

Development and Change - Issues and Options for the City

Core Strategy Development Plan Document Issues and Options Paper November 2005

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FOREWORD

The whole of the City of Sunderland is at the beginning of a new era. The Council aims radically to transform the image of Sunderland and is working with the Local Strategic Partnership to achieve this vision.

The foundations for the new image are set in the Sunderland Strategy, "A Bright Future for Sunderland", whose vision states:

"Sunderland will be a prosperous city.

A desirable, safe and healthy place to live, work, learn and visit, where people can reach their full potential."

The key to unlocking the new vision and image will be how we plan the City's physical changes – its new buildings and housing, roads and public transport and how the most precious assets of the City's culture and landscapes will be protected. The Local Development Framework (LDF) will set out the policies that will govern what, where and when new development will take place.

"Issues and Options" is the first step in the preparation of the Sunderland LDF "Core Strategy". This will set out the strategic policies that will underpin development in the City for the next 15 years. "Issues and Options" will stimulate debate about the key land use planning issues facing the City, and the options for dealing with these issues.

This is your opportunity to be involved at the outset of the new development plan. Your thoughts on how the City should develop are highly valuable at this early stage in the planning process to ensure that the LDF can meet the City's needs and aspirations for the early part of the 21st Century.

Please take a few minutes to fill in and return the Questionnaire Booklet, your help will be greatly appreciated.



Cllr Joe Lawson

**Portfolio Holder Environment
/ Development / Transport**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe Lawson". The signature is stylized and cursive.

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INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

The Local Development Framework (LDF) is being prepared by the City Council in consultation with its partners and the people and businesses of the City. The preparation of an LDF is a statutory requirement and will be the new Development Plan for Sunderland replacing the Unitary Development Plan (adopted 1998). The LDF will establish the context for the principal development of the city until 2021, and at a local level will take forward the government's agenda for delivering sustainable communities. This will ensure that all key developments reflect social, economic and environmental considerations to ensure that development will meet the present needs of the City without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

The Context for the Plan:

The preparation of the LDF will be underpinned by the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), which outlines the Council's commitment to ongoing stakeholder consultation. In line with this the LDF must also respond to National, Regional and Local planning policy including:

Planning Policy Guidance notes (PPG's) and Planning Policy Statements (PPS's) are prepared by Central Government to explain statutory provisions and provide guidance to local authorities (and other bodies, businesses, communities etc) on planning policy and the operation of the planning system.

The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the North East will guide the spatial and strategic planning of the Region until 2021 and is part of the suite of documents that will assist in the creation and adoption of each Local Authority's LDF. Once adopted by the Regional Planning Board all LDF policies must conform to its provisions, or clearly justify why they do not. The Draft RSS has recently been published for consultation with the final version of the RSS expected to be adopted in 2007. In the interim period, Regional Planning Guidance for the North East (RPG1) is the statutory RSS.

The Sunderland Strategy 2004 – 2007 is produced by the City of Sunderland Local Strategic Partnership (COS-LSP). It is the City's "Community Strategy" and incorporates the Neighbourhood Renewal and Sustainable Development (LA21 Future City – Future Lives) strategies to provide a single, co-ordinated focus for the future development of the City of Sunderland.

The City of Sunderland Unitary Development Plan (Adopted 1998) (UDP) is the current statutory land-use plan for the City of Sunderland. It allocates areas of the City for specific uses (housing, employment, retailing, etc), provides detailed guidance to developers to assist in the successful design of their schemes, ensures the conservation and reclamation of the City's environment whilst promoting sustainability and efficient use of natural resources. It also provides a framework for transport planning in the City.

The Local Transport Plan for Tyne and Wear (LTP) provides a strategic framework for the transport policies of the five local authorities in Tyne and Wear to 2006. Currently being reviewed to span the period to 2011, the main aim of the LTP is to support regeneration efforts by improving accessibility, enhancing public transport systems and combating congestion within the context of reducing the adverse impacts of transport on the environment.

SUNDERLAND YESTERDAY AND TODAY - A SNAPSHOT

With a population of 284,000 living in some 122,000 homes, Sunderland is the largest city in the North East of England. It includes the main built up area of Sunderland, the new town of Washington and the main former mining towns of Houghton-le-Spring and Hetton-le-Hole. The city covers some 134 sq km, and is physically very diverse.

Urban Sunderland is situated at the mouth of the River Wear and has a very attractive coastline. We have a port, a University, a sub-regional shopping centre, a regional theatre and perhaps surprisingly, to people who do not know the area, a large amount of countryside, 86 sites on the City's Nature Conservation Register, over 600 Listed Buildings and 13 Conservation Areas.

Two national highways, the A19 and the A1 (M) run through the city's boundary; we are on the east Durham Coast line which connects to Tyneside, County Durham, Teesside and to the national rail network. Sunderland is at a hub of town and country and inter-city bus services and is on the Tyne and Wear Metro rapid transit system. In addition three national cycle routes run through Sunderland - route No. 1, the Coast to Coast and the Walney to Wear. The latter two start/finish at Roker Pier.

The decline of traditional heavy industries in the second half of the 20th century left behind a legacy of derelict collieries, shipyards, industrial plants and quarries, redundancies among the workforce, economic uncertainty and social exclusion that remains a lasting challenge. Of Sunderland's 25 wards, 11 feature in the top 2000 of the UK Indices of Deprivation.

Over a period of some thirty years the number and proportion of manufacturing jobs decreased by some 17,000, and in energy production (including mining) by nearly 9,000. In 1973, these two sectors represented 45% of jobs in the city and by 2001 this had fallen to just under 25%. Over the same period, the proportion of jobs in the service sector rose by 13%.

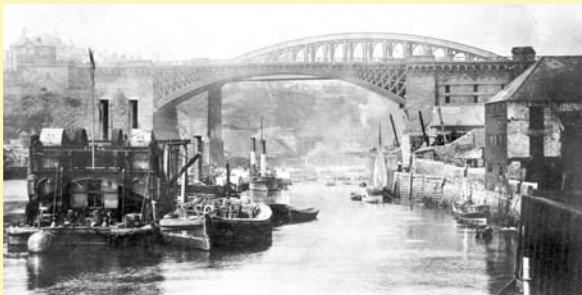
The unemployment rate at the beginning and end of the period analysed is the same but the recovery from the peak of 22% in the mid 1980's to the current rate of 4.8% is a fantastic achievement for Sunderland. However whilst population was stable for most of this period there has been a dramatic fall of some 11,000 between 1991 and 2001.

Against the background of economic social and technological change new challenges have arisen for the City including:-

- The availability of large new potential redevelopment sites in the river corridor following further major industrial closures.
- Declining levels of trade in the Port of Sunderland.
- The need to address problems of physical decline and under-use in older parts of central Sunderland and the Coalfield.
- Changes in national planning policy in relation to the regions, city centres, urban design and housing.
- A declining population in the City.

In response there is commitment at national, regional and local level to support the further regeneration of Sunderland, a great deal of interest from private developers and a willingness of our partners - notably Sunderland Arc and Sunderland Housing Group to face up to the challenges. However, perhaps most importantly, Sunderland and its people have an impressive track record in regeneration by managing not only gradual change, but also massive shocks to the city's economic foundations, as recent history can testify.

A 'Sustainability Appraisal' has been carried out in order to indicate the most sustainable options examined in this paper. A summary of the results is appended to help you to consider the questions.





1. Sustainable Communities:

What is a sustainable community?

Sustainable communities are places where people want to live and work, now and in the future. They meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, are sensitive to their environment, and contribute to a high quality of life. They are safe and inclusive, well planned, built and run, and offer equality of opportunity and good services for all. Good urban design is fundamental to the delivery of sustainable communities.

At the local level, the Sunderland Strategy sets the future vision for the City. The focus will be on raising the quality of life in Sunderland's communities through increasing economic prosperity, enhancing the quality and pace of physical regeneration, improving public services (including health and education), reducing inequalities and tackling crime (and the fear of crime).

Facts:

- Manufacturing accounts for 18.5% of jobs in the City
- Employment in service industries now accounts for 53.8%
- Between 1991 and 2001 the City's population declined by 10,000
- By 2021 15.6% of the population will be classed as "elderly" (over 60/65)

Priorities:

- Within this context the main priorities towards achieving sustainable communities in Sunderland are to:-
- Achieve sustainable economic growth;
- Stabilise the City's population;
- Ensure a good range of quality retail facilities in accessible locations

- Provide an appropriate mix of type, size, and tenure of decent high quality homes;
- Focus development on previously developed land and buildings in sustainable locations;
- Ensure the highest standards of design in all developments and their surroundings;
- Create a City that is attractive, safe and accessible;
- Protecting the City's built heritage from destructive or inappropriate alteration.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

The City's economy has undergone a fundamental transformation, with employment in the traditional industries (shipbuilding, coalmining) being replaced by newer sectors (automotive manufacturing, financial services). Unemployment in the City has also fallen dramatically, though it is still above the national average. Economic growth needs to continue to be stimulated if the City is to contribute to the "step change" being promoted through the Regional Spatial Strategy and Northern Way Initiative. Equally, it is important that economic growth in the City is sustainable; that is growth, which can be maintained in the longer term.

Supply of Employment Land (1):

On current rates of take up there is enough employment land to meet the needs of Sunderland for some 12 years. A key element of the Regional Economic Strategy is to ensure that by 2010 "the region boasts a premier portfolio of premises and sites and high quality public transport and road networks". There is a need to ensure an adequate supply of land to ensure long-term sustainable growth.

Issue 1: In the light of the need to secure a "step change" in the City's economy what should be the approach to land allocation?

- Make more intensive use of existing employment land?
- Minor expansion based on existing employment areas?
- New employment sites close to areas of greatest need/ unemployment?





- Employment land within existing public transport corridors?
- None of the above?

Supply of Employment Land (2):

Employment land is coming under increasing pressure for redevelopment for other uses, particularly housing. It is essential to achieve a balance between maintaining allocations of good quality marketable sites and ensuring flexibility to accommodate new potentially beneficial uses. Some older employment areas do not meet the needs of modern business and could potentially accommodate new uses.

Issue 2: How can the City's existing supply of employment land be best used?

- Restrict the use of best-located employment land ONLY to employment uses?
- Restrict the use of employment land to focus on employment growth sectors?
- Allow a wider mix of development including housing on employment land?
- None of the above?

New Industries:

Currently, areas of new job creation in Sunderland include retailing, distribution and warehousing, financial and professional services, research and development and health services. It is important to provide land and premises for expanding employment areas. In addition, some 14,300 work within the tourism and culture sector in Sunderland. The City has a range of natural features and cultural facilities which already attract some 1 million visitors to the area each year.

Issue 3: Where should the new growth industries be located?

- Existing employment areas?
- “Brownfield” sites not in existing employment areas?
- Concentrated in Sunderland and Washington Town Centres?
- None of the above?

Issue 4: Which of the following are most important for attracting more tourists to Sunderland?

- The coast?
- The riverside?
- The countryside?
- Shops, bars and restaurants in the City Centre?
- Heritage sites and cultural facilities?
- Active Sports/ Outdoor Sports?
- None of the above?

HOUSING:

Housing is probably the single most important planning issue in Sunderland and has a key bearing on the creation of a sustainable community. It is a powerful regeneration tool. The core issue for Sunderland is the need to provide new housing to help stem local population loss (if trends continue the City’s population could decline by up to 6,000 persons by 2021). However, a “ceiling” on the number of new houses in the City will be set in Regional Spatial Strategy. An increase in choice of type and value is important as the predominant house type in the City is low cost, notably terraced, housing. Significant new provisions are being made in Central Sunderland along the river corridor





and in historic Sunnyside with a large number of apartments proposed. There remains however a need for new housing development elsewhere in the City. The renewal programme of Sunderland Housing Group will regenerate large areas of former Council housing stock.

Securing housing choice and quality:

Issue 5: Which of the suggested approaches do you agree with?

- Provide an equal distribution of housing throughout the main built-up areas of the City?
- Provide a higher concentration of housing within and close to the City Centre and main local centres (Washington, Hetton, Southwick, Doxford Park)?
- Provide a higher concentration of housing close to key transport corridors with good public transport?
- Use Greenfield land if it contributes to a particular identified housing need?
- None of the above?

Issue 6: What level of priority should be given to provision of following types of housing?

- Higher value housing (£500,000 +)?
- Affordable housing, subsidised to allow young people and incoming key workers to get on the housing ladder?
- Apartment living?
- Family housing?
- Housing for older people?
- None of the above?

RETAILING AND URBAN CENTRES:

The City has a well-developed shopping hierarchy, with the principal focus for shopping in Sunderland being the City Centre, followed by the town centres of Washington and Houghton-le-Spring. In addition there are a number of suburban local centres meeting a range of everyday shopping needs, and several out-of-centre retail locations.

Issue 7: Where is your local centre for shops and services?**Issue 8: What facilities do you think are missing in this centre, if any?****URBAN DESIGN AND PUBLIC REALM:**

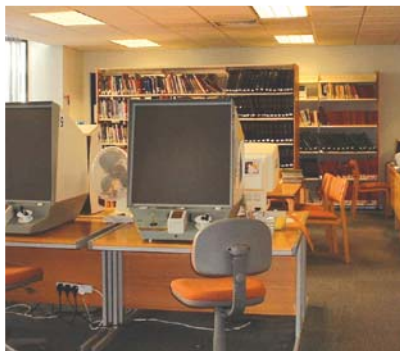
Apart from its role in creating an attractive City, high quality design (including the 'public realm' spaces around development) can help create sustainable communities by enhancing local distinctiveness and character and improving community safety.

The public realm includes streets, parks and squares and is used continuously by residents, communities, visitors and businesses. The City benefits from high quality public realm in several locations, for example Mowbray Park/ Winter Gardens, though some areas suffer from poor environments and misuse.

Issue 9: How can design help create a sustainable community?

- Design should be in keeping with the established character of an area?
- More buildings of innovative design should be encouraged?
- Traditional materials (stone, brick, slate, tiles) should be used?
- Local people should have a greater say in design of important schemes?
- None of the above?





Issue 10: What do you think contributes most to an attractive public realm?

- No visual “clutter” from signs?
- Co-ordinated street furniture?
- CCTV cameras?
- Car free or pedestrian priority streets?
- Tree/ shrub planting?
- Reduction or elimination of shop shutters and grills?
- Public art?
- None of the above?

COMMUNITY FACILITIES:

Community facilities provide a wide variety of services ranging from community centres, libraries, leisure centres, schools and health services. The Council is developing initiatives such as PeopleFirst centres and Electronic Village Halls - which allow local people access to the Internet and other I.T facilities along with a variety of other services. In addition the “Building Schools For The Future” programme will ensure high quality education facilities and provide services to the community by extending the schools facilities.

Issue 11: What do you consider to be your local community?

Issue 12: Do you believe your community has access to key community services?

Issue 13: What type of facilities, if any, do you believe your local community lacks?

2. Connectivity:

Transport provides a crucial contribution to the creation of sustainable communities. Land use and transport planning must be well integrated in order to tackle increasing levels of traffic congestion, air and noise pollution, and social exclusion. Without integrated policy, these issues will critically damage Sunderland's ability to flourish as a prosperous, economically viable and attractive city.

It is necessary to consider all aspects of transport – car use, public transport, cycling and walking – in order to ensure “connectivity” within the City; this accords with the approach adopted in the Local Transport Plan for Tyne and Wear.

Facts:

- Car ownership (and car use) is rising at a rate significantly higher than the national average
- Overall public transport patronage declined by 26% between 1993 and 2003
- 80% of journeys made by public transport are by bus
- Since 1985, the distances people walk have dropped by 25%. Around 60% of men and 70% of women are currently not physically active enough to benefit their health

Travel to work in Sunderland:

	1981	2001
Car	41%	64%
Bus	36%	18%
Walk	16%	10%
Rail/Other	6%	7%
Cycle	1%	1%





Priorities:

- Improving access for all;
- Promoting public transport use and reducing car reliance;
- Ensuring that land use development and public transport services support each other;
- Encouraging walking and cycling;
- Reducing the need to travel by making facilities and services available locally;
- Securing a reduction in the environmental impact of transport

TRAFFIC:

Traffic congestion has become a way of life in all British cities and has significant economic, social and environmental impacts. Sunderland is by no means the worst example, but increasing levels of car use is adding pressure to our road capacity. Notable congestion at peak hours occurs on/at Pallion Road, Queen Alexandra Bridge and Wearmouth Bridge approaches and the radial routes crossing the A19.

On its own, new road construction cannot ease congestion – and funding for new roads to purely ease congestion is difficult to secure from government. Measures for tackling congestion need to ensure long-term benefits. Well-planned transport networks will help to reduce congestion, air and noise pollution and increase road safety.

Issue 14: In terms of developing better transport for everyone, what modes of transport do you think need most improvement and development in Sunderland?

- Cycling?
- Motorbike?
- Public Transport?
- Private Car?
- Taxis?
- Walking?

PUBLIC TRANSPORT:

Efficient and effective public transport is a vital component in the creation of a “connected” City. A choice of high quality public transport influences the travel choices of those people with access to a car. Rail, Bus and Metro services in Sunderland provide a high standard of service that compares well with public transport services elsewhere in the UK. However, rising car ownership, perceived high costs of public transport and low public transport investment means that public transport use is declining. The Local Transport Plan emphasises the need for improved quality of key public transport corridors (Metro, bus and rail), such as the bus “Super Routes”, for example. The Project Orpheus initiative by Nexus could improve bus travel within the City and to neighbouring areas.

Metro:

The Metro has operated in Sunderland since 2002 and is increasing in popularity, though growth of user patronage has not achieved initial estimates to date. It is essential that this high cost fixed link service is supported by new development that is accessible and can in turn provide patronage. It is also important that in taking business decisions about the Metro, consideration is given to the need to provide a high quality service to all parts of the route, to ensure that residents do not revert solely to car usage in areas served by Metro.





Issue 15: How can public transport in the City be improved?

- More high quality public transport routes?
- New public transport systems (e.g. guided buses or Metro extensions)?
- Attractive, safe and secure stations, interchanges and bus stops?
- Better access to/from public transport stops?
- More 'Park and Ride' facilities?
- None of the above?

WALKING AND CYCLING:

Increased use of the private car means that people are walking less in Britain and in Sunderland. This has direct health implications, which are also costly to the local, regional and national economy. Similarly the number of cycling trips for everyday purposes has fallen to an almost insignificant level, though 'off-road' recreational cycling has seen an upsurge. People are deterred from cycling by increases in road traffic, speed and volume. Many new off-road cycleways have been created and are proving a real attraction for cyclists. However, many road and street layouts across the City should be reviewed in order to provide better conditions for all groups.

Issue 16: Which of the following approaches do you agree with?

- Develop pedestrian access improvements in key areas of the City with the pedestrian given increased priority over drivers?
- Develop pedestrians and cyclists priority in residential areas?
- Increase provision of on-road facilities to aid cycling?
- Provide more off-road cycle routes to access everyday needs?
- None of the above?

Issue 17: What transport and access improvement(s) in the City are the most important to you and to your local area?**TRAFFIC ENVIRONMENT:**

All forms of transport produce pollution. Noise and fumes from traffic impair the environment for residents and businesses close to busy routes as well as contributing to wider problems such as global warming and climate change.

It is possible to reduce the impact of transport on the environment, especially with regard to its effect on air quality and its contribution to climate change by reducing car use and encouraging the use of cleaner public transport systems.

Issue 18: How should the environmental effects of traffic be reduced?

- Introducing “green/ cleaner” public transport?
- Restricting traffic from central areas?
- Charging motorists for using the busiest roads?
- Reducing the need to travel, particularly by private car?
- Reducing the speed of traffic in residential areas?
- None of the above?





3. Environment:

Sunderland contains a diverse and dynamic environment. Scenery varies greatly, from the North Sea coastline, to the riverside and the Limestone Escarpment running through the City. The built environment includes significant variations comprising the main built-up area of Sunderland with associated suburbs, Washington New Town and the “coalfield” towns of Houghton-le-Spring and Hetton-le-Hole.

The City has an extensive ‘Green Belt’ as well as other countryside. The City Council is a partner in the Great North Forest project, which aims to increase the amount of woodland in and around the city.

Facts:

- There are 13 Conservation areas in the City and over 600 listed buildings
- 51% of the City is classed as either ‘countryside’ or public open space;
- 10% of the UK is classed as ‘woodland’, but in Sunderland only 3.7% is wooded.

Priorities:

- Continuing need to protect the City’s heritage features;
- Enhance wildlife and nature conservation;
- Protect the Green Belt;
- Enhance the quantity (in some locations) and quality of open space;
- Increase the rate of growth of the Great North Forest

LOCAL HERITAGE:

There is national legislation protecting the City's built heritage of Grade I and II listed buildings, Conservation Areas and sites of archaeological importance. Despite this, some buildings remain "at risk". National planning policy recommends that 'local lists' be compiled which identify other buildings and locations of particular local importance that warrant protection.

There have been notable successes in terms of improving and protecting the City's built environment and heritage such as Mowbray Park. However, more needs to be done across the City to retain the local heritage of our neighbourhoods and streets, whilst conserving areas and buildings of national value.

Issue 19: To what extent should historic buildings be preserved if threatened by new development?

- Preserve at all costs?
- Allow to be cleared only if a compelling justification can be made?
- Concede to new development?

Issue 20: The City has 13 Conservation Areas of special architectural or historic interest already designated – do you think more areas should be designated, and if so, where?**GREENBELT:**

The Green Belt is an important tool in restricting the sprawl of the City and resisting inappropriate development in the countryside. Sunderland's Green Belt prevents the merging of Sunderland with Washington, Houghton-le-Spring and Tyneside. Within the Green Belt approval will not be given except in very special circumstances for the construction of new buildings or for the change of use of existing buildings for purposes other than agriculture or forestry. Though the boundary of the Green Belt has been maintained for many years, there may be opportunities to review the finer details of local boundaries to accommodate emerging important uses in sustainable locations. Some sites and buildings within the Green Belt are derelict or of poor quality and detract from the appearance of the Green Belt



Issue 21: Which of the following proposals do you agree with?

- Leave existing Green Belt boundaries completely unchanged?
- Small-scale deletions to Green Belt boundaries to accommodate
- Important new developments?
- Permit redevelopment of disused sites and buildings?
- Extend the Green Belt (please describe where this should be below)?
- None of the above?

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL HABITATS:

Important wildlife and geological sites are scattered throughout the urban and rural areas of the City, and the City offers greater variety of landscapes. Further landscape and countryside improvements can be achieved through the planning system and active management.

The planning system has a vital role to play in conserving local and nationally important wildlife sites and countryside as well as encouraging wildlife in urban areas. The City Council supports the Durham 'Biodiversity Action Plan', which will help to protect the overall variety of species and habitats. Much of the City lies within the Great North Forest, which has already helped to expand woodland, develop country parks and improve recreational access.

Issue 22: Which of the suggested proposals do you agree with?

- Increased protection from the impact of development must be given to nature sites?
- Increased tree and woodland planting should be sought in new developments?
- Increased protection must be given to existing trees and woodland sites from development?



- More efforts should be made to establish the Great North Forest, particularly through increased contributions from new developments?
- None of the above?

OPEN SPACE:

There are many areas of greenspace across the City. These range in size from large country parks to small areas of amenity space in housing areas. Open space also includes allotments, cemeteries, and outdoor sports facilities, such as playing fields or multi-use skate play parks. The availability of public open space across the City is high, though there are a few locations with poor access. The quality of open space varies greatly with some open space areas in the City requiring improvement to match the needs of the local community.

The government requires local authorities to develop a 'vision' for its green and open spaces in consultation with the community, and to assess the amount and quality of provision. Your views could help develop the vision for Sunderland.

Issue 23: Which of the suggested proposals do you agree with?

- Increase the quality and accessibility of public open space, rather than quantity alone?
- Develop policy that supports increased wildlife diversity within the management of public open space?
- Allow underused open space to be developed for other uses?

Issue 24: In your view, what makes a good public park? What makes a bad public park?

URBAN ENVIRONMENT:

The MORI poll found that the proportion of people who were fairly or very satisfied with the City as a place to live fell slightly to 77% between 1998 and 2004. The Council's migration study found that an important reason given by those moving out of the City to nearby districts was for a better quality of environment.



Issue 25: What aspects of Sunderland's urban and residential environment most need improvement?

- Street Design?
- Levels of Crime?
- Open Spaces?
- Trees and Urban Landscape?
- Local Services (schools, health)?
- Traffic Congestion?
- Other?



4. Planning Globally and Developing Sunderland's Future:

Climate change and sustainable development are issues that the World's population- including Sunderland's residents- must address. The term "Think Global, Act Local" means that Sunderland together with national government and other local authorities should look to reduce its impact on natural resources, by recycling more, by saving energy and by generating more energy from renewable sources such as wind and solar power. This is now being referred to as reducing our "eco-footprint" – the amount of land needed for food, energy, water, waste and materials used in our daily lives. Sunderland's ecological footprint is almost 5 hectares per person and the City Council will be actively working to reduce this over the coming years. A "fair Earth share" would be 1.8 hectares.

Sunderland is also thinking globally in terms of its future, in planning for and developing a new image for a modern city. The Sunderland Strategy and Image Strategy for the City have laid out a new vision for Sunderland. This will be referred to in the Local Development Framework, picking up on the continuing changes to employment and population as indicated earlier, and to improving social and environmental conditions. Planning can ensure that development in the City not only conforms to policy and vision but also supports the wider neighbourhood through developer contributions, or "planning gain".

Facts:

- Each person within the City produces an average of 570 kilos of waste per year;
- Sunderland already contributes towards renewable energy creation, schemes including:
 - Doxford International Business Park (Winner of the UK Environmental Award – 1998), which boasts Europe's largest integrated photovoltaic façade;
 - Great Eppleton wind farm consists of four 750 kW turbines capable of generating a total of 3 MW;
 - Work has recently begun on a £2m windfarm that will help to power the Nissan plant. The scheme consists of six large turbines, which will produce enough electricity to power 2,600 homes.





Priorities:

- Need to increase sustainable energy generation and use;
- Increase recycling and reduce dependency on landfilling of waste;
- Ensure that new development supports the wider community;
- Need to move towards sustainable patterns of development
- To locate new development of all kinds where it is best located to meet its function and needs.

ENERGY GENERATION:

Energy use and generation is central to the way we lead our lives. However, the energy choices we make have significant consequences for the environment, such as climate change and low-level air pollution in urban areas. The Government promotes the need to minimise energy use and pollution and move towards a higher proportion of electricity generated from renewable sources. One of the government's key targets is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by cutting the UK's CO₂ emissions by 60% by 2050. In order to deliver on this target it is crucial that sustainable forms of development are encouraged that: minimise demand, use energy more efficiently, increase the amount of energy derived from renewable resources and; minimise the reliance on fossil fuels.

The draft Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) seeks to achieve the generation of at least 10% of the North East Region's electricity consumption from renewable sources by 2010, and Sunderland is playing its role. Sunderland has extensive rural areas, as well as coastline, and this provides the City with the opportunity to investigate a range of technologies, from large wind turbines to micro- renewable applications such as solar panels and photovoltaic's.

Issue 26: Which renewable energy technologies would you like to see developed in Sunderland?

Biomass	burning of plant or animal material to provide heat or energy;
Solar Power	energy from the sun, such as through use of photovoltaic cells or solar panels;
Wind Energy	energy collected from wind power, such as wind turbines;
Hydro Schemes	use of dams on rivers to release water through turbines;

Geo-thermal	utilising the natural heat of the earth's crust;
Wave energy	energy from wave movement using turbines;
Tidal energy	trapping water at high tide and releasing through turbines.

Issue 27: Should Sunderland set a higher standard of provision than the 6% minimum required by the RSS?

RECYCLING AND WASTE:

The recycling of waste is a key component of sustainable communities. Local authorities in the North East of England collect the least amount of waste for recycling in the UK. This is a cause for concern as the amount of waste produced continues to grow, incurring environmental, social and economic costs for the Region. There is over-reliance on landfilling, generally, and space is dwindling. In 2004/ 05 over 162,000 tonnes of waste were produced in the City - an increase of 3% over the previous year. Whilst this increase may seem small, if waste creation continues at this rate, the City of Sunderland will double the amount of waste currently created by the year 2020. Sunderland is working hard to reach a Government-set target of recycling 18% of household waste by the end of 2005-06.

Issue 28: Which of the suggested proposals do you agree with?

- Encourage developers to use higher percentages of recycled materials in new development?
- Encourage the provision of waste management industries for the treatment of residual household waste (waste from the 'Green Bins') within the City?
- Encourage recycling industries to locate within the City?
- None of the above?





DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS – “PLANNING GAIN”:

New development often places increased demand on local infrastructure and services and can change the local environment. The City Council is sometimes able to secure legal agreements on developers to provide funding or to carry out works that provide community benefits (known as “Planning Gain”). The Council must work in partnership to ensure these benefits are maximised in the interests of securing a fair and comprehensive approach to regenerating the City.

Issue 29: Which of the following benefits are most important for the Council to secure through “planning gain”?

- Community buildings?
- Public open space?
- Landscaping?
- Children’s playspace?
- Local Health facilities?
- Sport & recreation facilities?
- Public transport Improvement?
- Public artwork?
- Creation and management of wildlife habitats?
- Affordable housing?
- Convenient cycle and pedestrian links?

WHERE SHOULD DEVELOPMENT GO? – SPATIAL OPTIONS:

A key component in the move towards a sustainable city is to locate new development in locations where it will be well served by public transport and accessible by high quality pedestrian and cycle links. Reliance purely on the motorcar is not a sustainable approach, though employment areas, particularly in the manufacturing and storage sectors will require good road connections for deliveries.

This plan does not start with a blank canvas, as much of the built fabric and infrastructure is already in place. There are also several commitments that will shape the development of the future City, including existing planning permissions, the advanced plans of “Sunderland arc”, the renewal programme of Sunderland Housing Group to re-invigorate the City’s stock of social rented housing and also the requirements of Regional Spatial Strategy.

The latter includes policies to:

- Maintain the City’s Green Belt;
- Ensure that at least 65% of new housing is built on previously developed land; and to
- Apply a ‘Sequential Test’ to ensure that all types of built development consider as a first step the possibility of using previously developed sites.

The most environmentally friendly option is to concentrate new development close to main and local centres to maximise the benefits of access by public transport and minimise the need to rely on the private car. However this may not be the most sustainable option in social or economic terms and the Council is seeking views on alternative ways of distributing new development about the City.





Options

1. Continue the current strategy of the Unitary Development Plan to retain all existing and proposed employment land, maximise the use of community facilities and infrastructure (shopping, schools, health, roads and utilities), protect open spaces and most countryside from development, but give emphasis to locating major development accessible from the A19, Southern Radial road and Central Route. This option would tend to favour more trips by car and less use of public transport.
2. Locate the majority of new development within easy walking distance of the City's main public transport nodes (City Centre, Washington and Houghton le Spring town centres) or close to other main Metro and bus routes. This will maximise sustainable access opportunities but could put pressure for development on open spaces and underused property within the main corridors.
3. Focus all new development on previously developed sites to maximise protection of open spaces and the countryside. To ensure sufficient new development this may require particularly high-density housing and could limit the choice of sites available for new employment.
4. Locate as much new development as possible in the most deprived areas of greatest need (North-West Sunderland, southern riverside, West Sunderland, East Washington and the Southern Coalfield communities). This could give new impetus to rejuvenating deprived areas but may not meet the wider needs of the economy or the geographical choices for City residents.
5. Take a housing-led approach with new housing located to assist reducing out migration, regenerating inner Sunderland, the Coalfield communities and complementing social housing renewal areas. Such development, in line with the Council's Interim Strategy for Housing Land Strategy, will maximise rejuvenation of major areas of the City, support Metro and bus services.

Issue 30: Which development option do you think would most benefit the City?

- Continuation of UDP strategy
- Concentrating around main public transport corridors and nodes
- All new development to be on previously developed sites
- Concentrate development in the most deprived areas of the City
- Housing-led regeneration



Sustainability Appraisal:

Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, LDFs must undergo a Sustainability Appraisal (SA). An SA involves the identification and evaluation of the LDF's impacts on economic, social and environmental objectives – the three dimensions of sustainable development.

The SA process incorporates the requirements of a new European law on the environmental assessment of plans (referred to as the 'Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive').

The Guidance states that the purpose of SA is "to promote sustainable development through better integration of sustainability considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans...SA is an iterative process that identifies and reports on the likely significant effects of the plan and the extent to which implementation of the plan will achieve the social, environmental and economic objectives by which sustainable development can be defined".

The options generated by the Council perform well in sustainability terms and the choices between them are unlikely to generate significant sustainability effects.

The options are generally geared towards accommodating new development as sustainably as possible; providing for affordable and diverse housing needs; reducing the need to travel; ensuring good quality urban design; reducing

dependency on natural resources; and protecting the countryside and biodiversity.

A copy of the report is available from the Planning Policy Section located within the Civic Centre, Burdon Road, Sunderland SR2 7DN.

Stage A: Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope



Stage B: Testing the plan objectives against the SA Framework, developing and refining options, predicting and assessing effects, identifying mitigation measures and developing proposals for monitoring



Stage C: Documenting the appraisal process



Stage D: Consulting on the plan and SA Report



Stage E: Monitoring implementation of the plan

Illustration of the 5-stage approach to a Sustainability Appraisal

Please take a few minutes to complete and return the Questionnaire Booklet



WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

All the responses to the questions posed in this document will be used by the City Council in identifying a “preferred” Core Strategy for the long-term development of the City. This will be accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal which will assess the social, environmental and economic effects of the strategy to ensure that it accords with sustainable development; i.e. "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".

The “preferred” Strategy will itself be the subject of further public consultation in 2006 to ensure the views of stakeholders and the local population are fully taken into account. The Core Strategy will then proceed through the statutory planning process – an examination is likely to be required in Summer 2007 where the Strategy will be assessed by an independent government inspector – with the Strategy being adopted in early 2008.

If you have any alternative proposals or ideas regarding the issues raised in this report, please write them in the questionnaire booklet:

Thank you for your time and effort – your responses to these questions will ensure the creation of a sustainable City.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

The following set of terms and definitions are referred to in the Issues and Options Report:

Annual Monitoring Report (AMR):

Prepared each year to assess the implementation of the policies and targets set out in the Development Plan.

Biodiversity:

The richness and variety of living things (ie plants, birds, animals, fish and insects), which exist in a given area, and the habitats that support them.

Brownfield Land:

Any land, which has previously been used for any purpose and is no longer in use for that purpose, not necessarily contaminated, although contaminated land will automatically be brownfield.

Community Strategy:

Local Authorities are required by the Local Government Act 2000 to prepare Community Strategies, with the aim of improving the social, environmental and economic well being of their areas.

Conservation Area:

An area of special architectural or historic interest where development is strictly controlled so the special character and qualities can be preserved or improved.

Core Strategy:

Sets out the key elements of the planning framework for the area; includes a spatial strategy, core policies and monitoring and implementation framework.

Development Briefs:

Prepared by the Council or sometimes developers to inform the appropriate development of a specific site. They are usually produced for large sites and/or where there is to be a mix of uses on a site. The council must adopt a Development Brief in order for it to be formally recognised.

Development Plans:

Sets out the Council's policies and proposals for the development and use of land, the Development Plan guides day-to-day decisions as to whether or not planning permission may be granted (This system is known as Development Control).

Development Plan Documents (DPD):

Any part of the LDF that forms part of the statutory development plan e.g. the Core Strategy, site-specific allocations of land, area action plans and the proposals map.

Government Office for the North East (GONE):

Regional Government Office (based in Newcastle) responsible for implementing national policy in the region and ensuring LPA policy and plans accord with national guidance.

Greenfield Site:

Land that has not previously been developed or where the remains of any buildings, roads, uses etc. have blended into the landscape since last used.

Issues and Option Consultation Stage:

Before a draft DPD is prepared the Council will consult stakeholders on the issues that need to be considered and the possible options available for inclusion in the DPD. This process will be informed by the evidence base studies undertaken by the LPA, the strategic planning framework and the need to ensure the resultant DPD is sound in terms of sustainable development.

Local Development Document (LDD):

The individual documents that set out planning policies and guidance for the borough for specific topics or for the geographical areas.

Local Development Framework (LDF):

The collective name given to all those policies and documents forming the planning framework for the City including DPDs, SPDs, proposals map SCI, LDS and AMR.

Local Development Scheme (LDF):

The project management document setting out the programme for preparing the LDDs and proposals for monitoring and review.

Local Planning Authority (LPA):

The name given to the council that has responsibility for local planning matters.

Local Strategic Partnership:

A Local Strategic Partnership (LSPs) is a single non-statutory, multi-agency body, which matches local authority boundaries, and aims to bring together at a local level the different parts of the public, private, community and voluntary sectors.

Local Transport Plan:

The Local Transport Plan is a long-term vision for the development of transport systems. It is an essential element of the Government's policy to improve transport nation-wide, in particular walking, cycling and public transport.

MORI:

MORI is a market and public opinion research agency, which provides a range of quantitative and qualitative research services, working with clients in both the private and public sectors.

Planning Policy Guidance/Statement (PPG/PPS):

These are subject specific Government advice and policies on national land-use in England. PPSs are being phased in to supersede PPGs

Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS):

Overarching strategy document produced by the Regional Planning Body. The RSS provides a spatial framework to inform the preparation of the LDF and will form part of the Statutory Development Plan.

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI):

A document that sets out the standards to which the LPA will engage and consult the public and other stakeholders during the production of the LDF and when dealing with planning applications.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA):

An assessment of the potential impacts of policies and proposals on the environment to include proposals for the mitigation of impacts.

Sunderland Strategy “A bright future for Sunderland”:

The Strategy incorporates the Local Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy, Local Agenda 21 and the previous Community Strategy into one cohesive document, which articulates the Partnership's agenda.

Supplementary Planning Document (SPD):

Elaborate upon the policies and proposals contained in DPDs but do not have their statutory status. SPD is subject to the Sustainability Appraisal.

Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG):

Predecessor to SPD and performs the same function under the old system. SPG emphasises ideas and policies that are referred to in the UDP. Sustainable Development/Sustainability - When making decisions in relation to land uses, local authorities have a duty to ensure that a development is sustainable. This means that a development or activity must meet the needs of people today without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA):

An assessment of the social, economic and environmental impacts of the policies and proposals of each LDD.

Unitary Development Plan (UDP):

The existing adopted statutory plan for the City of Sunderland (adopted 1998), which sets out the detailed policies for development and its control and proposals for particular areas/sites. As DPDs are adopted they will replace parts of the Local Plan.

