; adjacent to sewage treatment works.
Mechanical Biological Treatment	A warehouse like facility in which the waste remaining after recylables are removed is treated using a combination of mechanical separation and biological treatment.	Land identified for general industrial use; adjacent to transfer stations; previously developed land in sustainable locations.
Advanced Thermal Treatment (Gasification and Pyrolysis)	Stabilising and reducing the volume of waste through applying heat, within an enclosed building.	Land identified for general industrial use; as part of an integrated waste management facility.

Thermal Treatment	Waste is burned at high temperatures and the heat released is recovered and used to generate electricity. Large scale facility requires a large building and a stack of about 60 to 80 metres.	Land identified for general industrial use; as part of an integrated waste management facility.
Transfer Station	A warehouse like facility used to bulk up waste from smaller waste collection vehicles to larger vehicles for onward transport.	Land identified for general industrial use; previously developed land in sustainable locations; as part of an integrated waste management facility.
Construction and Demolition Waste Recycling	Machinery that crushes and screens the waste into smaller, reusable sizes.	Active mineral sites; active landfill sites, construction/demolition projects, for a period not exceeding the life of the original activity.

6.16 National and regional planning policy advises that waste planning authorities, such as Northumberland County Council, should seek to manage their waste arisings within their own area, as well as encouraging communities and businesses to take more responsibility for the waste that they produce. The landfill sites in Northumberland have accepted wastes from outside the County. It is recognised that market conditions may mean that Northumberland landfill sites will have to continue to play a sub-regional role for the disposal of residual waste, due to their proximity to the Tyneside conurbation. However, there is much greater flexibility in where other types of waste management facility can be located, including in the more built up areas of the region. The County Council would therefore not wish to see excessive provision of waste management capacity which would result in the unnecessary importation of waste into Northumberland for treatment (Policy CS18).

6.17 The **preferred option** for assessing proposals for waste management capacity is to include the following policy (Policy CS18).

POLICY CS18

PLANNING PERMISSION WILL BE GRANTED FOR WASTE FACILITIES IN THE LOCATIONS SET OUT IN TABLE 6.4, PROVIDED THAT IT CAN BE DEMONSTRATED THAT:

- **THEY CONTRIBUTE TO THE PROVISION OF AN INTEGRATED AND SUSTAINABLE NETWORK OF WASTE MANAGEMENT FACILITIES FOR NORTHUMBERLAND;**
- **THEY FACILITATE THE MANAGEMENT OF WASTE UP THE WASTE HIERARCHY;**

- **THEY FACILITATE THE DELIVERY OF THE PROXIMITY PRINCIPLE;**
- **THEY CONTRIBUTE TO REGIONAL AND WHERE APPROPRIATE SUB REGIONAL SELF SUFFICIENCY;**
- **THERE ARE NO SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE EFFECTS ON LOCAL COMMUNITIES OR THE ENVIRONMENT;**
- **THE TRAFFIC GENERATED CAN BE SATISFACTORILY ACCOMMODATED; AND**
- **THE DESIGN IS APPROPRIATE TO THEIR LOCATION.**

EXCESSIVE PROVISION OF CAPACITY WHICH WOULD RESULT IN THE UNNECESSARY IMPORTATION OF WASTE FROM OUTWITH NORTHUMBERLAND WILL NOT BE PERMITTED.

PROPOSALS FOR NEW OR THE EXPANSION OF EXISTING WASTE MANAGEMENT FACILITIES SHOULD BE FULLY CONTAINED WITHIN BUILDINGS OR ENCLOSED STRUCTURES WHICH ARE APPROPRIATE IN SCALE AND CHARACTER TO THEIR SURROUNDINGS, UNLESS IT CAN BE CLEARLY DEMONSTRATED THAT ANY ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS CAN BE EFFECTIVELY MITIGATED BY ALTERNATIVE MEANS.

Rejected Option:

The first part of the policy reflects fundamental planning principles and is required by national and regional policy, therefore, no options were considered.

An option for waste importation is to be more restrictive and include a total ban on facilities for imported waste, although in practice this could be difficult to implement. Feedback in the early stages indicated that the County Council should accept that some cross boundary movement of waste is unavoidable in the interests of the proximity principle and regional self-sufficiency, and this is also supported by the Sustainability Appraisal.

LANDFILL

6.18 All levels of waste policy making, from the European Union through to national and regional policy and down to Northumberland's own strategies, are focussing on securing a reduction in the amount of waste going for disposal at landfill sites. Feedback received during the early stages of preparing the Minerals and Waste Development Framework also supports this move away from landfill. However, it is recognised additional landfill capacity will need to be provided for the disposal of residues from other waste management techniques and the disposal of waste streams where landfill currently represents the best

option. Landfill will also be required in the short-term until more sustainable waste management techniques are implemented. As Figure 6.2 shows that, even if the challenging regional recovery targets are met, Northumberland will still require additional landfill capacity to meet the waste arisings within Northumberland. The identification of additional landfill capacity will be done through the Site Specific Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document.

6.19 The **preferred option** for planning for landfill is to assume that the recovery of waste will significantly increase in line with national, regional and local strategies and that the provision of additional landfill capacity will be limited.

POLICY CS19

PROPOSALS FOR NEW LANDFILL SITES AND EXTENSIONS TO EXISTING LANDFILL SITES WILL NOT BE PERMITTED UNLESS IT CAN BE DEMONSTRATED THAT THE SITE:

- **CONTRIBUTES TO THE PROVISION OF AN INTEGRATED AND SUSTAINABLE WASTE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM FOR NORTHUMBERLAND;**
- **SATISFIES AN ESTABLISHED NEED FOR LANDFILL CAPACITY WHICH CANNOT BE MET FROM AN EXISTING SITE IN THE LOCAL AREA AND WHICH WOULD NOT RESULT IN THE UNNECESSARY IMPORTATION OF WASTE FROM OUTWITH NORTHUMBERLAND; AND**
- **THERE ARE NO SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE EFFECTS ON LOCAL COMMUNITIES OR THE ENVIRONMENT.**

PROPOSALS FOR NEW LANDFILL SITES IN AREAS OF GROUNDWATER VULNERABILITY WILL NOT BE PERMITTED.

Rejected Options:

Consideration was given to making no further provision for landfill, but this was rejected in recognition of the fact that landfill will continue to be required in the County. Making no further provision will lead to a shortfall in landfill capacity required to manage Northumberland's waste.

Consideration was given to the option of making generous provision for landfill on the assumption that the regional recovery targets will not be met, but this was rejected as being contrary to the policy framework for waste.

Neither of these options received community or stakeholder support and did not perform well in the Sustainability Appraisal.

SAFEGUARDING WASTE FACILITIES

6.20 Waste management operations require careful site selection and are not always easy to locate. When suitable sites are found they require protection from other nearby development that may result in potential conflicts. Existing facilities play an important role in delivering essential waste management services to the residents and businesses of Northumberland. The County Council will therefore seek to protect such sites from inappropriate neighbouring development which may prejudice their continuing efficient operation.

POLICY CS20

PLANNING PERMISSION SHOULD NOT BE GRANTED FOR DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD PREJUDICE THE USE OF EXISTING AND PROPOSED SITES FOR WASTE MANAGEMENT

LANDFILL GAS

6.21 Landfill gas, which typically contains methane and carbon dioxide, is a by-product of decomposing organic waste within landfill sites. Methane is a potent greenhouse gas. Its global warming potential is 21 times grater than that of carbon dioxide and is therefore a major contributor to climate change. Methane is dangerous underground and if it is not properly controlled there is a risk of explosion. However, the methane in the landfill gas can be used positively to generate electricity rather than releasing it into the atmosphere. The Seghill and Ellington Road landfill sites in Northumberland have energy generation plants and in 2004/05 generated around 21 million kWh of electricity.

6.22 In line with sustainable waste management principles of making the best use of waste and considering it as a resource, the generation of electricity from landfill gas will be encouraged wherever possible.

POLICY CS21

PROPOSALS FOR WASTE DEVELOPMENTS THAT ARE LIKELY TO GENERATE SIGNIFICANT QUANTITIES OF LANDFILL GAS WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED IF A GAS EXTRACTION SCHEME IS INCLUDED. WHEREVER PRACTICABLE, THIS SHOULD INCLUDE MEASURES FOR THE UTILISATION OF THE GAS.

NEW NON-WASTE DEVELOPMENTS

6.23 The design of new developments and their layout can have an impact on effective waste management. It is therefore important that waste management issues associated with new developments, such as

housing developments, retail developments and leisure facilities are considered at the early stages of design and planning. When planning new development, waste generated during construction should be minimised or re-used. Recycled materials should also be used wherever possible. All new development should make adequate provision for the storage of materials to be collected for recycling following completion of the development.

6.24 The Submission Draft Regional Spatial Strategy recognises the importance of addressing waste issues when considering proposals for non-waste developments. The Regional Spatial Strategy therefore requires major developments to submit a waste audit. A waste audit is a document setting out how opportunities for the minimisation, re-use and recycling of waste will be taken into account during construction and following occupation.

6.25 The principles of waste auditing should apply to development involving new buildings, changes of use, engineering operations and the conversion of buildings. However, it is acknowledged that the requirement for waste audits should be realistic and related to the scale of development. Waste audits will be particularly relevant to developments which generate a large amount of waste, and generally, this is likely to be the larger scale proposals. The thresholds when a waste audit will be required are set out in Table 6.5.

Table 6.5: Thresholds for Waste Audits

Category of Development	Waste Audit Requirements
Major developments: • Residential schemes – 150 or more dwellings or sites over 5 hectares • Retail and leisure schemes – sites over 10 hectares and/or 2,500 square metres floor space • Industrial and commercial development - sites over 10 hectares and/or 2,500 square metres floor space • Energy schemes – greater than 10 megawatts capacity or new, re-routed or upgraded transmission lines of 275 K volts or more • new transport infrastructure costing £5 million or more	Waste audit statement required as part of the planning application / environmental impact assessment
Minor developments: • Residential schemes – less than 150 dwellings or sites under 5 hectares • Retail and leisure schemes – sites under 10 hectares and/or 2,500 square metres	Statement on how waste management issues have been taken into account.

floor space • Industrial and commercial development - sites under 10 hectares and/or 2,500 square metres floor space • Energy schemes – less than 10 megawatts capacity or new, re-routed or upgraded transmission lines of less than 275 K volts • new transport infrastructure costing less than £5 million	
Small-scale householder developments.	No waste audit required.

6.26 Businesses, shops and leisure facilities have the potential to attract a large number of people and there is the potential of link small-scale local recycling facilities to locations where people would be visiting anyway. These small-scale local facilities play an important role in extending access to recycling facilities.

6.27 The **preferred approach** to planning for the management of waste at source is to include the following policies (Policy CS22 and Policy CS23). These policies will apply to all forms of development, not just minerals and waste, and as such, will generally fall to the district councils in Northumberland to implement.

POLICY CS22

PROPOSALS THAT ARE LIKELY TO GENERATE SIGNIFICANT QUANTITIES OF WASTE DURING DEVELOPMENT OR OPERATION SHOULD BE REQUIRED TO SUBMIT A WASTE AUDIT WITH THE PLANNING APPLICATION. THIS SHOULD DEMONSTRATE THAT DURING THE CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION PHASES, WASTE WILL BE MANAGED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE WASTE HIERARCHY. IN PARTICULAR THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION SHOULD BE INCLUDED:

- **THE ANTICIPATED NATURE AND VOLUMES OF WASTE LIKELY TO BE GENERATED;**
- **HOW THE PRODUCTION OF WASTE IS TO BE MINIMISED DURING CONSTRUCTION;**
- **HOW PROVISION IS TO BE MADE FOR THE RECYCLING OF WASTE DURING CONSTRUCTION;**
- **WHAT USE IS TO BE MADE OF RECYCLED MATERIALS IN CONSTRUCTION; AND**
- **HOW PROVISION IS TO BE MADE FOR THE STORAGE, RECYCLING AND COLLECTION OF WASTES DURING THE DEVELOPMENT'S OPERATIONS.**

POLICY CS23

PROPOSALS FOR MAJOR HOUSING, RETAILING, LEISURE AND RECREATION, TOURIST OR COMMUNITY FACILITIES SHOULD BE REQUIRED TO PROVIDE APPROPRIATE MINI-RECYCLING CENTRES.

No options have been considered as these Policies reflect fundamental planning principles. It is also required by national and regional policy and received strong support during the early consultation stages in the preparation of the Minerals and Waste Development Framework.

SEWAGE TREATMENT

6.28 An increased demand for the development of new sewage treatment facilities, the upgrading of existing treatment works and the development of alternative methods for managing sewage sludge are influenced by the frameworks governing sewage treatment and disposal, higher environmental standards and population growth. Sewage treatment works are constrained in terms of location by the need to be relatively close both to the populations they serve and to watercourses for discharge of treated waters.

6.29 Northumbrian Water has indicated that existing sites are likely to provide the focus for further investment required in response to legislative changes, changes in land-use patterns and new development requirements. Proposals for development at existing sites will normally be permitted if they increase the treatment capacity or improve the treatment of sewage and/or discharge standards.

6.30 There may also be a requirement for new sites. Proposals for new sewage treatment works will be granted permission where it can be demonstrated that the need for the development cannot be accommodated at an existing site and can be located without significant adverse effect on local communities or the environment. In particular, proposals must demonstrate satisfactory controls for odour, together with adequate access arrangements, standards of design and landscaping.

6.31 There is also potential for combining the management of other organic wastes at sewage treatment works, such as anaerobic digestion processes. The County Council will encourage such development and would expect proposals for new sites to investigate the potential for co-treatment of other organic wastes.

6.32 The **preferred option** for dealing with sewage treatment works is to include a criteria-based policy that balances the need for new treatment facilities with the protection of communities and the environment.

POLICY CS24

PROPOSALS FOR NEW SEWAGE TREATMENT WORKS WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHEN IT CAN BE DEMONSTRATED THAT THE NEED FOR THE DEVELOPMENT CANNOT BE ACCOMMODATED AT AN EXISTING SITE. THE PRIORITY FOR LOCATING NEW SITES IS WITHIN OR ADJACENT TO SETTLEMENTS. PROPOSALS FOR NEW SITES IN THE OPEN COUNTRYSIDE, INCLUDING THE GREEN BELT, WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE IT CAN BE DEMONSTRATED THAT NO SUITABLE SITES ARE AVAILABLE WITHIN A SETTLEMENT.

PROPOSALS FOR EXTENSIONS TO EXISTING SEWAGE TREATMENT WORKS WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT THEY ARE REQUIRED TO IMPROVE TREATMENT STANDARDS OR INCREASE CAPACITY.

WHERE APPROPRIATE, PROVISION FOR THE CO-TREATMENT OF SLUDGE WITH OTHER WASTES WILL BE SOUGHT.

PROPOSALS WILL NEED TO DEMONSTRATE THAT THEY CAN BE LOCATED WITHOUT SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE EFFECTS ON LOCAL COMMUNITIES OR THE ENVIRONMENT.

Rejected Option:

The identification of preferred areas was considered but rejected as Northumbrian Water has no specific details for new sites at this stage.

HAZARDOUS WASTE

6.33 Hazardous waste includes a range of waste streams such as acids, alkalis, pharmaceutical compounds, solvents, clinical waste, asbestos and others that are potentially harmful to human health and the environment. Information from the Environment Agency indicates that in 2002 hazardous waste arisings in Northumberland amounted to just under 25,000 tonnes per annum. This represents 8% of the total hazardous waste produced in the North East Region. The amount of hazardous waste produced and managed in Northumberland is not large when compared with other waste streams. However, because of its nature, hazardous waste is the most difficult waste stream to manage.

6.34 Major changes in waste legislation are having a significant impact on the management of hazardous waste. The number of waste streams

classified as hazardous has increased. Items such as televisions, computer monitors and fluorescent tubes are now hazardous waste and, as a result, require appropriate treatment. Under the European Union's Landfill Directive, the co-disposal of hazardous and non-hazardous waste in landfill sites was banned in July 2004. The Landfill Directive also required all hazardous waste to be treated prior to disposal.

6.35 Most landfill sites are in the process of being reassessed by the Environment Agency under the 'Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control' (IPPC) regime. Under this process, there has been a massive reduction in the number and capacity of landfill sites that are able to take hazardous waste. In the North East Region there are only two such sites, neither of which are in Northumberland.

6.36 Waste minimisation initiatives and new facilities for the treatment and management of hazardous wastes will be required in the region. Waste management methods for the treatment and management of hazardous waste may include high temperature incineration, other thermal treatment (such as gasification and pyrolysis) and chemical treatment. The Submission Draft Regional Spatial Strategy states that the majority of facilities for managing hazardous waste should be located in Tyne and Wear and Tees Valley as these sub-regions generated the greatest quantities of hazardous waste in the North East Region. However Northumberland needs to play a role in this future provision.

6.37 The **preferred option** for hazardous waste is to include a criteria-based policy which balances the need for new facilities with protection of local communities and the environment.

POLICY CS25

PROPOSALS FOR THE TREATMENT OF HAZARDOUS WASTE WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED IF THEY REDUCE THE DEGREE OF HAZARD OF THE WASTE AND THEY CAN BE SATISFACTORILY LOCATED ON AN INDUSTRIAL SITE. IN ASSESSING WHETHER A PROPOSAL CAN BE SATISFACTORILY ACCOMMODATED, ACCOUNT WILL BE TAKEN OF:

- **THE NATURE OF SURROUNDING LAND-USES;**
- **THE POTENTIAL FOR NOISE, DUST AND ODOUR AND POSSIBLE MITIGATION MEASURES;**
- **THE POTENTIAL FOR RISK OR HAZARD TO LOCAL COMMUNITIES OR THE ENVIRONMENT;**
- **TRAFFIC VOLUMES AND THE ADEQUACY OF THE ROAD NETWORK; AND**

- **ANY INCREASE IN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS WHICH WOULD RESULT.**

Rejected Option:

The identification of preferred areas was considered but rejected. This is because of the small amount of hazardous waste produced in the County and there has been no interest from the waste industry in coming forward with sites for inclusion.

CHAPTER 7: NORTHUMBERLAND'S SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

7.1 The main objectives in relation to Northumberland's social and economic development are:

I. To protect and enhance the attractiveness of Northumberland as a location for investment

J. To maximise the social and economic benefits of the minerals and waste industry

7.2 A key policy priority for the North East Region, as identified in the Submission Draft Regional Spatial Strategy, is to achieve an urban and rural renaissance through economic prosperity and growth and the delivery of sustainable communities. Two regeneration areas within Northumberland are identified in the Submission Draft Regional Spatial Strategy identifies. These regeneration areas are the South East Northumberland and North Tyneside Regeneration Initiative area and the Rural Coalfield Regeneration Area. Economic regeneration is also a policy priority of the County Council. The Northumberland County and National Park Joint Structure Plan identifies a South East Northumberland Regeneration Area which is to be the priority location for the majority of development. The policy priorities in these areas are job creation and retention together with social led regeneration initiatives and environmental enhancement. The rural areas are also recognised as important contributors to the regeneration of the County and the North East Region.

7.3 It is important that regeneration efforts are not hindered by inappropriate development which may affect the attractive image of the County as a business location and tourist destination. However it is also important to recognise that minerals and waste developments provide job opportunities. In 2003, approximately 1,400 people were employed directly by the minerals and waste industries in Northumberland. Even small numbers of jobs can be quite significant in the more rural parts of the County.

7.4 The **preferred approach** for addressing social and economic development issues is to include the following policy (Policy CS26):

POLICY CS26

MINERALS AND WASTE DEVELOPMENTS SHOULD SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH BY POSITIVELY CONTRIBUTING TO THE DEVELOPMENT AND DIVERSIFICATION OF NORTHUMBERLAND'S ECONOMY AND THE CREATION OR RETENTION OF EMPLOYMENT.

No options have been considered as this Policy reflects national, regional and local priorities, received support from consultees and helps deliver the Minerals and Waste Development Framework objectives.

CHAPTER 8: SECURING EFFECTIVE AND IMAGINATIVE RESTORATION OF SITES

8.1 The main objectives in relation to securing effective and imaginative restoration of sites minerals extraction and landfill sites are:

K. To ensure that minerals and waste sites are reclaimed to a high standard.

L. To seek the implementation of positive after-uses

8.2 Over the past 10 to 20 years, standards of reclamation at minerals extraction and landfill sites have improved in response to pressure from environmental groups, public concern, more effective use of planning controls and changing attitudes in the minerals/waste industry. Government policy in 'Minerals Planning Guidance 7: Reclamation of Mineral Workings' and the 'Consultation Paper on Minerals Planning Statement 1: Planning and Minerals' emphasises the importance of good quality reclamation, the importance of seeking to enhance the environment through reclamation. It also emphasises the need for a high level of commitment by all parties concerned.

8.3 Reclamation is not only relevant to temporary operations, such as minerals extraction and landfill sites. It is not relevant to permanent built waste management developments, such as waste transfer stations and recycling facilities.

8.4 It is essential that mineral extraction/landfill operations and their subsequent reclamation are properly designed at the planning application stage to ensure that both are technically and economically feasible, and their impact can be fully assessed. More detail on good practice in reclamation will be given in a Reclamation Supplementary Planning Document to be prepared in 2008/09.

8.5 The **preferred option** for addressing reclamation is to include a policy with a high focus on reclamation, requiring reclamation to positively enhance the local environment and brings benefits to local communities.

POLICY CS27

PROPOSALS FOR MINERAL WORKING AND LANDFILL DEVELOPMENTS WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE PROPER PROVISION HAS BEEN MADE FOR THE RECLAMATION OF THE SITE AS SOON AS PRACTICABLE TO A CONDITION SUITABLE FOR THE IDENTIFIED AFTER-USE. THIS WILL INCLUDE:

- **AN ASSESSMENT OF THE EXISTING LANDSCAPE AND A PRACTICABLE SCHEME SHOWING HOW THE RECLAIMED SITE WILL BE ASSIMILATED INTO THE LANDSCAPE;**
- **DETAILS OF PHASING, FILLING, LAND FORMS, DRAINAGE, POLLUTION PREVENTION MEASURES, MANAGEMENT OF SOILS AND LANDSCAPING;**
- **ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE EFFECTIVE AFTER-CARE OF SITES;**
- **PROGRESSIVE RECLAMATION WHERE RELEVANT OR APPROPRIATE; AND**
- **DETAILS OF THE FINANCIAL PROVISION FOR THE PROPER RESTORATION OF THE SITE.**

PROPOSALS FOR THE AFTER-USE OF SITES MUST DEMONSTRATE THAT THEY POSITIVELY ENHANCE THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT AND BRING BENEFITS TO LOCAL COMMUNITIES. PARTICULAR REGARD SHOULD BE PAID TO THE FOLLOWING:

- **OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE ENHANCEMENT OF THE AMENITY OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES;**
- **OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO THE LANDSCAPE;**
- **OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE PROVISION OF RECREATIONAL FACILITIES AND PUBLIC OPEN SPACE;**
- **OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE CREATION OR ENHANCEMENT OF BIODIVERSITY;**
- **OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE CREATION OF COMMUNITY WOODLANDS; AND**
- **OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE CREATION OF NEW PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY.**

Rejected Option:

A more basic reclamation policy, which would merely have required reclamation to an appropriate after-use, was considered. However, this was rejected because the feedback received indicated a strong support for a positive approach to reclamation. National and regional policy also places a high emphasis on securing beneficial after-uses.

CHAPTER 9: MONITORING AND IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

9.1 Monitoring is essential to establish what is happening now, what may happen in the future and then compare these trends against existing policies and targets to determine what needs to be done. Monitoring helps to address questions like:

- are policies achieving their objectives and in particular are they delivering sustainable development?;
- have policies had unintended consequences?;
- are the assumptions and objectives behind policies still relevant?; and
- are the targets being achieved?

Monitoring represents a crucial feedback loop within the cyclical process of policy-making.

9.2 The County Council is required to produce an Annual Monitoring Report by the end of December each year, covering the preceding monitoring year, which runs from 1 April to 31 March. The Annual Monitoring Report is required to review the achievement of the key milestones identified in the Local Development Scheme for the preparation the Minerals and Waste Development Framework and to assess the extent to which the policies are achieving their objectives.

9.3 Measuring the performance of policies requires a clear statement of their objectives. Relevant indicators then need to be identified and appropriate targets set against which movement towards or away from policy objectives can be measured over time. The monitoring and evaluation of progress towards objectives and targets will then form part of the feedback mechanism to ensure the effective operation of policies, or highlight any revisions that may be required.

9.4 Government advice identifies a number of indicator types:

- **Output Indicators**, which measure the direct effect of a policy.
- **Contextual Indicators**, which measure changes in the wider social, economic, and environmental background against which policies operate.
- **Significant Effects Indicators**, which measure the significant effects of the plan (linked to the Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment).

9.5 The Northumberland Minerals and Waste Annual Monitoring Report 2004/05 put forward a suggested approach for establishing a

monitoring framework. To try and ensure an integrated approach to monitoring with other strategies and plans, the indicators identified correspond, wherever possible, with:

- the national core output indicators;
- the indicators used to monitor the Regional Spatial Strategy;
- the indicators used in the Sustainability Appraisal for the Minerals and Waste Development Framework; and
- the indicators used in the Northumberland Community Strategy and the community strategies for each of the six districts.

APPENDIX A: SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL SUMMARY

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 Core Strategy Document 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 DPD on sustainable development.

A5 The Sustainability Appraisal Report forms part of the public consultation on the 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.

CS1 Delivering Environment and Quality of life Objectives	This policy should lead to a number of very positive impacts, especially in terms of environmental protection. The comprehensive list of criteria gives clear guidance and aids understanding and interpretation of all the other policies. There have been no negative impacts identified and no alterations suggested.
CS2 Supply of Minerals	This policy sets out a means of maintaining continuity of minerals and waste management facilities supply. Therefore the main benefits are in terms of meeting need. Other positive impacts identified were in terms of reducing transport, maintaining jobs, efficiency and maintaining air quality.
CS3 Encouraging Re-use of Resources	Some very positive impacts were identified, particularly in terms of encouraging reuse, recycling and thus waste reduction at minerals sites. The policy should also have positive impacts against environmental objectives. Impacts upon job creation are more uncertain.
CS4 Ensuring Resources are Protected	This policy is predicted to have a significant positive impact in terms of minimising the irreversible sterilisation of mineral resources.
CS5 Allowing Extraction in Advance of other Planned Development	The policy provides protection of the environment and communities. A major positive impact was identified in terms of minimising sterilisation of mineral resources.
CS6 Planning for Aggregates	An economically favourable policy allowing society's needs for minerals to be met and creating a small number of jobs. However, there could be negative impacts where need overrides environmental concerns, good management can minimise this and ensure long term benefits through restoration.

CS7 Maintaining Continuous Supply	The policy reflects national planning principles. It places a strong emphasis on environmental protection but also recognises that the particular issues of need and availability will have to be considered in decisions on specific sites. The criteria attempt to balance these factors and provide the most sustainable option.
CS8 Borrow Pits	There are several short term negative impacts. However, where borrow pits are permitted, there are also some positive impacts. On-site borrow pits also reduce the need to travel such large distances thus reducing the amount of site traffic on the roads. There are other associated positive impacts with reducing traffic including maintaining air quality and reducing the causes of climate change.
CS9 Planning for Opencast Coal	The policy is broadly positive in terms of environmental protection through the assertion that future working will be refused except in specific circumstances. Communities potentially also benefit through the provision of local 'benefits'. A small potentially negative impact was identified in terms of reducing the causes of climate change.
CS10 Maintaining supply of Coal	The main steer of the policy is towards ensuring that society's need is met and that in some cases this need may override environmental concerns. Where this happens, there will be a negative impact upon the environment; however, the policy requires plans to meet strict criteria. Long term benefits through restoration.
CS11 Minerals associated with Coal	Positive environmental impacts were identified as the policy limits the potential for damage to untouched areas. Providing guidance in other policies is carefully followed, no significant negative impacts were identified.
CS12 Drift Mines	The effects of this policy are very similar to those identified in Policies CS9 and CS10 in that there is likely to be an environmental impact in the short term but there is potential for longer term benefits.
CS13 Planning for Sandstone	Negative short term impacts are minimised through criteria in the policy and there are long term benefits through restoration and after-use. There are other positive impacts such as creation of local jobs, a reduction in site transportation and maintaining local air quality.

CS14 Peat Extraction	There are some potentially very large negative impacts associated with peat extraction. However, policy criteria seek to minimise the risks and there is a potentially very positive impact in terms of restoration.
CS15 Clay Extraction	Several potentially positive impacts have been identified including to the environment and communities, waste and reuse, efficiency and meeting demand. Job creation potential was less certain, it is more likely that the policy would simply help to maintain jobs.
CS16 Oil and Gas Extraction	Potential environmental issues are identified within the policy and requirements set for developers should minimise the risks. There is a potential positive impact upon reducing the causes of climate change. There is a positive impact in terms of economic growth.
CS17 Waste Management	There are particular benefits of this policy in terms of waste minimisation and reuse and transport. These in turn have environmental benefits and there is potential for local job creation.
CS18 Waste Management Capacity	Policy criteria recognise environmental issues and seek to minimise the impacts. There is potential for positive impacts in terms of traffic, air quality and climate change and job creation; however, due to the nature of the policy, it might be beneficial to specifically mention water issues within the criteria.
CS19 Planning for Landfill	The policy is likely to have a particular positive impact upon protecting water. Potentially negative impacts are mitigated through criteria in the policy and CS1. A particular benefit is in terms of meeting need for sites.
CS20 Safeguarding Waste Facilities	Again, this policy helps to meet the future needs of society. No direct environmental impacts have been identified.
CS21 Landfill Gas	There are potentially negative environmental impacts in terms of related infrastructure. However, positive impacts have also been identified including local air quality, recycling and possible creation of a small number of jobs.
CS22 Management of Waste at Source	Assessment against environmental objectives was mainly positive and where potential negative impacts were identified, these were mitigated against within the policy.

CS23 Mini Recycling Centres	The major impact of this policy is in terms of waste minimisation, and increasing the amount reused and recycled. The policy also helps to ensure an adequate network of waste management facilities.
CS24 Sewage Treatment Works	Encouragement of co-treatment and an increase in treatment standards both yield potentially positive results in terms of environmental criteria. It is important that Policy CS1 is adhered to.
CS25 Hazardous Waste	Clear criteria within the policy ensure a positive impact upon the environmental objectives.
CS26 Social and Economic Development	The main impacts of this policy are on maintaining high and stable levels of employment and promoting innovative solutions for restoration of sites.
CS27 Reclamation	Very positive affects were identified for both local communities and the environment, providing opportunities for both the creation and enhancement of landscapes and habitats. There is ample provision for recreation and amenity.

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

A7 The Core Strategy 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 to ensuring adequate provision of minerals and waste facilities whilst ensuring proper consideration is given to wider environmental, social and economic factors.

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

Aerobic Digestion - Biological treatment of biodegradable organic waste in the presence of oxygen, producing a residue suitable for use as a soil improver.

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.

Anaerobic Digestion – Biological treatment of biodegradable organic waste in the absence of air, producing a gas (methane) and solid (digestate). The by-products can be useful, for example the gas can be used in a furnace, gas engine, turbine or gas-powered vehicles, and digestates can be re-used on farms as a fertiliser.

Biodegradable Waste - Waste that is capable of breaking down, such as food, garden waste and paper.

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

Biological Treatment - Any biodegradable (breaking down) process that changes the properties of waste, such as anaerobic digestion and composting.

Bring systems (public recycling facilities) - Recycling schemes where the public deliver their recyclables to a central collection point, such as those in supermarket car parks for bottles and cans.

Community Strategy - A strategy prepared by local authorities to help deliver local community aspirations, under the Local Government Act 2000.

Composting - The process that converts biodegradable material such as garden or kitchen waste, in the presence of oxygen (aerobic) into a stable material that can be used as a soil improver. Composting can be done at different scales, from home composting to a large centralised facility.

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 - Development is defined under the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act as "the carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operation in, on, over or under land, or the making of any material change in the use of any building or other land." Most forms of development require planning permission.

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.

Gasification and Pyrolysis (Advanced Thermal Treatment) - A means of recovering energy from waste, known as advanced thermal treatment. Waste is heated at high temperatures and a useable gas is produced.

Greenhouse Gases - Naturally occurring examples include water vapour, carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide and ozone. Some human activities increase these gases, including fossil fuel combustion within motor vehicles and some power stations.

Inert waste - Waste not undergoing significant physical, chemical or biological changes following disposal, as it does not adversely affect other matter that it may come into contact with, and does not endanger surface or groundwater

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.

Landfill (including land raising) - The permanent disposal of waste into the ground, by the filling of man-made voids or similar features, or the construction of land forms above ground level (landraising).

Landfill Gas - The gas generated in any landfill site accepting biodegradable material. It consists of a mixture of gases, mainly methane and carbon dioxide.

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

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.

Local Development Framework/Minerals and Waste Development Framework (LDF) - 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 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.

Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) - A facility for sorting and packing recyclable waste.

Mechanical Biological Treatment (MBT) - The treatment of residual waste using a combination of mechanical separation and biological treatment.

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

Preferred Areas - An area containing mineral resources which can be identified with a high degree of precision and where there is a strong presumption in favour of extraction.

Proximity Principle - Requires that waste should be managed as near as possible to its place of production, to reduce travel impacts.

Recovery - Value can be recovered from waste by recovering materials through recycling, composting or recovery of energy.

Recycled Aggregates - Aggregates produced from recycled construction waste such as crushed concrete and planings from tarmac roads.

Recycling - The reprocessing of waste either into the same product or a different one.

Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF) - A fuel product produced from the combustible fraction of waste.

Regeneration The economic, social and environmental renewal and improvement of rural and urban areas.

Regional Aggregates Working Party - A working group consisting of local authority officers, representatives of the aggregates industry and central government established to consider the supply and demand for aggregate minerals.

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.

Regional Self sufficiency - Requires that most waste should be managed within the region in which it is produced.

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.

Residual Waste - Waste remaining after materials for re-use, recycling and composting have been removed.

Secondary Aggregates - Includes by-product waste, synthetic materials and soft rock used with or without processing as a secondary aggregate

Sequential approach/sequential test - A planning principle that seeks to identify, allocate or develop certain types or locations of land before the consideration of others. For example, brownfield sites before greenfield sites.

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) - The SCI 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 European Union 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 by 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.

Supplementary Planning Document - An Supplementary Planning Document is a Local Development Document that may cover a range of issues, thematic or site specific, and provides further detail of policies and proposals in a 'parent' Development Plan Document.

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".

Waste Hierarchy - A framework for securing a sustainable approach to waste management. Wherever possible, waste should be minimised. If waste cannot be avoided, then it should be re-used; after this value recovered by recycling or composting; or waste to energy; and finally landfill disposal.

Waste Minimisation/Reduction - The most desirable way of managing waste, by avoiding the production of waste in the first place.

Waste Transfer Station - A site to which waste is delivered for sorting or baling prior to transfer to another place for recycling, treatment or disposal.

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.