

ENVIRONMENT AND ATTRACTIVE CITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

13 MARCH 2012

SUNDERLAND CITY COUNCIL LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK: ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT

REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Strategic Priority: SP5 - Attractive and Inclusive City

**Corporate Priorities: CIO1 – Delivering Customer Focused Services; CIO3
Efficient and Effective Council**

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report informs committee of the Council's Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) for 2010 / 11.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, all Councils are required to prepare a Local Development Framework (LDF). The LDF will replace the current Unitary Development Plan which was adopted in 1998. As the statutory development plan for the city, the LDF will be the starting point in considering planning applications. Furthermore, it will be the fundamental mechanism to deliver the key spatial objectives of the Economic Masterplan.
- 2.2 As part of the LDF, authorities are required to prepare an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). Existing regulations require that AMRs contain :
- Progress on the preparation of development plan documents against the timetable within the Local Development Scheme (the LDF project plan)
 - Any local development orders adopted or revoked
 - Adopted policies that are to be rescinded and why
 - The annual number of net housing completions.
- 2.3 Under the terms of the Localism Act 2011, future AMRs must also contain information relating to affordable housing completions; details of monies received from the Community Infrastructure Levy; the number of adopted neighbourhood plans; and any actions taken under the new 'duty to co-operate'.
- 2.4 Previously, the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) published detailed guidance on what AMRs should contain. Legally, AMRs had to be submitted to the Secretary of State by 31 December each year.
- 2.5 With the raft of planning reforms proposed and implemented by this Government since coming into power (outlined at Section 3), DCLG has withdrawn its previous guidance relating to AMRs. Authorities may now determine the content of AMRs (subject to the minimum regulatory requirements set out at paragraph 2.2). AMRs no longer need to be submitted to the Secretary of State.
- 2.6 This is the Council's eighth AMR and covers the period 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2011. A draft of this AMR is attached at Annex 1. Given the move to monitoring locally derived issues, this AMR has been prepared in accordance with the

regulatory requirements. For completeness, this AMR includes more up to date information on matters that fall outwith the 2010/11 monitoring period.

- 2.7 Through the development of the emerging LDF Core Strategy, the emerging Corporate Outcomes Framework and 'Low Carbon City Village' project, it is proposed that more appropriate monitoring requirements will be developed through 2011/12 to examine the spatial affects of policy implementation.

3.0 UPDATE TO THE PRINCIPAL REFORMS TO THE PLANNING SYSTEM

- 3.1 From 2010/11 to the present, there have been a number of important changes to policy at the national and regional level which has and will continue to have a significant bearing on LDF preparation within Sunderland. The principal changes are summarised below.

Amendments to Planning Policy Statement 3 "Housing"

- 3.2 In June 2010, private gardens were removed from the definition of brownfield land and removed national minimum density targets of 30 dwellings per hectare.

Revocation of Regional Spatial Strategies

- 3.3 In July 2010, Government announced the immediate revocation of RSSs prompting a series of High Court judgements. The Localism Act 2011 has now removed the relevant clauses from legislation requiring their need and use. DCLG consulted upon a series of Sustainability Appraisals (as required by EU law) to formally remove them. Their formal revocation is expected in Spring 2012. In the interim, RSS remains legally in force, though the weight afforded to it varies:-

- For development control purposes, the revocation can be treated as a 'material consideration' which means that depending on the nature of the application, RSS policies may or may not be applied
- Emerging LDFs must by contrast still conform with the RSS provisions until they are formally abolished.

The Localism Act 2011

- 3.4 In December 2010, Government published the Localism Bill which received Royal Assent in November 2011. The Act will introduce significant changes to the planning regime over the coming months as secondary legislation and regulations are introduced. In short, the Act :-
- Confirms that RSS's will be abolished (as outlined above)
 - Would allow communities to bring forward their own 'neighbourhood plans' that deliver more, but not less, development than is set out in the authority's local plan. These are to be prepared by the community. Once adopted, these would form part of the Council's development plan for that particular neighbourhood.
 - Requires pre-application consultation on major schemes to be mandatory
 - Permits financial incentives to be material considerations in determining planning applications
 - Neighbourhoods are to be given a proportion of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) raised from development which can be spent locally at their discretion
 - No longer requires the Inspector's report (following a public examination into a Development Plan Document of the LDF) to be binding on the local authority
 - Introduces a duty to co-operate between all public bodies on strategic planning.

The Draft National Planning Policy Framework

- 3.5 In July 2011, the draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published for consultation. Whilst present national policy is set out in over 1,000 pages of themed policy statements, the draft NPPF would consolidate all national policies into a single document. Linked to provisions of what is now the Localism Act, the NPPF proposes the following key reforms to Local Development Frameworks : -
- The planning system should remain plan-led
 - Plans should be brought forward as quickly as possible, failure to do so would mean that the NPPF would become the primary decision making document
 - Only in exceptional circumstances should more than one planning document be brought forward. The implication is that a single 'local plan' is produced setting out the broad strategic requirements and site specific allocations.
 - Further guidance is provided on the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans.

4.0 PROGRESS ON SUNDERLAND'S DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENTS (DPD'S)

- 4.1 The Local Development Scheme (LDS) provides a timetable for the preparation of the constituent development plan documents that will comprise Sunderland's LDF. The council's current LDS was approved in March 2009. Progress of the Council's three DPDs against the adopted LDS are considered below.

DPD1 ~ The Core Strategy

- 4.2 This document will set out the overarching strategic policies for growth across the city. Subject to the timing of the revocation of the RSS, it will further set out the City's long term development requirements including those for housing and employment.
- 4.3 Whilst a Revised "Preferred" Option Draft was approved in March 2010 (in accord with the LDS), its publication was deferred given the then impending national elections and the subsequent range of sweeping changes introduced by the Coalition Government to the planning system. The intervening period has been used :
- Review and update the emerging Core Strategy document itself and continue to maintain an alignment between the Core Strategy and the Economic Masterplan
 - Assess the evidence base that underpinned the original RSS policies
 - Formally respond to a range of DCLG consultations regarding proposals to modify the planning system.
 - Develop and update the evidence base that is required to underpin the LDF which includes :
 - i. Employment Land
 - ii. The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)
 - iii. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)
 - iv. Green Space Audit
 - v. Green Infrastructure Strategy
 - vi. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP)
 - vii. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)
 - viii. The Nature Conservation Audit.

DPD2 ~ Allocations Development Plan Document

- 4.4 Taking its lead from the Core Strategy, the Allocations DPD will identify sites for employment, retail, community facilities and open space, areas of nature conservation and transport routes. Previously preparation of DPDs of this nature

had to follow behind Core Strategies. Its preparation has, as a consequence, slipped behind the timetable set out within the adopted LDS. That said, to support site specific issues, substantial evidential work has been undertaken to maintain an up to date evidence base as detailed above.

DPD3 ~ Hetton Downs Area Action Plan

4.5 Centring on the Hetton Downs / Eppleton area, this plan will provide the development framework for the area's long-term sustainable improvement and regeneration. The formal "Publication" draft was provisionally timetabled for July 2010, but this date was not met as a consequence of detailed issues around the School Place Planning exercise and the impacts this may have had on particular sites and road proposals within the plan area. Further investigative work is presently being undertaken to consider the proposed access road linking Houghton Road (at Broomhill) and the north end of Church Road in addition to the recent completion of an Neighbourhood Renewal Assessment undertaken for Maudlin Street (approved by Cabinet in November 2011). Consideration is now to be given as to how best progress the Area Action Plan.

Alteration No. 2 to the Unitary Development Plan

4.6 In September 2007, Alteration No. 2 was formally adopted to provide an up to date planning framework for the regeneration of Central Sunderland. Whilst not formally a constituent part of the City's emerging LDF, it remains a legal part of the city's development plan. Under the planning legislation, these policies technically had a 3 year lifespan and would have expired in September 2010. In July 2010, the full suite of policies set out in Alteration No. 2 were legally "saved" in perpetuity (until formally rescinded or replaced by the LDF).

The Duty to Co-Operate

4.7 The Localism Act now requires cooperation between local authorities on cross-boundary issues. Whilst this does not impose an automatic duty to agree, the City Council has and continues to work effectively with the adjacent authorities.

Neighbourhood Plans

4.8 Further regulations are awaited on the production of Neighbourhood Plans and it is too early to report on the possible take up regarding these plans in Sunderland.

Monies received from the Community Infrastructure Levy.

4.9 The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) will be a roof tax on all development for the provision of essential infrastructure. Whilst there is no adopted CIL for the city, its development is presently being considered.

5.0 NEXT STEPS IN DPD PRODUCTION

A Revised Local Development Scheme (LDS).

5.1 Retaining an up to date LDS remains a statutory requirement. The Council's last LDS was adopted in 2009. Whilst on track as at March 2010, given the national upheavals, the programme has now slipped. The LDS is presently being reviewed as part of the wider work programming exercises of the newly established Economy and Place Team (which is now responsible for the LDF preparation).

Core Strategy

5.2 It is considered appropriate to retain the programme to prepare and consult upon a Revised Preferred Options draft to agree as far as possible, proposals for locally derived land requirements, prior to moving to the next statutory stage (the Publication Draft).

5.3 A provisional timetable for the Core Strategy is as follows :

Key Milestone	Date
Revised Preferred Options Draft	Full Council – July 2012 (+ 6 week consultation)
Publication Draft	Full Council – November 2012 (+ 6 week consultation)
Submission Draft	April 2013
Examination in Public	July 2013
Receipt of Inspector's Report	November 2013
Adoption	Full Council – February 2014

Allocations Development Plan Document

5.4 Whilst formal preparation of this DPD has yet to commence, its future programme will be considered through the review of the LDS. As previously discussed at Section 4, the evidence base to take this document forward is largely complete or in the final stages of completion. Consideration is presently being given to 'fast tracking' its production to run close to that of the above Core Strategy programme.

Hetton Downs AAP

5.5 Given the potential levels of potential changes since the Preferred Options draft was first published in 2007, it would presently appear expedient to revisit this stage of the process. As, with the Allocations DPD, its future timetable will be established through the review of the LDS.

6.0 Policy Monitoring

6.1 In summary, key performance of the UDP's main policies in 2010 / 11 are as follows: -

- **Business Development and Town Centres** – In 2010 / 11 some 36,523m² of new employment floorspace was granted consent primarily for (31,600 m² for manufacturing operations and 4923 m² for office uses). The latter permission representing the £10m Software City development at Tavistock Place. By the same token, there were some losses in employment floorspace, where permission was granted for residential development on some 7.65 hectares of employment land in Washington and at Fencehouses. The primary retail activity within this period related to consent being granted for the 8,378 m² (net) Tesco foodstore at Sunderland Retail Park along with the provision of four additional retail units totalling some 3000 m² (net) and the consent for the new 5,574 m² Primark within the City Centre.
- **Housing** – In gross terms, new house building delivered some 714 dwellings (an increase from the previous year where gross additions to the housing stock were 614 dwellings). The main characteristic of house building activity in the city was the increased activity of Registered Providers which for the second successive year, saw their schemes outstrip those of the private sector. The key contributory factor was the previous Government's "Kickstart" programme which actively intervened in the market place by directly supporting house building activity in the city with some 403 affordable homes being delivered by the social house building sector. Equally for the second year running losses in housing stock (either through demolition or conversions to other uses) remained

lower than previous years totalling some 338 dwellings. The net effect reduced the number of net new homes completed in 2010 / 11 to 376 (though this remains the fourth highest net gain since 1999/2000).

- **Waste** – 33.4% of the city's municipal waste was recycled or composted, which shows a steady rise year on year with 22% having been recycled in 2006/07, 24% in 2007/08 and 26% in 2008/09 and 27% in 2009/10.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 Committee is requested to endorse the Annual Monitoring Report attached at Annex 1.

Background Papers

Sunderland City Council Annual Monitoring Report December 2010
Sunderland City Council Annual Monitoring Report December 2009
Sunderland City Council Annual Monitoring Report December 2008
Sunderland City Council Annual Monitoring Report December 2007
Sunderland City Council Local Development Scheme March 2007
Sunderland City Council Annual Monitoring Report December 2006
Sunderland City Council Annual Monitoring Report December 2005

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Local Development Framework

Annual Monitoring Report 2010/11

December 2011

INTRODUCTION

Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the City Council is required to prepare a Local Development Framework (LDF). As statutory development plan for the city, the LDF will set out policies for land use across the entire city and be the primary basis for considering planning applications for the development or use of land. The LDF is the collective term for the variety of planning documents (which are both statutory or non-statutory) that the council will bring forward to undertake this function. The LDF will replace the current Unitary Development Plan which was adopted in 1998.

The 2004 Act requires every local planning authority to produce an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) to assess:-

- The implementation of the Local Development Scheme (the timetable for preparing the LDF);
- The extent to which policies in the Local Development Framework are being achieved.

The Planning Regulations require the AMR to contain the following information:-

- Progress of the preparation of development plan documents against the timetable set out in the Local Development Scheme (the LDF project plan), including any that have been adopted in that year;
- Any local development orders adopted or revoked (not applicable to this Authority);
- Adopted policies that are to be rescinded and why (not applicable to this Authority);
- The annual number of net housing completions.

In addition, the Localism Act will require that future AMRs monitor performance on :

- The additional affordable housing completions;
- The amount received from the Community Infrastructure Levy;
- The number of Neighbourhood Plans that have been adopted; and
- Actions taken under the new duty to co-operate with public bodies on strategic planning issues.

The AMR must be completed by 31 December each year. This is the eighth such Annual Monitoring Report prepared by the City Council and primarily addresses the period 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2011. However, where necessary and for completeness, up to date information as at December 2011 is provided.

SUMMARY

The Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) is in two main sections:-

1. Local Development Scheme implementation

The first section provides detail on progress on implementing the council's Local Development Scheme. The current LDS details the timetable for the preparation of three local development documents:-

- Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD)
- Allocation DPD
- Hetton Downs Area Action Plan (AAP)

2. Policy implementation and monitoring

The second section provides detail on how the policies of the current development plan – the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) - have been implemented.

DEVELOPMENTS AND CHANGES IN PLANNING POLICY

Over the course of 20010/11 there were a number of important changes to policy at national, regional and local level which will have a significant bearing on both the preparation and content of the LDF.

National

Since the new Coalition Government came into power in May 2010, it is seeking to remove centralised controls and give neighbourhoods and local areas the flexibility to innovate, access new resources and control their own futures. As part of this approach, it has sought to deliver on a series of pre-election pledges to reform the planning system. The Government sees that the planning system has a central role in delivering three key functions : -

- To give people more control over the shape, look and feel of their communities including the protection and promotion of important environmental and social interests;
- To provide sufficient housing to meet demand;
- To support economic development by providing infrastructure and using land use planning.

In June 2010, Planning Policy Statement 3 “Housing” was reissued setting out two key changes :

- The removal of private residential gardens from the definition of previously developed land
- The removal of the national minimum density target of 30 dwellings per hectare.

In October 2010, the Government published the first National Infrastructure Plan outlining its vision for the future of UK economic infrastructure. A detailed version of the plan is expected by the end of 2011 setting out the long term investment needs and priorities for UK economic infrastructure.

The mechanics of delivering many of these reforms, including those to the planning system were set out in the Localism Bill published in December 2010 which subsequently received Royal Assent in November 2011. Supplementary legislation and regulations will be required that will have a significant bearing on spatial planning which will require further consideration as they emerge. Among the reforms set out in the Act are:

- The abolition of Regional Spatial Strategies to include the scrapping of top down house building targets on local authorities
- A commitment to a plan led system, albeit in a modified form, that includes
 - The consolidation of all national planning policies into a consolidated National Planning Framework which was published for consultation in July 2011 requiring *inter alia* that authorities should prepare a single Local Plan as a matter of urgency
 - The move to preparing a single Local Plan setting out both strategic and site specific policies for the development of the area
 - A non-binding Inspector's report
 - Giving the power for local communities to prepare Neighbourhood Plans to bring forward more development than that set out in the Local Plan
- The commitment to retaining the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), but modified to permit
 - Funds to be passed to neighbourhoods where development has taken place
 - Funds that can be spent on new, and on the ongoing costs of infrastructure
 - Local authorities have greater control over setting charging levels.
- The replacement of the Infrastructure Planning Commission with a fast track Major Infrastructure Unit where major projects would require ministerial approval.

Regional

In July 2010, Government confirmed its earlier statements by revoking all Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS) with immediate affect. This meant that the starting point to determine all planning applications lay with adopted plans such as Sunderland's saved Unitary Development Plan (1998). This announcement prompted a series of High Court judgements. Their formal revocation is not expected until early 2012. In the interim, RSS remains legally in force, though the weight afforded to it varies:-

- For development control purposes, the revocation can be treated as a 'material consideration' which means that depending on the nature of the application, the RSS policies may or may not be applied
- Emerging LDFs must by contrast still conform with the RSS provisions until they are formally abolished.

Local

In October 2010, the Council and its partners launched the city's first Economic Masterplan that will guide the city's economic growth over the next 10 to 15 years. The Economic Masterplan seeks to integrate both the urban economic strategy and the spatial framework for the area and will become a powerful development and marketing/ promotional tool. The Masterplan's long term vision for the city is :

"To create an entrepreneurial university city at the heart of a low carbon regional economy"

This is underpinned by five aims that will have a spatial dimension :

- Aim 1 : A new kind of University City – developing Sunderland University's ability to facilitate enterprise and innovation in the city.
- Aim 2 : A national hub of the low carbon economy – emphasising the city's potential in pioneering a low carbon economy and linked to the Ministerial designation in July 2009 that Sunderland will be at the geographic heart of the Low Carbon Economic Area in the North East.
- Aim 3 : A connected waterfront City Centre – emphasising the importance of the city's waterfront position as a driver for economic development and place-making
- Aim 4 : A whole-life, inclusive city economy – ensuring the strategy delivers economic interventions that directly contribute to improving access to opportunity and reducing wordlessness and social exclusion in the city
- Aim 5 : Entrepreneurial in economic leadership – driving this ambitious city agenda will require clear, strong and entrepreneurial leadership around which resources and appropriate governance arrangements can be assembled.

As the Economic Masterplan is not a statutory document it cannot allocate land for development or set spatial planning policies to guide the future development of the city. However, it is a fundamental building block, forming part of the evidence base for the LDF.

The LDF, in particular the Core Strategy will therefore be the key delivery mechanism for delivering the spatial objectives of the Economic Masterplan.

1.0 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME IMPLEMENTATION

Background

1.1 A key requirement of the Annual Monitoring Report is to review actual progress in terms of Local Development Document preparation against the timetable set out in the adopted Local Development Scheme (LDS).

1.2 The Local Development Scheme is a vital part of the LDF. It is a public statement setting out details of those Local Development Documents the City Council intends to produce, in what order and when. Producing the LDS is a priority as it will set out the timetable for document preparation over the coming years.

1.3 The city's first Local Development Scheme was adopted in March 2005 and was last updated in March 2009.

1.4 The change in Government and the new direction it is now seeking to introduce (namely the position of the Regional Spatial Strategy and the spatial planning issues arising from the Localism Act and the emerging National Planning Policy Framework) has and will continue to have a significant affect on the present programme for delivering the LDF in accordance within the adopted timescales. Therefore it will be essential to review the Local Development Scheme.

1.5 This Annual Monitoring Report assesses the delivery of the adopted LDS which details the timetable for the preparation of three local development documents:-

- Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD)
- Allocations DPD
- Hetton Downs Area Action Plan

1.6 The LDS establishes the following key targets (or "milestones") for document preparation, based on Government guidance :

- i) Consulting the statutory bodies on the scope of the sustainability appraisal;
- ii) Publication of the DPD;
- iii) Submission of the DPD;
- iv) Adoption of the DPD

DPD progress: Core Strategy DPD – Background

1.7 The Core Strategy lies at the heart of the LDF. It will set out the overarching strategic planning framework for the development of the city for the next 15 years and draw from other strategies of the City Council (such as the Sunderland Strategy and Economic Masterplan) and other organisations. In the main, it will not set out site-specific proposals or allocations. Apart from consideration being given to proposed Strategic Sites, the Core Strategy will indicate the broad locations for delivering new development such as housing, employment and transport. Once the Core Strategy is adopted, all other DPD's must be in conformity with it.

1.8 The first formal Core Strategy stage began with consultation on the Issues and Options between November 2005 and February 2006. The Preferred Options Draft was consulted upon between December 2007 and February 2008. However, given the availability of new evidence and regulatory changes during 2008 and 2009, it was considered appropriate to revise Preferred Options draft prior to advancing to its next formal stage, the Publication Draft.

1.9 During late 2009, the Council developed and consulted upon a four realistic alternative approaches regarding the overall spatial distribution of development across the city which included :

- § Approach A ~ Focussing Development on the Conurbation
- § Approach B ~ Proportional Distribution of Development
- § Approach C ~ Focus Development within the Current Urban Area

§ Approach D ~ Meeting Sub-Area Spatial Requirements - a Hybrid of Approaches A-C

1.10 Ten strategic sites were also identified and proposed for consultation.

1.11 Some 150 responses were received showing that Approach D was the preferred option favoured by residents and stakeholders which was corroborated by the accompanying Sustainability Appraisal. The number of strategic sites was also reduced to two – namely Vaux and land to the north of Nissan.

1.12 The format of the Revised Preferred Options Draft was also reviewed, moving away from a thematic based policy approach to one that focussed more on place making. In other words, it set out to tell the 'story' of where Sunderland has come from and where it will be in 15 years through the delivery of the policies. To provide greater local distinctiveness, five separate sub-area chapters were developed for Central Sunderland (and the City Centre), Sunderland North, Sunderland South, Washington and the Coalfields. These set out local visions, the key issues and constraints and the opportunities for potential growth together with bespoke policies that responded to the distinctive issues of each sub-area.

1.13 In accordance with the LDS the Revised Preferred Options Draft was approved in March 2010 by the Council for consultation purposes.

Overview of Progress during 2010 / 11

1.14 Given the then impending national elections, the formal consultation of the Revised Preferred Options draft was deferred. With the range of sweeping changes introduced by this Government (particularly the ensuing High Court decisions following the announcement to revoke RSSs in 2010) the intervening period has been used :

- Review and update the emerging Core Strategy document itself and continue to maintain an alignment between the Core Strategy and the Economic Masterplan
- Assess the evidence base that underpinned the original RSS policies
- Formally respond to a range of DCLG consultations regarding proposals to modify the planning system.
- Develop and update the evidence base that is required to underpin the LDF which includes :
 - i. *Employment Land*
Working to an RSS requirement of providing up to 225 hectares of employment land, the Employment Land Review was adopted in September 2009 to assess the city's portfolio of employment sites. Work has commenced to establish the city's own employment requirements against more up to date information and to reflect the objectives of the Economic Masterplan. A final report is expected in early 2012.
 - ii. *The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)*
The annual update of the SHLAA is progressing to inform the LDF of the potential availability of housing sites over 15 years and to establish that there is a rolling 5 year supply of ready to develop housing sites. The final report is expected in early 2012.
 - iii. *The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)*
The principal role of the SHMA is to model the level of housing need and demand across the city by location, house type, size and tenure. It further determines the demand for general market housing and affordable housing. Proposals under the draft NPPF would require SHMAs to further establish the authority's long term housing requirements (in the absence of RSS). From July 2010, substantial evidence has been to date been gathered and analysed to develop scenarios as to the levels of future housing requirements. The City's last SHMA was adopted in February 2008, though its data is only robust for a 5 year period. Work has commenced to update the SHMA in accordance with the requirements of the draft NPPF (programmed for completion in mid-2012).
 - iv. *Green Space Audit*
The emerging Green Space audit has reviewed both the quantum and quality of some 1800 green spaces across the city (including public consultation in 2011). Categorized into 9 different typologies (eg amenity open space, formal recreational areas and country parks), it will

identify areas where there are surpluses and deficits of green space by each typology. The data will further evidence the setting of standards by sub-area as to what types of open space should be secured through the development process; those areas of open space that should be protected from development and those that might be considered for release.

v. *Green Infrastructure Strategy*

The Green Space audit will further inform development of the Green Infrastructure Strategy. This will develop and enhance the existing network of open spaces and countryside that surrounds the city and extends into its built areas. The Strategy will consider not only the types of green spaces, but also the functionality of each. To develop a GI network, the strategy will consider the range of additional functions that could be designed into green spaces eg playing fields could have boundary tree planting providing shelter, a visual attraction and a habitat for wildlife, in addition to including pedestrian and cycle links to the local neighbourhood and wider GI network. These strands are programmed for completion in March 2012.

vi. *The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP)*

Infrastructure planning is a key component to the Core Strategy. The planning Inspector will test the soundness of the plan to ensure that its policies and proposals are as far as possible deliverable. The IDP will identify what physical, social and green infrastructure is required; as far as possible, identify how and when infrastructure will be delivered (which includes planned spending and funding gaps); and who will deliver the necessary infrastructure. Sunderland's draft IDP was first prepared in March 2010 and has been updated in 2011, involving a range of partners, agencies and service providers from both the public and private sector.

vii. *The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)*

The SFRA models and identifies areas at most risk of flooding from all sources (including rivers, the sea and surface water). The objective being that future development is not located in areas at most risk. The City's SFRA was updated and adopted in July 2010.

viii. *The Nature Conservation Audit.*

Though not critical to the Core Strategy, the Audit will inform the Allocations DPD and will inform current development control decisions. This audit review the quality of the City's existing nature conservation sites and makes proposals to designated new sites and where necessary delete others. The findings of the survey are presently being analysed. This will subsequently be reported through Cabinet for consideration in early 2012.

1.15 Given the emerging changes nationally and the call for moving to locally derived land requirements, it would remain expedient to continue with the programme to prepare and consult upon a Revised Preferred Options draft (as originally programmed). Whilst, no longer a statutory stage, it could be used to test and agree as far as possible, proposals for locally derived land requirements. This would offer time savings prior to moving to the next statutory stage (the Publication Draft). Subject to the actual timing of the RSS revocation, the emerging Core Strategy must still conform to the RSS requirements, though it would seem reasonable to introduce the City's own derived requirements.

1.16 A provisional timetable for the Core Strategy is as follows :

Key Milestone	Date
Revised Preferred Options Draft	Full Council – July 2012 (+ 6 week consultation)
Publication Draft	Full Council – November 2012 (+ 6 week consultation)
Submission Draft	April 2013
Examination in Public	July 2013
Receipt of Inspector's Report	November 2013
Adoption	Full Council – February 2014

DPD progress: Allocations DPD – Background

1.17 Taking its lead from the Core Strategy, the Allocations DPD will identify sites for employment, retail, community facilities and open space, areas of nature conservation and transport routes.

Overview of progress during 2010 / 11

1.18 Previously preparation of DPDs of this nature had to follow that of the Core Strategy. Consequently, progress has slipped against the adopted LDS given the issues outlined above. Whilst formal preparation of this DPD is yet to commence, its future programme will be considered through the review of the LDS. However, as set out above, the evidence base to take this DPD forward is largely complete or in the final stages of completion.

1.19 The Planning Inspectorate presently stipulates that other DPDs should not be prepared in tandem with Core Strategies. In the event that a Core Strategy is struck down for being unsound, all subordinate DPDs would also be declared unsound. Accordingly, it is currently good practise to run subordinate DPDs some 6 months behind a Core Strategy programme. Given Inspector's reports are no longer binding upon authorities under the Localism Act 2011, this advice may change. It could be reasonable to assume that production of an Allocations DPD could be accelerated to the point of almost 'catching up' with the Core Strategy programme, potentially delivering a single local plan as per the proposals within the draft NPPF.

DPD progress: Hetton Downs Area Action Plan – Background

1.20 A Private Sector Housing Condition Survey carried out in 2002 identified parts of Hetton Downs as being in an advanced state of decline. A subsequent Neighbourhood Renewal Assessment revealed a range of key regeneration issues in the area. An Area Action Plan will provide a robust planning framework for the area, to provide the development framework for the area's long-term sustainable improvement and regeneration.

1.21 A baseline assessment of the area was undertaken and this was used to inform the preparation of four land use options which were consulted upon in August 2006, prior to consulting on the Preferred Options draft in between August and September 2007. Responses to this latter consultation exercise focussed upon :

- Concerns about the proposed access road linking Houghton Road (at Broomhill) and the north end of Church Road – concerns included the proximity of the proposed route to Eppleton Primary School and associated issues of road safety, increased traffic on Church Road and the loss of Eppleton Cricket Club and a (disused) football pitch.
- Opposition to the proposals to relocate Eppleton Cricket Club and allocate the ground for housing development and to accommodate part of the route of the new access road.

Overview of progress during 2010 / 11

1.22 The formal "Publication" draft was provisionally timetabled for July 2010, though at the time of preparing the LDS in 2009, it was unclear at what point the School Place Planning process would be resolved (given that the potential closure of the school could have created significant issues for taking forward particular sites and road proposals within the plan area). It was agreed with Government Office North East that due to these circumstances the AAP timetable was provisional and would be amended upon resolution of the School Place Planning programme.

1.23 Now that the School Place Planning exercise has been completed, further investigative work is presently being undertaken to consider the proposed access road linking Houghton Road (at Broomhill) and the north end of Church Road. In addition, a Neighbourhood Renewal Assessment was undertaken for Maudlin Street (approved by Cabinet on 3 November 2011). Consideration is now to be given as to how best progress the Area Action Plan through the review of the Local Development Scheme.

Sustainability Appraisal – Background

1.24 Sustainable development is central to the planning system. Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Appraisal (SEA) are essential requirements for Local Development Frameworks and provide a way in which the sustainability effects of a plan can be described, analysed and compared. It also marks the beginning of the development plan process.

1.25 An initial part of the SA / SEA process is the preparation of a Scoping Report which sets out the context, establishes baseline information, and proposes sustainability objectives for a plan.

1.26 In May 2005 Scott Wilson Consultants were appointed to undertake the SA / SEA of the LDF Core Strategy and Unitary Development Plan Alteration No. 2 (Central Sunderland). A Scoping Report was published in October 2005 and separate SA / SEA's were subsequently carried out on the two plans and the emerging Hetton Downs Area Action Plan.

1.27 In the light of the proposed changes to the programme for the LDF it was necessary to revise and update the SA Scoping Report so that it would provide a basis for both the revised Core Strategy and Allocations DPD. In particular, much of the information contained in the 2005 Scoping Report was becoming out-of-date and would not be sufficiently robust to support emerging the DPD's.

1.28 In accordance with the LDS, a revised SA Scoping Report was prepared and was subject to a statutory five-week public consultation (including the three statutory Consultation Bodies – Natural England, English Heritage and the Environment Agency) between 29 May and 6 July 2009.

1.29 All three statutory environmental bodies responded as did One North East, Nexus, the Highways Agency and Northumbrian Water. The majority of comments received were supportive. The main points which arose highlighted that the range of other plans reviewed in the Scoping Report was not sufficient and other documents should be included (e.g. the 2007 Pitt Review on flood-related emergencies), also the need to include more recent data or amend data in the Scoping Report.

1.30 The SA Scoping Report, appropriately revised to take account of consultation responses, was adopted by the Council in September 2009. This Scoping Report was used to develop the SA / SEA Environmental Report for both the Alternative Approaches consultation (and was subsequently held up as good practice by PAS) and the Core Strategy Revised Preferred Options Draft.

Overview of progress during 2010 / 11

1.31 Given the recent adoption of the revised Scoping Report, there has been no need to undertake other formal elements of the Sustainability Appraisal during 2010/11 other than ensuring that due cognisance was given to the SA Objectives as part of reviewing the Core Strategy policies.

Saved Unitary Development Plan Policies – Background

1.32 On commencement of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (September 2004) the policies of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) previously adopted in 1998, were automatically "saved" for three years, that is they would remain in force until September 2007.

1.33 In view of the need to consider policy coverage beyond this period, guidance was released by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) which informed local planning authorities on how to save policies beyond September 2007. It required the council to submit a list of those policies it wished to save to the Government Office for the North East (GO-NE) by 1 April 2007.

1.34 Following Cabinet approval (February 2007) a schedule outlining which policies the Council wished to save was submitted to GO-NE. A subsequent directive was issued which confirmed saved UDP policies. These saved policies will continue to provide guidance in development plan matters and be used as a material consideration in assessing proposals for development until replaced by their counterparts in the LDF.

Overview of progress during 2010 / 11

1.35 The UDP Alteration for Central Sunderland (UDP Alteration No.2) was adopted in September 2007. As this Alteration was brought forward under the Transitional Provisions of the 2004 Act these policies also technically had a 3 year lifespan ending in September 2010. Working to the same procedure as outlined above, the full suite of policies set out in Alteration No. 2 were formally saved in July 2010.

Actions Undertaken Through The Duty to Co-Operate

1.36 The Localism Act now requires cooperation between local authorities on cross-boundary issues. Historically, there have been a number of examples of working together on cross boundary issues such as:-

- The development of a regionally accepted approach to preparing Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments
- The Tyne and Wear authorities have jointly commissioned the gathering of evidence for commercial and industrial waste
- Working with adjacent authorities to agree best working practices to deliver future SHMAs.
- At officer level, formal meetings are now convened with the Gateshead, South Tyneside and Durham Councils.

Adoption of Neighbourhood Plans

1.37 At this stage, further regulations relating to the production of Neighbourhood Plans have only recently been released. It is too early to report on the possible take up regarding these plans in Sunderland.

Monies received from the Community Infrastructure Levy.

1.38 The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) will be a roof tax on all development, where the developer must make a contribution to the authority for the provision of infrastructure that is deemed essential to the enabling and meeting the growth requirements of the authority's Core Strategy. Presently, the Council does not have an adopted CIL, though its preparation is presently being considered to be delivered in tandem with the Core Strategy.

2.0 POLICY MONITORING

2.1 This section provides a broad overview of significant developments taking place in the city during the course of 2010/11.

Context

2.2 Sunderland City covers 137km². It includes the main built up area of Sunderland including the city centre, plus the new town of Washington and the main former mining towns of Houghton-le-Spring and Hetton-le-Hole.

Demographics

2.3 As with the other Tyne and Wear districts and most authorities in the North East, Sunderland's population fell significantly between 1991 and 2001 by over 10,000 people. In some instances small increases are now beginning to be seen. Based on the latest estimates, Sunderland's population rose by 1,800 (or 0.6%) in the year to mid-2010, to 283,500. This is the first time the city's population has risen (year on year) for over a decade. Notwithstanding this, the population remains –4.9% less than it was in 1981. This compares to the other Tyne and Wear districts whose population remains on average some –3.2% less than it was since 1981. Between 2001-2010 the population in Sunderland fell by –0.4%, compared to a growth of 3.0% in Tyne and Wear.

City of Sunderland population change (in thousands)											
Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Pop'n	285,700	284,600	283,600	282,700	282,000	281,700	281,300	281,000	280,900	281,700	283,500
Source : 2010 Mid- Year Estimates (June 2011)											

2.4 The table below compares the most recent population profile of the city to the North East and England.

Population by age group						
Age	Sunderland		North East		England	
0-14	45900	16.4	427.2	16.5	9075.7	17.5
15-29	59600	21.2	532.2	20.6	10377.7	20
30-44	55300	19.7	493.3	19	10874	21
45-64	74600	26.6	690.2	26.7	13047.9	25.2
65-84	41200	14.7	387.1	15	7271.6	14
85+	4300	1.5	54.3	2.1	1162.9	2.2
	280900		2584.3		51809.7	
Source: ONS Mid-Year Estimates 2008 (published August 2009)						
Note: Figures may not sum to totals due to rounding						

Socio cultural issues

2.5 The 2004 Indices of Deprivation (IMD) ranked the city as the 22nd most deprived local authority out of 354. The latest IMD data (2010) ranked Sunderland as the 38th most deprived local authority in England - an improvement of 16 places.

2.6 The city has the highest proportion (24%) of persons with a limiting long-term illness of all the Tyne and Wear Local Authorities (2001 Census). This compares to 23% of North East residents and 18% of England and Wales' population (2001 Census).

Economy

2.7 The proportion of people economically active in Sunderland has decreased from 75% in 2009/10 to 71.5% in 2010/11. This figure is below the regional average, where in the same time period the proportion of people economically active in the region actually increased 0.4% to 73.4%, and the national average which saw the number of people economically active decrease 0.2% to 76.2%. Workplace earnings in Sunderland continue to be below the North East average and UK average. The gross weekly pay for a full time worker in the city is £440.70 whilst in the North East it is £451.80. Whilst both local and regional

figures are increasing at a quicker rate when compared against national indicators, both remain significantly lower than national gross weekly pay which stands at £502.60.

2.8 The city has 194.5 hectares of available employment land and a further 19.1 hectares available for mixed use regeneration in Central Sunderland. 55% of the available employment land is in Washington. In the long term there are over 20 hectares available at South Ryhope and approximately 30 hectares available to the west of Nissan. A 20ha Strategic Site to the north of the Nissan factory is proposed in the Core Strategy (March 2010).

2.9 In 2010/ 2011 a number of planning decisions resulted in the loss of employment land in the City. Following a planning appeal in December 2010, permission was granted for the development of 71 houses on the former SIG Combibloc factory at Fencehouses; this would result in the loss of 5.5ha of employment land in the Coalfield (though it should be noted that the company relocated to a 5,000 sqft unit at Rainton Bridge Business Park). In February 2011, 60 houses were approved on the former Volker Stevin site at Springwell (the de-allocation of this site had previously been recommended in the Council's 2009 Employment Land Review).

2.10 A number of employment developments were granted permission in Washington in 2010/11 including the erection of a steel framed storage building (1,600 m².) at Washington Envelopes in Hertburn, and a 30,000 m² manufacturing plant for Rolls Royce at Radial 64 (the former Dunlop tyre factory).

2.11 In April construction started on the new electric battery plant at Nissan. The 25,000sqm facility will be operational in early 2012 and will provide a centrepiece for the North East region in its capacity as a Low Carbon Economic Area and is expected to create 200 new jobs at the plant.

2.12 Also at Nissan, Gateshead College and One North East announced the creation of a unique new open-access test track facility at the plant. One North East is investing £2.4 million to fund the refurbishment of the on-site workshop and the initial running costs of the new facility, transforming the centre into a hub for Low Carbon Vehicle development. The centre will be the only one of its type in Europe linked to a training facility. These characteristics were fundamental in the designation of the North East Enterprise Zone in 2011 which focuses on low carbon technologies, of which some 42 hectares of the Enterprise Zone are located at Nissan.

2.13 In January 2011 planning permission was granted for the £10m Software City development in Sunderland City Centre at Tavistock Place. The 4,923 m² development will include space for 60 software businesses, as well as exhibition space. Presently under construction, the development is scheduled for completion in early 2012.

2.14 North Sunderland has been the focus for the largest retail development in the City. In September 2010 permission was granted for a Tesco superstore at the Sunderland Retail Park. This store (8,378sqm [net]) will be developed along with 4 retail units totalling some 3,000sqm (net). Work on the scheme is expected to start early in 2012. Within the City Centre, consent was granted for new 5,574 m² Primark store at The Bridges.

Housing

2.15 The city has a total of 124,859 dwellings¹, of which the majority are within the private sector, either in owner occupation or private rented. This tenure has seen a gradual increase however this increase is mirrored by a declining number of properties within the Registered Social Landlord (RSL) sector.

2.16 The average house price in the city as at November 2011 was £93,394. This was a decrease from the 2008 levels, when the average house price was £115,909.

2.17 In gross terms, new house building in 2010 / 11 saw 714 new homes completed in the city through either new-build completions or changes to properties which created additional homes. This figure is an

¹ Housing Flows Reconciliation Return 2010

improvement on gross completions in 2009/10 (where gross completions totalled some 614). However, when discounting losses in housing stock through demolitions and changes out of residential use, the net completion rate fell to 376 for 2010 / 11. That said, this represents the fourth highest net gain since 1999 / 2000. It is potentially, too early to suggest that this is demonstrating a recovery in the city's housing market. The rate of new house building in Sunderland was the subject of active intervention through the previous Government's Kickstart project which pump primed a number of social housing developments led by Gentoo alongside increased provision of extra care accommodation. To further clarify this, a total of 403 affordable homes were built by Registered Providers (totalling some 56% of the total homes built). Since the economic downturn the increased activity of the Registered Providers compared to the private house builders has been fundamental to sustain house building activity within the city.

2.18 Private sector development continues to fall in comparison to previous years. The principle factor being the lack of mortgage availability as opposed to the lack of available sites that remain ready to develop for housing.

Environment

2.19 Sunderland's urban character varies considerably in its age, style, and the scale of its built form. This reflects the city's former industrial history of glass, shipbuilding, and coalmining.

2.20 The city has fourteen conservation areas. Management strategies have already been completed for twelve of these following the adoption of the Silksworth Hall, Sunnyside and Ryhope CAMS.

2.21 The city has 17 sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) totaling 104 hectares. All of this land meets Natural England's condition targets with 84% by area considered in favourable condition and 16% unfavourable but recovering. The Tyne and Wear average is approximately 73.5% favourable and 22% unfavourable but recovering. Other nature conservation designations include 1 Special Protection Area/Ramsar Site, 5 Local Nature Reserves, 1 Special Area of Conservation and 68 Local Wildlife Sites (formerly SNCIs)². As referred to in Section 1, the council is presently undertaking an extensive audit of all its nature conservation sites, to ensure that the appropriate levels of protection can continue to be afforded to these sites through the development management process. Equally, the audit will further assess the potential to designate new sites of nature conservation importance.

2.22 The integrity of the defined Green Belt and open breaks/ wedges was maintained during 2010 / 11 where no applications in the Green Belt were approved contrary to policy.

Renewable Energy

2.25 In recent years a significant wind turbine scheme has been implemented in stages at the Nissan site. During 2008/09 a further two turbines were installed, each 660KW capacity. This brings the total on site to ten turbines, providing a cumulative total installed-capacity of approximately 6.6MW. In addition, 2 small 6KW wind turbines were installed at Houghton Keping School.

2.26 In 2009 / 10, four wood biomass system (each 400KW) were installed at secondary schools across the city in Academy 360, Castle View, Red House Academy, and Washington School. A Ground Source Heat pump was installed at in the new purpose built City Space building on the University's Chester Road campus.

2.27 However, there were no renewable energy schemes granted consent in 2010 / 11. Therefore, the total planned and installed capacity existing in the city remains at 17.2MW and contributing significantly to meeting the extant RSS renewable energy generating capacity target in Tyne and Wear of 22MW.

Waste

2.28 During 2010/11 33.4% of the city's municipal waste was recovered via recycling or composting, a 6.4% increase on last year's figure. Recycling has been growing steadily for several years, from only 11% in 2004/05. The other primary method of waste disposal remains landfill, although recycling initiatives have seen this fall from 80% of the city's waste in 2005/06 to 65.76% in 2010/11.

Municipal waste by disposal method						
Method	2005/06 %	2006/7 %	2007/8 %	2008/9 %	2009/10 %	2010/11 %
Landfill	80	78	73	74	72	65.76
Recycling/ composting	20	22	24	26	26	33.4
Other			3			
Source LDF AMRs 2005-2009						

Transport

2.29 In April 2010 permission was granted for the new river crossing at Claxheugh. Part of the Sunderland Strategic Transport Corridor (SSTC), the new “landmark” bridge will improve access between the A19 and the Port of Sunderland supporting regeneration such as the Groves, Vaux and Farrington Row sites in the river corridor, and the City Centre as a whole. Currently the bridge is the subject of Compulsory Purchase proceedings and funding decisions by Government. If successful on both counts, the new bridge could be open by the end of 2015.